

2024 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and Greater Iowa City, Inc. annually recommend and support positions on key policy issues affecting our region and state’s economic growth. These positions and recommendations are made with significant input from our combined 2,000 members, investors, partners, and community stakeholders.

GOAL: Welcome Workers from All Populations

Our members and investors agree – they need more workers. The impact of the worker shortage crosses every industry, every business size, and every skill set category. To meet current and future labor demands, we must ensure skilled, qualified workers choose to live and work in Iowa.

It is time to address immigration policies that create barriers for new people to join, or remain, in Iowa’s workforce. Immigrants comprised 44% of Iowa’s population growth from 2010-2019, according to the most recent U.S. Census. Business leaders recognize a diverse workforce means greater success. It is vital to our population growth that Iowa is welcoming to people of all backgrounds, experiences, and it is a place where everyone can thrive.

We support bipartisan policies that provide a permanent path to citizenship for individuals who came to America as children; to individuals granted asylum upon coming to America; and policies that simplify the work and student visa system. Under the current system, it can take years for hardworking, talented individuals to legally obtain the documentation required to work in the United States, leaving countless jobs unfilled.

Policy Solutions	Federal Policy	State Policy
Support policies that protect the nearly 4,000 recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and create a simple pathway to citizenship *	X	
Expand and simplify the visa capacity of all professions, including seasonal workers to fill important roles with in our agricultural industry and expansion of options for international students to acquire work authorization in the U.S. upon graduation.	X	
Support policies that encourage and expand secondary migration and refugee resettlement to live and work in Iowa.	X	X
Modernize employment verification (e-verify) system to check work documentation, including no penalties for companies who act in good faith, and discourage a siloed state-by-state approach.	X	X
Support policies that are inclusive to all populations to live and work in Iowa, allowing businesses to attract a diverse workforce and cities to compete to host national events.		X
Support policies that encourage new workers to move to and remain in Iowa, paying taxes in Iowa, as well as policies that do not penalize Iowa businesses from employing workers that live outside of Iowa.		X

*Featured Priority

To learn more, see our comprehensive 2024 state and federal public policy agenda for the ICR region at www.cedarrapids.org or www.greateriowacity.com.

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and Greater Iowa City strongly encourage elected officials, candidates, and citizens to be civil in discussions and debates on policy issues and political opinions. We are committed to leading by example.

