



» 2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1 Hold the line on taxes and spending.

With 2024 spending increases exceeding 35% of the prior state budget, Minnesota is becoming a cost outlier. 27 red and blue states have actually cut taxes and reduced regulations to stimulate economic growth. Business costs matter – for employers and employees alike.

2 Mitigate impacts of paid time off programs.

Despite widespread business opposition, Minnesota mandated two massive PTO programs that intrude upon the employer-employee relationship.

The Earned Sick & Safe Time requirement (1 hour of paid sick time per 30 hours worked) is effective now, and the Paid Family & Medical Leave Act (12 paid weeks each for parental and major sick leave) is set to begin in 2026. Thousands of Minnesota businesses are unaware or unprepared for these mandates. More education, simpler rules, and fraud prevention measures are needed.

3 Streamline environmental permitting.

More businesses are looking to expand outside Minnesota due to our unusually slow state permitting process. Long delays are common and expensive. We support streamlining the state's review and permitting process without compromising regulations designed to protect our environment. Rather than expand their business in other states, this will allow local companies to eliminate uncertainty and make timely decisions.

4 Unlock the economic impact of local projects.

We believe in the economic, tourism and workforce potential of the National Loon Center and WonderTrek Children's Museum, which are professionally managed and shovel-ready. These facilities will attract thousands of year-round visitors, creating a halo effect that will benefit our member businesses. With public and private funds finally secured, both will be ready to break ground in the next year.

Developed in partnership with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, **the first three priorities** are endorsed by more than 50 local Chambers that represent more than 21,000 businesses across the state.



» ABOUT THE BRAINERD LAKES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: We strengthen businesses that strengthen our communities.

- ✓ **Chambers: 3**
Brainerd Lakes, Crosslake, Pequot Lakes plus the Hwy 371 Welcome Center
- ✓ **Member Businesses: 1,123**
- ✓ **Member Employees: ~20,000**
- ✓ **Volunteer Leaders: 250+**
- ✓ **Professional Staff: 16**

FOCUS AREAS

Economic Development | Workforce Development
 Regional Tourism | Networking & Connections
 Business Training | Government Affairs

2024 BUSINESS CHAMPION SPONSORS



Board of Directors

- » **Chair: Jesse Grant**
Jim's Electric
- » **Vice Chair: Lori Kohorst**
Party Time Rental
- » **Past Chair: Frank Soukup**
Grand View Lodge
- » **Executive Officer: Lori Davies**
Clow Stamping Company
- » **Jill Andersen**
Lonesome Cottage Furniture
- » **Paul Augustinack**
Woods to Water Real Estate (WAVE Chair)
- » **Lori Bender**
Penmac (Ambassador Chair)
- » **Jill Casper**
CTC
- » **Todd DeFreece**
Essentia Health
- » **Cory Jay**
Advantage Home Pros
- » **Colton Maher**
Woods to Water Real Estate
- » **Nick Miller**
3 Cheers Hospitality
- » **Pat Netko**
Lake Country Crafts and Cones
- » **Tim Ramerth**
Widseth
- » **Lori Scharenbroich**
West Shore Marketing & Spaces
- » **David Spizzo**
Breezy Point Resort

Government Affairs Committee

- » **Jim Haakonson**
CliftonLarsonAllen
- » **Deb Holthaus**
Benefit Innovations
- » **Val Knudsen**
Advantage Home Pros
- » **Ginny Knudson**
BSKK Law
- » **David Liedl**
Woods to Water Vacation Homes
- » **Chris Quisberg**
Pequot Lakes Supervalu
- » **Tim Ramerth**
Widseth
- » **Matt Seymour**
Tudor Properties
- » **Tim Swanson**
Initiative Foundation
- » **Bart Taylor**
RiverWood Bank
- » **Angel Zierden**
Live North MN