

# **BELONG**

***2023-2025 ADVOCACY AGENDA***



**GREATER MADISON  
CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE**

*Greater Madison is having a moment –  
**perhaps THE moment.***

*The region boasts low unemployment, high workforce participation and accelerated population growth, led by Gen Z net migration and new hires.  
**The future is seemingly boundless.***

*Yet with these tailwinds come challenges. **We are facing a talent imperative.**  
The demand for skilled workers exceeds the supply and we – the business community – bear a responsibility that extends beyond job creation.*

*Our collective focus must be to ensure  
Greater Madison is a place where everyone feels a  
true sense of belonging.*

***This is the moment when  
aspiration meets reality.***

**THIS  
IS OUR  
AGENDA**



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## Increase Opportunity

*The next big thing will happen in Greater Madison by increasing opportunity for the world's talent to locate, build and grow here.*

1. Make Greater Madison the best place in the country for entrepreneurs of color to own a business by providing equitable access to capital and opportunities, including support for diverse investment fund managers, supply chain diversification, personalized mentoring and targeted resources.
2. Maximize our nation's innovation output by advancing and fully funding the U.S. Department of Commerce's Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs program, and National Science Foundation's Regional Innovation Engines program.
3. Enact a permanent solution that allows undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children ("Dreamers") to remain in the country.
4. Ensure Greater Madison and Wisconsin remain inclusive places of opportunity for all talent.
5. Support federal skilled-worker immigration reform to grow and retain talent, foster entrepreneurship, and drive economic growth.
6. Pursue important federal immigration reforms that encourage entrepreneurship, support our growing workforce needs and boost our nation's competitiveness.
7. Bolster government-funded research to ensure the United States remains the world's dominant innovation economy.
8. Encourage policies that support the breakthrough discoveries emerging from UW-Madison and Greater Madison's bioscience, healthtech and software businesses.
9. Prioritize economic development strategies that support advanced industry growth, which imports wealth into our communities.
10. Encourage state government to expand venture capital fund-of-funds initiatives, expanding the impact of private co-investment and helping new and emerging companies scale in Wisconsin.



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## Enhance Connectivity

***Creating enhanced connectivity within our region and beyond will support economic growth.***

1. Establish intercity passenger rail service to Madison, connecting Milwaukee, Chicago and the Twin Cities.
2. Support the growth of Dane County Regional Airport by renaming to an “International” designation and focusing on establishing more non-stop connections to new and vital business hubs.
3. Support the modernization of the Alliant Energy Center campus to maximize sports, entertainment and cultural offerings, with a focus on environment, equity and employment. In addition, enhance the physical connection between the AEC campus and downtown Madison.
4. Support digital equity through technology expansion and investment in fast and reliable broadband access.
5. Support and leverage public and private investment in bicycle infrastructure.



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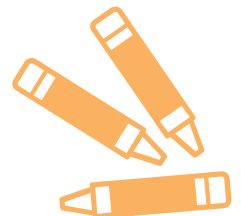
## Strengthen Community Resilience

*The resilience of our region will be recognized with strategic investments and locally driven solutions to some of our country's biggest challenges.*

1. Develop a public- and private-sector Madison Model that supports innovative strategies to reduce barriers to entry for entrepreneurs and workers in the childcare industry. We are facing a market failure as the industry struggles to pay competitive salaries for the workforce while costs remain prohibitive for families in need of care.
2. The effects of climate change have both environmental and economic impacts. Public and private partnerships should be prioritized to address climate change with policies that incentivize private-sector investment to help create jobs, reduce emissions and costs.
3. Support higher education institutions in Greater Madison as preparers of a quality workforce and providing needed research and services that impact economic development and the business community.
4. Ensure State Street and the Downtown Madison economy remain vibrant to attract talent, industry and visitors for the benefit of the region.
5. Encourage public-private collaboration and investment in strategies with the greatest impact to improve water quality in the Yahara watershed.
6. Support apprenticeship and trades education to advance careers in growing fields.



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## Enable Responsive Governance

*Predictable, responsive governance promotes stability for markets and greater efficiency for urgent infrastructure investments.*

1. Pursue creative approaches to the development process, including the application of REACH codes, layering targeted incentive programs and financing tools, and reducing burdensome zoning restrictions and duplicative process approvals.
2. Reform elections by adopting Final Five Voting to promote functional governance, collaboration and a productive policy-making environment.
3. Remove state and local licensing barriers tied to federal immigration status.
4. Enable communities across Wisconsin to coordinate transportation services through the creation of Regional Transit Authorities.
5. Adopt a presumptive approval policy to ensure that once project plans are submitted, decisions are made in a timely, predictable way with necessary public input, while minimizing the costs associated with lengthy delays.
6. Resolve insufficiencies in the state's transportation fund by providing meaningful finance reform and sustainable funding sources.
7. Foster enhanced economic literacy among elected officials through structured training opportunities to ensure informed policy discussions and decision-making.



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## Advocacy Team

**PUBLIC POLICY MANAGER**  
**David Aguayo**, 608-443-1963  
david@madisonbiz.com

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Kevin Little**, 608-443-1949  
kevin@madisonbiz.com

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