

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Alabama State Capitol building. The building is a grand, white, neoclassical structure with a large central dome and a portico with many columns. An American flag is flying on a tall pole in front of the building. The sky is a clear, bright blue with some light, wispy clouds. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

2020

★ FEDERAL ★

LEGISLATIVE

PRIORITIES



birmingham
businessalliance

THE CHAMBER FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY



Greg Curran,
Chairman of the Firm
Maynard Cooper & Gale
and BBA Vice Chairman,
Public Policy

“The Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) promotes policies that will drive inclusive economic growth to promote job growth in the region while supporting a culture of entrepreneurship. Advocating for legislative priorities that place the Birmingham region in a competitive position increases our ability to attract and retain business and a quality workforce. Both the BBA’s State and Federal Agendas consist of policy priorities that are critical to the economic development success of our region. The BBA will advocate for and against policies and legislation that stand to positively or negatively impact the business climate of our region.”



ECONOMIC GROWTH

“The Birmingham Business Alliance’s (BBA) core principles and mission statement are based on developing sound policies that spur economic growth. These policies are essential to ensure an inclusive economic development climate where companies succeed. Our priority of increasing the capacity of existing business and recruiting new business in key industry sectors will lead to quality job growth and economic resilience.”

Joe Hampton, *President of Spire and
BBA Vice Chairman, Economic Development*

TARIFFS IMPACTING THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

The BBA joins leaders across the state of Alabama and other business associations in opposition to any tariffs on imported vehicles and automotive parts. The BBA encourages the Administration, Congress and the U.S. Department of Commerce to work together toward a solution that will not negatively impact the automotive industry.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT (USMCA)

The BBA supports a balanced trade agreement with Canada and Mexico that creates American jobs, boosts economic growth and strengthens local economies. Birmingham companies, particularly those in the automotive industry, manufacturing, machinery, primary metals and chemicals, have been positively impacted through trade.

MEDICAID

The BBA supports Senator Doug Jones’ sponsored S.585 (SAME Act) and HR584, legislation that would direct the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to fund 100 percent of the cost when a state or locality chooses to expand Medicaid for the first three years of expansion. Currently, Alabama has missed the window and assumes 30 percent of costs associated with Medicaid. Under expansion, as it stands now, the state would only be responsible for 10 percent of the costs, with the federal government picking up the balance.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN OPPORTUNITY ZONES

The BBA supports federal efforts to target federal resources in economically distressed communities to stimulate economic development through the Opportunity Zone program. The White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council is working to expand federal resources and support for Opportunity Zone projects. In particular, the University of Alabama at Birmingham is proposing a biotech incubator that would fall under the Opportunity Zone program and would significantly benefit the Birmingham regional economy through increased jobs, new start-up companies, and innovative research and development.

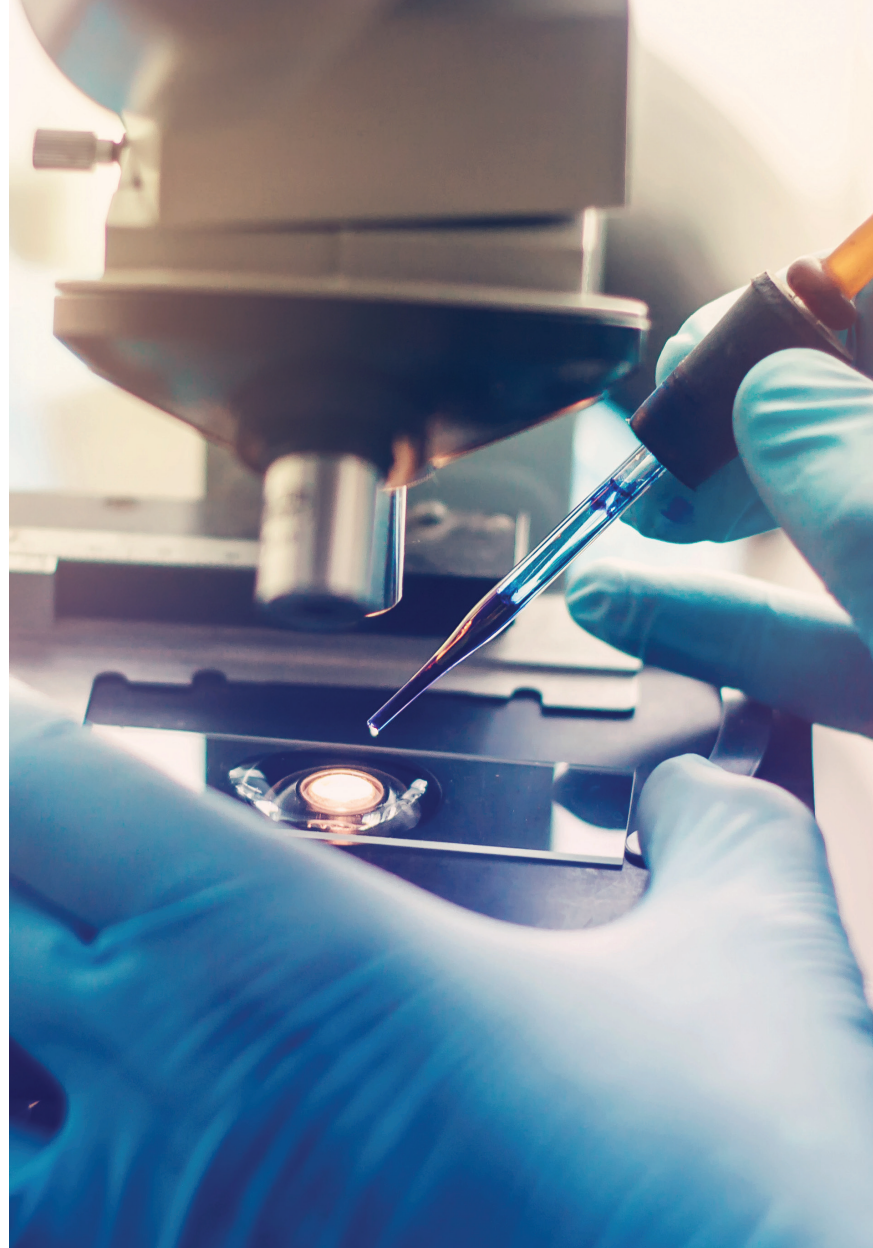
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

“Research and technology thrive in the Birmingham seven-county. To continue Birmingham’s development and growth as a technology hub, policies that encourage inclusive innovation must be implemented to grow entrepreneurship. The BBA works closely with hundreds of technology-based companies and local startups to identify resources and potential funding streams needed for sustainable growth.”

Dr. Ray L. Watts, *President of University of Alabama at Birmingham and BBA Vice Chairman, Research and Innovation*

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

The BBA supports sustained or increased funding levels for the federal agency and research and development budgets. Furthermore, the BBA opposes any stagnated funding that impedes research and development. Any decrease in federal funding would result in significant job loss in the Birmingham region.





“The Birmingham region is home to an international airport, an inland port, three Class I railroads and five interstates. In order to capitalize on these unique assets and our strategic positioning in the Southeast, the BBA and its investors are committed to promoting policies dedicated to increasing revenue and resources for future growth and expansion. Investment in Alabama’s infrastructure, especially in projects like the Northern Beltline, is critical to progress for the Birmingham region.”

**M. James Gorrie, CEO and President of
Brasfield and Gorrie and 2020 Chairman of the BBA**



NORTHERN BELTLINE

The BBA supports the expeditious construction, full funding and timely completion of the Northern Beltline as an essential component of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS). The BBA also supports continued 100 percent federal funding for the ADHS, the appropriation of funds over and above Alabama’s formula apportionment, and inclusion of the ADHS in any infrastructure proposal from Congress or the current administration. The BBA encourages consideration of non-traditional funding solutions in order to accelerate completion of this transformational project through a mix of local, state, federal and public-private partnerships. The BBA opposes any effort to limit the amount of available funding or reduce the national priority status for the completion of the ADHS and this project.

BIRMINGHAM-JEFFERSON COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY

The BBA supports expanding the port and encourages the efforts of the Birmingham-Jefferson County Port Authority to obtain funding on the private, local, state and federal levels in order to improve safety, encourage economic development and bring jobs to Birmingham and surrounding areas. This includes but is not limited to grants and other funding streams.

HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT INVESTMENT

The BBA supports Congress dedicating additional revenues in support of highway and transit investment, such as a federal gas tax increase and other financially responsible investments, reforms and long-term solutions. In 2020, the Federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) will once again be insolvent unless Congress acts to address the revenue deficiency for the HTF in conjunction with any available legislative tax vehicle. This should take place well in advance of the September 30, 2020, expiration of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in order to provide the certainty Alabama and the Birmingham region need to move forward on significant transportation projects.

BROADBAND POLICY INITIATIVE

The BBA supports broadband policies that promote: (1) increased access to affordable broadband for all Alabamians, (2) the efficient deployment of advanced technology platforms, (3) continued investment and innovation to enhance deployment across Alabama, and (4) competition and choice for Alabama’s businesses and residents. The BBA opposes public policy that promotes or leads to burdensome bureaucratic processes, government regulation of the Internet, and government-owned competition, all of which inevitably drives up costs for business and consumers in Alabama. Broadband is an important component of Alabama’s infrastructure and the continued growth and diversification of Alabama’s economy.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

“Inclusive workforce development is a top priority for the BBA. Through innovative initiatives, the BBA works to recruit the best and brightest talent to the Birmingham metro area and retain the region’s greatest asset - its people. The BBA is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with industry, education and workforce training providers to develop an inclusive career readiness system that ensures all students in our region are prepared for post-secondary options, whether pursuing higher education or entering directly into the workforce. Implementation of these policies will help to address the talent shortage and education misalignment facing our region.”

Dr. Sanjay Singh, *Director, Pack Health
and BBA Vice Chairman, Workforce Development*

EXPAND APPRENTICESHIPS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

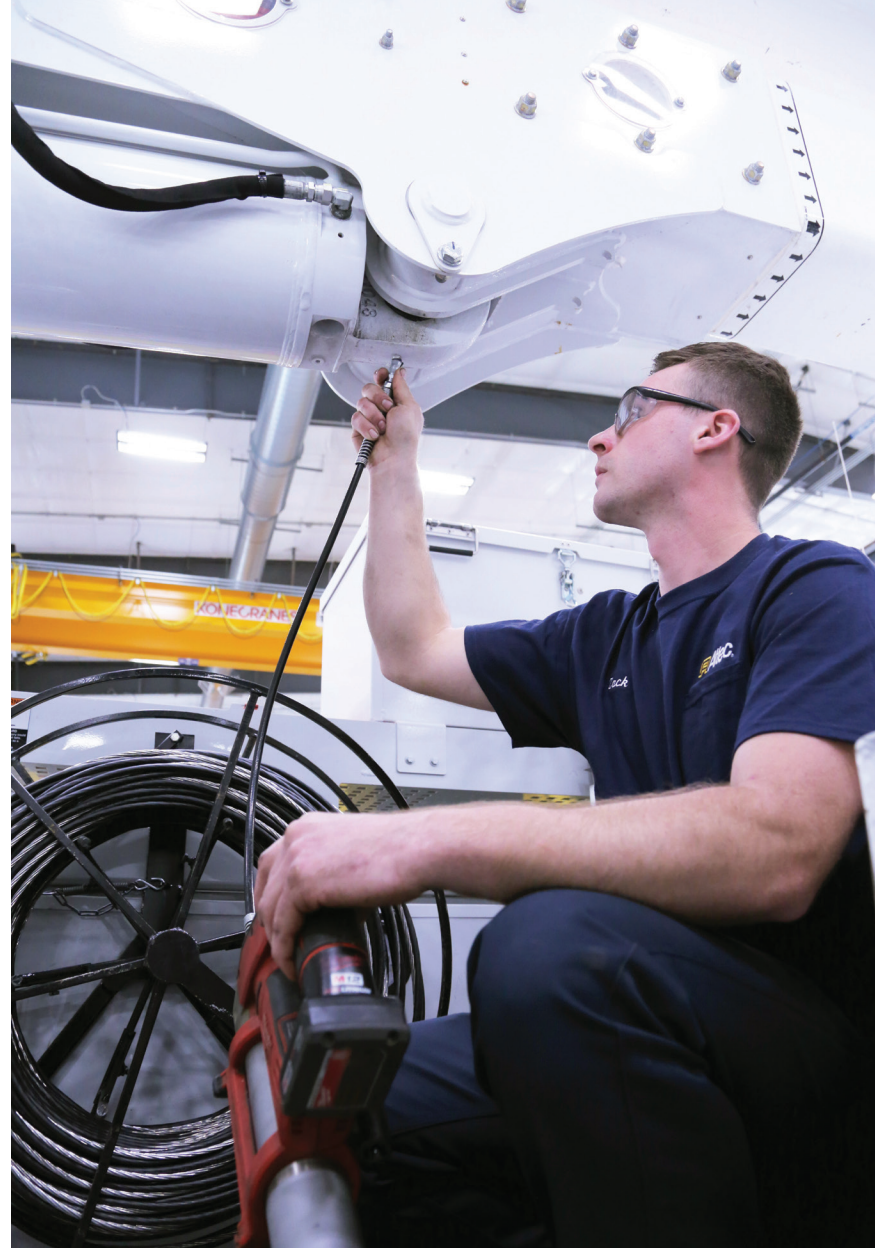
The BBA supports public investment in industry partnerships to help expand apprenticeships and build a skilled workforce to compete in today’s global economy.

MODERNIZE YEAR-ROUND PELL GRANTS

The BBA supports modernizing Pell to be more demand-driven and responsive to employer skill needs while creating advancement opportunities for entry-level employees. The Pell Grant is a valuable investment in a better-educated workforce and a vital component to our nation’s long-term economic strength. In 2017, Congress approved the restoration of year-round Pell. In order to make Pell Grants work for our businesses and employers, Congress should make short-term occupational certificate programs with a track record of success eligible for Pell Grants.

THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2017

The BBA supports the Workforce Development Tax Credit Act of 2017 (H.R. 1190) or similar legislation to incentivize companies to train and hire apprentices. Talent development is vital to provide skilled workers for companies to help fill available jobs in our region.



BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS ALLIANCE PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

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