

The Minnesota High Tech Association 2009 Legislative Agenda

The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) supports public policies that strengthen Minnesota's technology-based economy and position the state as a global leader through the development and use of advanced technologies. MHTA develops, advocates and supports policies that promote the long-term growth and global competitiveness of Minnesota's technology-based economy.

MHTA believes that strong, consistent, focused leadership from the private sector, working in collaboration with educational and government partners, is the critical link in driving our state's economic development and recognition as a global technology leader. MHTA will advocate for policies that recognize the changing face of Minnesota's workforce and the global realities of commerce in the 21st century. The future workforce will be more diverse, and will need to be more educated and more technologically skilled. State and federal policies and practices must support global commerce.

The MHTA legislative agenda utilizes the cornerstones outlined in the MHTA Public Policy Principles that, when combined, create an environment that supports a vibrant, growing technology-based economy. The 2009 Legislative Agenda is organized into three categories that require collaboration in order to advance Minnesota's technology-based economy: Education, Business and Government.

Category: Education

- We support providing the funding necessary to create world class K-12 education and higher education facilities and programs that inspire learning, prepare our workforce for the 21st century and result in a skilled and diverse workforce that Minnesota employers can rely on.

Subcategory: K-12 Policy

- We support policies that provide Minnesota Science, Technology, Engineering and Math teachers with the knowledge, skills, tools and training to help prepare students for rigorous coursework in STEM disciplines.
- We support measuring student progress in math and science achievement with students internationally in an effort to bring curricular focus and gain insight into successful education strategies.
- We support redesigning Minnesota's K-12 system to better meet the STEM needs of the 21st Century, including:
 - Maintaining rigorous standards and testing in the STEM disciplines in order to accurately measure what students know and are able to accomplish

- Creating alternative teaching pathways that are both effective and efficient
- Promoting pay for performance compensation initiatives such as Q Comp
- Encouraging virtual education as a means to access world-class education programs.

Subcategory: Higher Education

- We support policies that facilitate additional higher education research that leads to the commercialization of those investments and ideas.

Category: Business

- We support creating a tax policy that encourages investment in new technology and related ideas by providing companies with incentives to perform research and development activities leading to new start-up companies and the creation of new technologies. We specifically support:
 - Increasing the R&D tax credit to 10%
 - Replacing the state sales tax on capital equipment with an upfront exemption.
 - Creating a 25% tax credit for angel investors that invest in regional angel funds that focus on emerging businesses and new technologies.
- We support protecting personal privacy in a way that does not harm the competitiveness of Minnesota employers
- We support initiatives that will promote and incentivize the development of green technology and green jobs in the state
- We support the expanding the availability and use of broadband technology in order to:
 - Grow new markets for Minnesota-based businesses
 - Enhance educational access
 - Strengthen the quality and reduce the cost of health care
 - Increase the potential to attract and retain high paying jobs
 - Improve quality of life
 - Provide Minnesota citizens and businesses with the capabilities necessary to compete in today's dynamic global marketplace.

Category: Government

- We support improving the delivery of government services to the citizens of Minnesota and reducing the overall cost of government by increasing the use of technology to provide government services.
- We support the State of Minnesota in looking at innovative ways to deliver government services in a challenging fiscal environment.