

## 2024 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and Greater Iowa City, Inc. annually recommend and support positions on key policy issues affecting our region and state's economic growth. These positions and recommendations are made with significant input from our combined 2,000 members, investors, partners, and community stakeholders.

### GOAL: Remove Barriers to Employment & Close the Opportunity Gap

By creating desirable and robust communities, Iowa can establish itself as a great place to live and work. Available housing stock, modern and accessible airports, robust broadband connections, community placemaking projects, and recreational opportunities are vital to Iowa's talent attraction and retention strategy and create great "quality of place."

Housing shortages exist throughout the state in both rural and urban areas. We must grow the stock of attainable housing for working households across the region. To retain and attract more workers, Iowa can take additional steps to address the shortage through increasing existing tax credits and additional incentives for developers, communities and employers to invest in new and existing housing for all Iowans.

Policy Solutions	Federal Policy	State Policy
Support policies that address access to high-quality, affordable child care and early childhood education, including increased wages and benefits to grow our child care workforce, and expanded Child Care Assistance benefits to support working families. *	X	X
Support policies that help prepare offenders for successful reentry to Iowa communities and employment, including the expansion of high school equivalency diploma pathways and apprenticeships. It is also imperative to support correctional facility employee training.		X
Support increased funding and access for mental health services for businesses, schools and communities.	X	X
Support policies that improve access to talent, capital and opportunities for early and growth-stage companies and expand access to capital to allow minority business owners to start and grow businesses.	X	X
Address the nation's aviation workforce shortage, including lowering financial barriers to the profession, re-examining the 1,500-hour minimum flight time rule, and increasing funding for aviation workforce development programs.	X	
Support funding for law enforcement crisis intervention training and staffing for community mental health coordinators to alleviate additional pressures on law enforcement.	X	X
Expand funding for ESL programs to advance employment opportunities for immigrants and programs that encourage employers to gain broader language and communication skills.	X	X

*\*Featured Priority*

To learn more, see our comprehensive 2024 state and federal public policy agenda for the ICR region at [www.cedarrapids.org](http://www.cedarrapids.org) or [www.greateriowacity.com](http://www.greateriowacity.com).

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and Greater Iowa City strongly encourage elected officials, candidates, and citizens to be civil in discussions and debates on policy issues and political opinions. We are committed to leading by example.