

Local Priorities

Local Agenda

Education:

- The ESCOC will advocate for the creation of a Technology Magnet School that will provide local students with the skills required to make them employable at higher paying technology jobs and provide skilled workers for our current and future business community.
- The ESCOC supports the establishment of new, and enhancements of existing, technical/career education programs in area high schools to provide these students with the necessary skills for future employment.

Responsible Development:

- The ESCOC will advocate for zoning and development ordinances that promote and encourage the growth of more affordable housing alternatives on the Eastern Shore.
- The ESCOC supports state legislation to give Baldwin County & local municipalities, the ability to regulate cell phone companies and private sewer & water systems and have oversight of the same to protect the general public. The ESCOC believes Baldwin County needs to act swiftly to set up the guidelines to assure quality growth within the county. It is the belief of this Chamber that serious overall planning controls need to be devised on all these issues. The ESCOC will work with the county and the municipalities in any way possible to see this comes to fruition.
- The ESCOC will advocate for the creation of a Baldwin County Housing Authority, including the zoning officials of Spanish Fort, Daphne, Fairhope, and Baldwin County, to explore workable solutions to create affordable housing. The Chamber of Commerce does not endorse any specific plan or idea in this regard but believes all ideas, including creating an Overlay District, Land Bank, Bonus System for Multi-Unit Development, among other ideas, should be considered.
- The ESCOC will strongly support our communities in creating new parks, sidewalks and greenways throughout the region.

Tourism:

- The ESCOC believes tourism should be an Eastern Shore priority and will support efforts to promote the Eastern Shore as a tourist designation.
- The ESCOC will advocate for the creation of an ESCOC affiliated Convention and Visitors Council to market the Eastern Shore and its many attractions as a destination for groups and individuals.

Transportation

- The ESCOC will actively work with our municipalities towards solutions for our transportation needs.
- The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce supports BRATS and the BC Public Transit Coalition in their efforts to improve public transportation throughout the county AND between Baldwin and Mobile counties

State and Federal Priorities

State Agenda

Education

- The ESCOC believes our current population, and estimated future population growth, requires the expansion of 4-year educational opportunities on the Eastern Shore and we will actively promote this agenda.
- The ESCOC will support the expansion of technical training programs on the Eastern Shore.
- The ESCOC supports a reevaluation of the "equity funding" legislation, an earlier attempt to equalize funding among counties.

County Sewer, Utility, and Cell Phone Regulations

- The ESCOC supports legislation to give Baldwin County & local municipalities, the ability to regulate cell phone companies and private sewer & water systems and have oversight of the same to protect the general public.

State Parks and Historical Areas

- The ESCOC requests that the Governor and the Legislature approve continued funding of state agency-operated historical and nature parks (such as Historic Blakely State Park and Historic Fort Morgan) in Southwest Alabama at a reasonable level consistent with total available state revenue.

Transportation

- The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce requests more money back from federal and state fuel taxes. Baldwin County only receives 21% of all taxes generated in Baldwin County.

Other

- The ESCOC will support constitutional reform. (The Chamber does not take a position on whether this reform should take place by amendment or via a Constitution Convention.)
- The ESCOC strongly believes that the Alabama Department of Insurance should proactively engage in the process of finding solutions to insurance attainability and affordability in our community.

Federal Agenda

The ESCOC will support efforts to:

- Make healthcare more affordable to our small businesses & sole proprietors.
- Provide regulatory relief by advocating the review and repeal of outdated, unnecessary regulations.
- Return more money back from federal and state fuel taxes. Baldwin County only gets 21% of all taxes generated in Baldwin County.
- Maintain the current minimum wage, which protects small business owners from undue hardships they suffer in our challenging economic environment when an increase is mandated.

Federal Agenda (cont.)

- Reauthorize the Water Resources Development Act and any provisions that appropriate adequate annual funding for the operation, maintenance and timely improvement of the state's ports and navigable waterways. (The U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R. 2864 in a bipartisan vote of 406-14 on July 14, 2005.)

Eastern Shore Elected Officials

City of Daphne

621-9000

Fred Small, *Mayor*

Council

Bailey Yelding, Jr., *District 1*

Cathy Barnette, *District 2*

John L. Lake, *District 3*

Greg W. Burnam, *District 4*

Ron Scott, *District 5*

Regina Landry, *District 6*

August Palumbo, *District 7*

City of Fairhope

928-2136

Tim Kant, *Mayor*

Council

Debbie Quinn, *Place 1*

Dan Stankoski, *Place 2*

Cecil Christenberry, *Place 3*

Mike Ford, *Place 4*

Bob Gentle, *Place 5*

City of Spanish Fort

626-4884

Joseph C. Bonner, *Mayor*

Council

Wanda Finch, *District 1*

Mike McMillan, *District 2*

Joe Thomas, *District 3*

Tom Sawyer, *District 4*

Mary Brabner, *District 5*

Baldwin County

Commissioners

937-9561

Frank Burt, Jr., *District 1*

David E. Bishop, *District 2*

Wayne A. Gruenloh, *District 3*

Charles F. "Skip" Gruber,

District 4

Board of Education

937-0306

Dr. Faron Hollinger,

Superintendent

State Government

Legislators

937-0240 (Local Office)

Sen. Bradley Byrne, *District 32*

Sen. Pat Lindsey, *District 22*

Rep. Joe Faust, *District 94*

Rep. Randy Davis, *District 96*

Lt. Governor

Jim Folsom, Jr.

334-242-7900

Governor

Bob Riley

334-242-7100

Congressional Delegation

House of Representatives

Rep. Jo Bonner, *1st District*

943-2073

Foley Office

US Senate

Sen. Jeff Sessions

414-3083

Mobile Office

Sen. Richard Shelby

694-4164

Mobile Office



Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce Legislative Agenda 2007

The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce has officially adopted these local, state and federal issues as top priorities for 2007. The membership has been very vocal and supportive of these issues and their feedback is instrumental in developing our legislative agenda. It is impressive that we have so many members interested in our political climate. The Board of Directors reviewed, revised, and endorsed every issue on this agenda as well.

A majority of these issues have a direct impact on our quality of life. Having a legislative agenda approved by the Board does not mean that the Chamber will take action on every topic. It does mean we have a written opinion about these issues and, if needed, we have approval to act on these issues. This agenda is sent to our members, our County Commissioners, our State Legislators, as well as our Federal Legislators.

Our Chamber is constantly working on relationship building. We hosted a reception for all our Eastern Shore elected officials last fall and will do so again in the spring of 2007. This gives them the opportunity to talk with each other on a casual basis and build relationships. We are also partnering with the other Baldwin County Chambers of Commerce to host quarterly elected official receptions on behalf of the County Commission for all the elected officials representing the entire county!

As businesses, we must stay focused on working with our elected officials to help control our growth. Transportation, Infrastructure, Workforce, and Environment are the buzz words of the year. The Chamber is working on these issues that affect all of our businesses, large and small.

Best Regards,

Darrelyn Bender
President/CEO

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