

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2016 PRIORITY ISSUES

*The Sacramento Metro Chamber has identified three critical areas of investment for our region: infrastructure, people and strategic initiatives. Each issue is designed to improve business recruitment, retention and expansion and provide quality job opportunities supporting our region's families.*

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**Infrastructure:** The Sacramento regional economy requires reliable and robust infrastructure for moving people, goods, water and data to spur and preserve economic growth, help recruit investment and employers and foster sustainable development, a cleaner environment, and healthier residents. The Metro Chamber seeks to: (1) mitigate and prepare for future droughts by obtaining funding for new and expanded water storage projects; (2) continue federal investment in both transit and transportation projects that are key to regional growth; (3) ensure adequate funding and the regulatory flexibility needed to grow our airport system; and (4) advocate for grant funding to expand broadband access in our rural communities.

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**People:** The economic well-being of our community requires that every person have an opportunity to obtain the skills and training needed to participate in our workforce to support themselves and their families and to maintain their wellness. Accordingly, the Metro Chamber seeks to: (1) ensure adequate funding for Pell grants, Federal Perkins Loans, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity grants, and services for veterans transitioning from soldier to student; (2) embed reform approaches, such as Career Pathways and Linked Learning, into Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) regulations; (3) seek funding to expand Pathways to Employment, a program designed to provide employment to homeless individuals; (4) seek funds for improved outreach and training for first responders dealing with mental illness; and (5) ensure access to healthcare by asking Congress to protect and expand Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements.

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**Strategic Initiatives:** Our region's success is determined by the initiatives we support to ensure we fully capitalize on our competitive advantages while protecting ourselves from hardships. To ensure the same, the Metro Chamber seeks to: (1) secure \$175 million in FY2017 for Small Business Development Centers; (2) support trade expansion for the region by advocating for the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership and T-TIP (Trans-Atlantic Trade & Investment Partnership) agreements; (3) support the Made in America Manufacturing Communities Act, which will afford our region preferential consideration for up to \$1.3 billion in existing federal economic development assistance, (4) modify the definition of "rural" by USDA to make more of our communities eligible for grants from 40 different agencies; and (5) increase federal investment for projects essential to reducing flood risk for the urbanized population centers and rural agricultural areas; and (6) ensure resources for proper forest management to prevent catastrophic wildfires that hinder our ability to meet important federal air quality standards.