



# 2019 Policy Paper

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An overview of the NSBA and its key policies  
and position statements

est. October 2019

This document contains the basic policies and positions of the NSBA. It is not all-encompassing, but rather, provides a snapshot of what the NSBA is about and what it stands for. It is a living document in that it is reviewed by the NSBA Board of Directors on an annual basis. Approved by the Board of Directors October 18, 2019

# **NSBA Policy Paper**

**October 2019**

## **NSBA Vision Statement:**

Inspiring Your Courage  
Strengthening Your Business  
We Are Your Voice

### **Preface**

- The NSBA advocates and lobbies on behalf of its members to further their common interest of creating a more business friendly environment.
- The NSBA activism is rooted in the history of the organization and differentiates it from other business organizations.
- The NSBA is known for a sensible approach to problem-solving, speaking up when the occasion warrants, and getting things done.
- The NSBA's strategic approach means lobbying efforts can be proactive and sustained for years while membership advocacy can be more reactive to present or anticipated conditions.
- The NSBA effectively enhances its credibility and influence by meeting with business leaders and demonstrating its value and gaining their trust.
- Lobbying is often a complex and long-term process. Resulting strong relationships aim to serve as catalysts for change.

### **The NSBA is known for the following:**

- Loyalty to its members. The NSBA is focused on its members' interests as it works with governments, regardless of their political stripe, and other organizations.
- Getting things done. The NSBA has demonstrated its effectiveness of saying the right thing and then doing it.
- Opinion leader. The NSBA's reputation means that our involvement and leadership is regularly sought.
- Voice of Business. The NSBA has become the voice of the owner managed business community.

- Premier Business events. The NSBA is recognized as the market leader in business event programming.
- Strength in community. The NSBA's members become stronger through their participation in and association with the NSBA community.

**The current top five initiatives for the organization include:**

- **Government Procurement:** The NSBA supports "best value" procurement principles. The NSBA continually works to ensure that the Province and the City to employ these principles in a fair and accurate manner as intended in their policy.
- **Indigenous Economic Inclusion:** The NSBA supports the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the economy in line with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #92. The NSBA supports efforts to educate and assist industry to achieve economic reconciliation.
- **Resources:** We support policy, legislation, and industrial activity regarding energy & resources that have a positive economic impact on the province while being environmentally responsible.
- **Infrastructure:** The NSBA supports the development of the Saskatoon Freeway and north river crossing around Saskatoon and the creation of a downtown development/entertainment district. The NSBA will provide continual feedback to the City and Province to ensure that these projects meet the goal of making Saskatoon a more attractive place to live and do business.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Civic and provincial budget reviews to ensure that government spending is in the best interests of businesses and taxpayers, including monitoring for accountability purposes and promoting modernization of government processes. Key to this initiative is our annual pre-budget civic taxation review, which has been well-received by the City and continues to help improve the transparency of the civic budget.

## **Key Policy Positions**

### **Blanket statements:**

The NSBA:

- supports and protects business;
- supports free trade that is fair and on a level playing ground;
- believes businesses' primary function is wealth creation;
- encourages business relationships built on mutual trust, respect, integrity and value;
- is aware of, and supports when appropriate, the greater good of the community at large.

### **Government Relations Policy:**

- We believe government's primary function is to govern; to provide the basic necessities.
- We believe government's role is to regulate businesses as opposed to operating businesses that could otherwise be served by private sector interests.
- We believe government's role is to create economic conditions for business to prosper.
- We encourage governments to have an eye towards expense reduction; we support lean initiatives.
- We believe in small, lean governments, with competitive tax policy.
- We believe competitive tax policy provides a competitive advantage for Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan to grow and prosper.
- We support paying our fair share of taxes, particularly when we perceive there to be a good return on investment.
- To that end, we believe the non-residential property tax ratio should be 1.43:1, as opposed to its current ratio of 1.59:1.
- We support P3 initiatives, when they make good economic sense.
- We support the principles behind Priority Saskatchewan.

### **Economic Development Policy**

- We support government involvement as long as the programs and services assist in economic development; such taxpayer-funded initiatives must be truly advantageous to build the economy and demonstrate a return on the investment.
  - Such involvement can take place in a number of areas, such as:
    - Indigenous economic development
    - Business retention/attraction

- Education/Workforce training
  - Exports
  - Technology transfer
- We support the development of commodity transportation infrastructure, particularly those that have long-term benefits to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Canada such as oil and gas pipelines.
- We believe business development must respect environmental standards; however, government environmental policies must also take into consideration economic implications and market reality.

### **Labour Relations Policy**

- We strongly support a safe workplace for all employees and employers.
- We support Mission Zero initiatives.
- We support the modernization of Saskatchewan's Employment Act.
- We support the indexation of Minimum Wage.
- We support the expansion of immigration into Saskatchewan.
- We encourage the efforts of the Worker's Compensation Board to reform its organizational policy and culture.
- We believe WCB should refund its excess revenue to its rightful owners, the businesses of Saskatchewan, on an annual basis and take steps to mitigate instances of excess revenue now and in the future.
- We believe it's government's responsibility to negotiate and collectively bargain with its employees in a fair and equitable manner, with the taxpaying stakeholders being fairly represented.
- We support defined contribution plans for any government employees' pensions.
- Labour Standards, OHS and Labour Relations Boards all serve distinct needs but they all must improve in recognizing the interests of businesses.
- We encourage the WCB to have contemporary & relevant policies to cover mental health leave that is fair and equitable for employers as well as employees.
- We believe that legislation surrounding the legalization of marijuana should be developed to ensure that workplaces remain safe.

### **Taxation Policy**

- We believe that due to the tax premiums businesses pay, whether through payroll taxes,

(WCB, Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, etc.), income taxes, non-residential property tax premiums, property assessment etc. that businesses' opinions and perspectives should be similarly weighted, and therefore, be given primary consideration.

- The NSBA supports balanced budget initiatives by all levels of government.
- We believe it is the expenditures side of the ledger that should be the first area of review for balancing books.
- We believe competitive taxes create more opportunity, and hence economic stability, for all.
- We can support tax increases provided there are valid reasons for doing so.