



## **2015 Federal Legislative Agenda**

Every year the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce works with local, state, and congressional officers on a number of different public policies. The Chamber's membership is surveyed and asked what issues are most important to them. While the Chamber will continue to work diligently on all issues that have a significant impact on the business community, **workforce development, transportation and healthcare will remain at the forefront for this year's state and federal agendas.**

Below are the Chamber's positions:

**Workforce Development:** The Chamber strongly supports a workforce system that is business driven and locally administered as highlighted in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. In partnership with local elected officials, Local Workforce Investment Boards will maintain governance of WIOA funds and will be given the authority to require all regional job training programs to be part of these LWIBs so that duplication is reduced and administrative expenses are streamlined.

**Healthcare:** The Chamber supports innovative legislation that promotes personal responsibility, improves the quality of health care while eliminating waste and abuse, and expands affordable insurance coverage options for employers. While the Chamber supports Medicaid reform and expansion in Virginia, the Chamber will oppose any legislation reducing the federal government's commitment as detailed in the Affordable Care Act to pay for the costs associated with this expansion, specifically 100 percent until 2016 and then a phase down to 90 percent by 2020.

The Chamber opposes the ACES Act. Although we support efficient and responsible use of energy and materials, the Act as worded has the potential to force employers in rural communities to reevaluate the costs of operating their business in the United States. The Chamber opposes the Employee Free Choice Act as it is currently proposed.

**Federal Benefits:** The Chamber advocates for an accountability program where persons who receive benefits from federal entitlement programs are either drug free or in a program to become drug free. This program should adopt a graduated reduction of benefits approach for those who do not meet this standard.

Energy: The Chamber supports the development of cost-effective, alternative, and renewable energy sources while keeping the United States competitive in the energy market. The Chamber further supports the continued development of clean coal technology, exploration for oil and natural gas off of the east coast, and incentives for implementation of sustainable business practices. The Chamber also supports extending the energy efficient commercial building deduction beyond its current expiration date.

**Transportation: The Chamber advocates strongly for the construction of I-73 as it would be an economic engine for Martinsville-Henry County and the entire corridor that it serves.**

E- Fairness Act: The Chamber supports measures aimed at compliance, fairness and revenue balance for our communities in a new retailing environment. E-fairness will help local businesses compete, grow and create jobs in our communities.

Sound Fiscal Practice: The Chamber believes the federal government should responsibly balance revenues and expenditures for the benefit of the business community while reducing the national debt.