

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a grand, classical building, likely a state capitol, featuring a prominent dome and numerous columns. The image is rendered in a dark, monochromatic blue color scheme, creating a formal and authoritative atmosphere. The building's architecture is detailed, showing the dome's structure and the classical columns of the facade.

# **POLICY PLATFORM 2022**

# A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



**T**he United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) was founded on the notion that the success of the American economy is directly linked to the success of the Hispanic business community. When Americans work together to create prosperity for our Hispanic entrepreneurs and our workforce, the entire country benefits economically. Our Board of Directors and professional team are proud to represent the dynamic innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of America's Latino/a small business community.

The purpose of our 2022 USHCC Policy Platform is to concisely summarize the positions of the USHCC on the most important public policy issues that impact Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) and the broader Hispanic community. In the United States, there are five million Hispanic-owned businesses that, together, contribute over \$800 billion dollars to the U.S. economy each year.<sup>1</sup> Hispanics are starting businesses at three times the rate of the general population, and Hispanic women start businesses at six times the national rate.<sup>2</sup> Overall, Hispanics power the economy with a \$2.8 trillion gross domestic product (GDP) and comprise almost 19 percent of the American workforce.<sup>3,4</sup>

Despite the economic contributions of the Hispanic community, HBEs face disproportionate barriers that create challenges to starting, running, capitalizing, and scaling a business. If Hispanic-owned businesses were given the opportunity to scale at the same level as non-minority-owned businesses, there would be an additional \$1.47 trillion contributed to the

**CAPITAL**  
Expanding equitable access to capital through traditional and innovative partnerships

**CAPACITY**  
Building capacity through programming, training, and new grant investments

**CONNECTIONS**  
Establishing connections through matchmaking, procurement, and advocacy

American economy, larger than the annual GDP of countries like Australia, Spain, Mexico, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>5</sup>

The USHCC is committed to closing the opportunity gap for the betterment of the American economy by expanding access to capital, providing small business technical assistance, creating procurement matchmaking opportunities, leading innovative programs, empowering our network of more than 260 local chambers, and advocating for more resources for businesses to be able to scale.

Our vision at the USHCC is to be the leading voice to advance Hispanic business potential to drive our American economy. To this end, we have focused our advocacy on behalf of our Hispanic-owned businesses, Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, and Corporate Partner Members guided by our "Three C's":

- **Capital** – Expanding equitable access to capital through traditional and innovative partnerships,
- **Capacity** – Building capacity through programming, training, and new grant investments, and
- **Connections** – Establishing connections through matchmaking, procurement, and advocacy.

We will strengthen our collective voice as America's largest Hispanic business organization to advocate for equity and a seat at the decision-making tables in the U.S. Congress, Administration, and America's largest corporations on behalf of our Latino community. We as a nation must continue to ex-

pand access to capital, education, and procurement opportunities to unleash the potential of the Hispanic community.

The USHCC is an American institution that will continue to be a powerful voice to secure the best interests of Hispanics who built this country, which we love, and will demand a seat at every table of power. America's Hispanic business community and fast-growing consumer spending represents the economic engine that will fuel our future economy, the largest of any nation in the world today.

On behalf of the Hispanic business community, we look forward to working in close partnership with our corporate partners, private sector stakeholders, elected leaders, and government officials to build a stronger minority business ecosystem and further evolve America's economic vibrancy.

Respectfully,

**Ramiro A. Cavazos**  
President and CEO  
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



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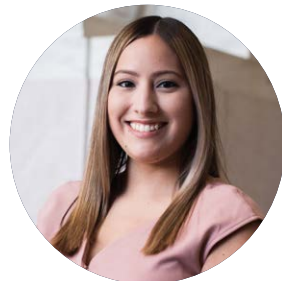
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# AN OVERVIEW OF THE USHCC'S POLICY FOCUS AREAS

## OUR ADVOCACY IS DRIVEN BY THREE MAIN GOALS:

**1. Grow business opportunities for Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs)**

**2. Support the broader U.S. Hispanic community**

**3. Integrate Hispanic businesses into the global economy**

To achieve these goals, the USHCC researches and develops policy positions to support Hispanic businesses in the areas of:

- Access, Management, and Control of Capital
- COVID-19: Economic Relief and Recovery
- Economic Development in Puerto Rico
- Education and Workforce Development
- Energy and Sustainability
- Federal Government Appointments
- Government Procurement
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Immigration
- Infrastructure
- International Trade and Commerce
- Technology and Data
- Privacy and Cybersecurity

First, we advocate at the federal level to improve the conditions for Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) to thrive within the United States. We support the following policies:

- Ensure Equitable Access to Capital
- Renovate Physical Infrastructure in the United States
- Support Economic Development in Puerto Rico
- Recognize the Vital Importance of High-Skilled Immigration to America's Economic Recovery Post COVID-19
- Federal Investments Aimed at the Economic Recovery of Hispanic Businesses Enterprises (HBEs) Impacted by COVID-19
- Help Hispanic Business Owners Leverage Federal Resources
- Improve the Affordability of Healthcare for Small and Minority-Owned Businesses

Second, we advocate for policies that generate prosperity and opportunity for the U.S. Hispanic community, which strongly correlate with improved economic outcomes of Hispanic businesses. We support the following policies:

- Emphasize STEM Education
- Promote Career and Technical Education for Latinos/as
- Investing in the Next Generation of Latino/a Leaders by Ensuring Access to Excellent Education at Every Level
- Build a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce
- Increase Access to Affordable and Quality Healthcare
- Build a Compassionate and Economical Approach to Immigration Reform and Border Security
- Protection and a permanent solution for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Recipients
- Access to Affordable Housing

We advocate for policies that help Hispanic Businesses integrate and contribute to a prosperous and sustainable global economy. We support the following policies:

- Help Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) Access International Markets
- Support for Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) to Leverage International Trade Relations
- Develop Secure Technological Infrastructure
- Innovation and Privacy in the Data Economy
- Clean Energy and Sustainability

## THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE UNITED STATES HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Mission of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) is to build an ecosystem to accelerate Hispanic business growth and prosperity.

The Vision of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) is to be the leading voice to advance Hispanic business potential to drive our American economy.

The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses, that combined, contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. It advocates on behalf of its national network of more than 260 local chambers of commerce and business associations nationwide, and partners with hundreds of major corporations.

**5 MILLION**  
HISPANIC-OWNED  
BUSINESSES

**\$800 BILLION**  
IN ECONOMIC IMPACT  
ANNUALLY

**63.5 MILLION**  
LATINOS/AS LIVE IN  
UNITED STATES



# 2021 USHCC ADVOCACY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**THE USHCC HAS BEEN ACTIVELY ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES THAT SUPPORT OUR MISSION ACROSS THE PRIVATE, PUBLIC, AND NONPROFIT SECTORS. SOME EXAMPLES OF RECENT LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES AND INITIATIVES ARE DETAILED BELOW.**



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**T**he USHCC has been actively advocating for policies that support our mission across the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Some examples of recent legislative victories and initiatives are detailed below.

## **COVID-19: Ensuring Hispanic-owned businesses recover from the global pandemic**

Our work at the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) has never been more important. As the nation undergoes one of the most difficult economic times in recent history, our work to assist the more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses to recover is vital to the growth of the American economy.

With our presence in Washington D.C. and network of local Hispanic chambers of commerce across the country, we are fighting hard to advocate for COVID-19 funding to help Hispanic, small, and minority-owned businesses recover economically. While we continue to advocate for all policy matters that are relevant to our constituents, we are responding to the economic strains brought on by the COVID-19 global pandemic and helping Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) in several ways.

## THE USHCC'S ADVOCACY TO CONGRESS RESULTED IN THE FOLLOWING POLICY OUTCOMES

- ✓ The passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (\$1.2 trillion),
- ✓ The Restaurant Revitalization Fund (\$28.6 billion),
- ✓ The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) (\$14 billion),
- ✓ The State Small Business Credit Initiative (\$10 billion),
- ✓ The Emergency Broadband Benefit (\$3.2 billion),
- ✓ The amendment to the CARES Act under Section 1102 (a) definitions, to clarify that the term 'nonprofit organization' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code (Our Hispanic Chamber network received approximately \$4 million in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding),
- ✓ The Codification of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA),
- ✓ The Extension of the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program, and
- ✓ The re-opening of land ports of entry between the United States, Mexico, and Canada to allow for economic activity and recovery in border communities.

**“ WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO TRACK THIS FUNDING AND MAKE SURE OUR COMMUNITY GETS OUR FAIR SHARE TO ECONOMICALLY RECOVER. ”**





## ADVOCATING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AS PART OF THE USMCA

**T**he combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States, Mexico, and Canada is over \$24 trillion, making the North American economy the largest in the world.<sup>6</sup> The United States, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA) promises to strengthen economic ties in North America and boost the economy of the region. In particular, the focus to increase trade and investment opportunities for small minority-owned enterprises (SMEs) allows these firms to access international markets and supply chains.

The USMCA allows SMEs to export more goods without facing burdensome fees.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Chapter 25 of the agreement establishes a ‘Committee on SME Issues,’ designed to help SMEs take advantage of commercial opportunities resulting from the USMCA. The USHCC recognizes this initiative as a trilateral commitment to support small and mid-sized Hispanic businesses in the United States. Moreover, the USHCC will continue to support regulatory and legislative measures that facilitate international trade with both borders such as the capital increase of the North American Development Bank (NAD Bank).

**WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO TRACK THIS FUNDING AND MAKE SURE OUR COMMUNITY GETS OUR FAIR SHARE TO ECONOMICALLY RECOVER.**

## ADVOCATING FOR LATINO/A REPRESENTATION IN THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



**T**he United States government should reflect the diversity of our country’s Latino population, 63.5 million strong to date. Nevertheless, history has proven that this doesn’t happen on its own. The USHCC is a member of “Proyecto 20%,” a partnership organization that calls for 20%, or approximately 800 out of 4,000 political appointments to identify as Latino/a, thus representing the American population.

The President has already named the largest number of first-term Hispanic cabinet members in U.S. history. However, the Administration is far from fulfilling our petition to be accurately represented in the U.S. Federal Government. Without qualified Hispanics at all levels of government service, our community will continue to be left out and not fully incorporated in U.S. Federal Government priorities. By the end of 2021, out of 397 Senate-Confirmed positions announced, only 42 are Latinos/as (10.6%) and only 17 were confirmed (4%). Latinos/as only make up 9.2% of independent Federal Agencies, Boards, and Commissions. Furthermore, Latinos/as only make up 8.3% of U.S. Ambassadors or Representatives around the world.

The USHCC firmly believes that having a strong Hispanic presence at every level of the U.S. Government will allow us to fully reflect our diversity in Hispanic communities, including gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and ethnicity. Our country will benefit from the wealth of talent and commitment that exists in the thousands of Hispanic public service professionals ready and qualified to serve our country.

Our demographic accounts for approximately 20% of all Americans.<sup>8</sup> However, in our modern history we have never been equitably represented in the Presidential Cabinet, our Court System, or other key political appointments. This Administration has the unique opportunity to change this and create a systemic paradigm shift of inclusion and equality in the highest ranks of our federal government. We look forward to collaborating with the Office of Presidential Personnel to achieve this important goal. Furthermore, the USHCC proudly stands ready to provide any recommendations and resumes of qualified Hispanic professionals who are willing and ready to serve our country.



## RACIAL EQUITY: SUPPORTING EQUITY FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES



**T**he USHCC Board of Directors stands in solidarity with people of all ethnicities, genders, disabilities, and orientations to oppose all forms of discrimination. Today, we call for justice and reform through policy and action to meaningfully address social and racial injustice in America in every community. The USHCC does not tolerate any forms of racism or injustice.

The continued acts of violence occurring in many communities in America should rattle us all to our core as it also should for Asian-Americans harassed and targeted with violence due to misinformation about COVID-19, Jewish-American victims of Anti-Semitic hate crimes, and our brothers in sisters in other communities of color.

We must come together now as communities of color, as Americans, and as new allies, neighbors, friends, business leaders, and decision makers to stop racism and discrimination and promote reforms in education, housing, job creation, and economic opportunity.

**THE USHCC DOES NOT TOLERATE ANY FORMS OF RACISM OR INJUSTICE.**



**T**he USHCC proudly supports and applauds the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that the language of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex discrimination, applies to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Our mission to foster Hispanic economic development and to create sustainable prosperity for the benefit of American society – includes advocacy and a strong commitment towards opportunity, equity, and inclusivity.

Until this decision, it was legal in more than half of all U.S. states to fire workers for being gay, bisexual, or transgender. This vastly consequential decision permanently extends workplace protections to millions of people across our nation.

Equity is the catalyst to protect all Americans from discrimination. We know that many of our own members have experienced discrimination in many forms and are proud that this ruling will protect many Americans. We stand against any act of discrimination whatsoever and support our LGBTQ+ community, which includes many Hispanic-Americans.

Equity creates wealth in all communities and lifts the overall economy. We will rise by lifting others.

## EQUALITY: SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

**DISCRIMINATION IN ANY FORM IS BAD FOR BUSINESS.**



**FOCUS AREA #1:**  
IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR  
HISPANIC BUSINESS ENTERPRISES  
(HBEs)

## USHCC SUPPORTS ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR HISPANIC BUSINESSES, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND INVESTMENT MANAGERS



### OVERVIEW

**A**ccessing capital is one of the greatest challenges faced by business owners of SMEs. Ninety percent of small business owners in the United States believe that the inability to access capital hinders their success.<sup>9</sup> Big banks approve less than a fifth of all loan requests from small business owners, forcing these businesses to engage in riskier practices to fund their business.<sup>10</sup>

Challenges to capital access are exacerbated for minority business owners. According to a study conducted by the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank in 2020, Latino- and Black-owned businesses were less than half as likely as white-owned firms to be fully approved for loan applications. Furthermore, in 2020, Latino- and Black-owned businesses with low credit risk were approved for loans at roughly the same rate as white-owned businesses with medium- and high-credit risk.<sup>11</sup>

It is imperative that every capital provider commit to equitable debt and equity investments for all businesses and entrepreneurs, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. The USHCC seeks to promote both debt and equity capital solutions for HBEs.

**“How equitable access to capital aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

The USHCC is committed to holding all financial institutions accountable to invest fairly and without prejudice to support all minority communities. Furthermore, the USHCC strongly believes that positive reform can help financial institutions engage in more lucrative investments while still following the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirements. With measures such as allowing credit for loans given to entrepreneurs in Opportunity Zones, banks would have diverse options to invest and tremendously benefit Hispanic-owned businesses. Equitable access to capital is a critical part of the USHCC’s mission.

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC advocates for a modification to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to strengthen investments made to minority populations. The CRA has the objective of guaranteeing that banks provide mortgages, small business loans, and other services in areas where they operate. Additionally, providing technical assistance improves the ability for Hispanic-owned businesses to raise capital or seek debt financing. For this reason, the USHCC advocates for the expansion of Small Minority Enterprise (SME) assistance programs as one of the fundamental factors to ensure the maximization of government resources.

Furthermore, the USHCC will continue to monitor and advocate for the expansion of resources available for all small and minority-owned businesses, such as:

- **The State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI)**
- **The Employee Retention Credit (ERC)**
- **The Emergency Capital Investment Program (ECIP)**
- **The Minority Business Development Agency Rural Business Center Program**

These programs present an unprecedented opportunity for minority firms to access government funds, contracting opportunities, and diversified streams of capital. The USHCC will continue to advocate for accountability and equity in the distribution of these funds at local, state, and federal levels.





## USHCC SUPPORTS MORE EQUITABLE ACCESS, MANAGEMENT, AND CONTROL OF CAPITAL FOR HISPANIC AND OTHER MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES

### OVERVIEW

**F**or most Hispanic-owned businesses, accessing capital is as complicated today as it was 50 years ago.<sup>12</sup> While there are various capital providers, including large and small banks, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs), corporations, pension funds, insurance companies, credit unions, venture capital funds, growth capital funds (both debt and equity), angel investors, and other new non-traditional providers, minority-owned businesses and minority owned financial institutions and investment managers still have less access to capital than their non-minority-owned peers, according to the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).<sup>13 14</sup>

**“How increasing access to capital aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Minority-owned firms are less likely to receive loans than non-minority firms and, in fact, are more likely not to apply for loans due to rejection fears, according to findings from the MBDA.<sup>15</sup> If they do get approved for loans, minority-owned firms are more likely to receive lower loan amounts than non-minority firms and pay higher interest rates on business loans.<sup>16</sup> Increasing

access to capital, at reasonable interest rates, is necessary for the launch and expansion of businesses in the Hispanic community.

Debt and equity capital are needed throughout the size and life cycle spectrum of HBEs. The Capital Savannah exercise led by The Aspen Institute is a great way to segment the wide variety of debt and equity capital needs for micro, small, mid, and large sized Hispanic businesses. Diverse mechanisms of capital such as seed, venture, and growth capital, both debt and equity, satisfy a variety of capital needs, and have historically been absent for our businesses.

Hispanic capital providers are uniquely qualified to address the needs of HBEs. Despite their unique ability to serve HBEs and minority-owned businesses growing capital needs, these firms and Hispanic Financial Institutions continue to face disproportionate challenges when raising capital.

The State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), the Emergency Capital Investment Program (ECIP), and the Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program at the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) represent unique opportunities to direct capital to HBEs, including full utilization of Hispanic capital providers, who have historically been overlooked.

### CALL TO ACTION

We encourage all capital providers to boldly support the growth of Hispanic businesses that are part of their supply chains, communities, and business networks. The USHCC stands ready to work with all institutions to ensure that capital is flowing to Hispanic business owners and Hispanic capital providers. In our quest to become architects of our own solutions, we ask that our capital providers are given meaningful opportunities to compete and address the financial needs of our community. These opportunities come from government programs such as the SSBCI and the SBIC program.

Financial regulators, especially through the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the SBA can and should continue to encourage institutional investors to allocate meaningful capital to capable Hispanic capital providers. The U.S. Government can use its convening power to continue to encourage financial institutions, corporations, and institutional investors to support Hispanic capital providers so they can have the resources to support the financing and growth of HBEs.





## USHCC SUPPORTS HELPING HISPANIC BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (HBEs) LEVERAGE FEDERAL RESOURCES TO GROW THEIR COMPANIES

### OVERVIEW

**W**e encourage Hispanic business owners to participate in government and public-private partnerships that facilitate both capital access and effective management of capital. For example, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) have a variety of programs that can be leveraged by minority business owners.

Through the SBA, small businesses can connect with reliable lenders, receive an “SBA credit score” that can help them qualify for loans, and take advantage of streamlined processing for loans under \$350,000.<sup>17</sup> The SBA also has regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), some of which are housed in Hispanic chambers of commerce across the country.

The U.S. Department of Treasury provides access to micro-loans and flexible financing for small businesses. Through the Community Development and Financial Institutions (CDFI’s) Fund, the Treasury provides loans, financial services, and technical assistance to underserved populations.

**“How supporting federal resources for Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) align with the USHCC mission and values.”**

With increased small business loans for HBEs, as well as other economic opportunities, these business owners are getting more tools that they need to scale their businesses. Governmental and other resources that specifically support Hispanics and offer small business loans and grants for Hispanics have contributed to the growth of businesses launched by Hispanic entrepreneurs.



### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC seeks to address the under-utilization of these programs by Hispanic business owners. We encourage federal agencies to develop initiatives to increase Hispanic business participation, such as Spanish-language resources and outreach to our nationwide network of local Hispanic chambers.

Furthermore, the U.S. Government can use its convening power to encourage corporations to elevate and expand their supplier diversity efforts. Historically, supplier diversity programs have mainly been focused on low margin and low barrier to entry industries. We must extend these programs into industries that have historically been excluded such as investment management services, legal services, accounting services, and value add products.

## USHCC SUPPORTS IMPROVING THE AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTHCARE FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

### OVERVIEW

**I**t is essential that Hispanic business owners have access to affordable and quality healthcare. According to Small Business Majority, more than 5.7 million small business employees or self-employed entrepreneurs are enrolled in federal healthcare under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).<sup>18</sup> Two million of the entrepreneurs that gained coverage were insured due to Medicaid Expansion. The ACA also helped small business owners provide insurance to employees through both the Small Business Healthcare Tax Credit (for firms with under 25 employees) and SHOP, the Small Business Health Options Program (for firms with 25-50 employees). It is imperative that these programs are continued and adequately funded. Without insurance, unexpected medical costs can shut down a business.

Furthermore, the USHCC is in favor of extending the premium assistance provided by the American Rescue Plan that has helped make healthcare more affordable for many entrepreneurs. We support increasing premium assistance to those who are otherwise eligible for premium tax credits and expanding subsidies to people making less than 400% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). These reductions will make health coverage more accessible in the long run to small business owners and their employees who are struggling to afford coverage.

Finally, the USHCC supports the passage of healthcare tax equity for the self-employed so that freelancers can deduct their healthcare expenses from their FICA tax obligations, just like other business entities.

**“How affordable healthcare aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

The cost of healthcare is often excessively burdensome for small business owners, and many small employer firms are unable to provide healthcare for employees, forcing them to hire part-time instead of full-time workers. A Morning Consult poll released in December of 2021 by the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council (SBE Council) and the USHCC that examined the top concerns among small business owners concluded that more than nine out of ten said Congress’ top healthcare priority should be policies that address the rising cost and dwindling coverage of health insurance. The cost burden of healthcare is even greater for minority business owners, who are less likely to own scaled businesses. Rising medical costs coupled with poor social determinants of health are often devastating to HBEs.

### CALL TO ACTION

It is essential that Hispanic business owners have access to affordable and quality healthcare. The USHCC emphasizes the need for healthcare solutions that preserve economic growth and innovation, provide small businesses more choice, and flexibility in managing their rising operational costs. Furthermore, it is imperative that current programs are continued and adequately funded. Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the USHCC supports the coverage of vaccinations, at home COVID-19 tests, and expanded funding for COVID-19 scientific research.



# USHCC SUPPORTS INVESTING IN AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE

## OVERVIEW

The USHCC supports infrastructure development and renovation across the nation. Today, the meaning of the word “infrastructure” has expanded far beyond bridges and roads. The United States Government must continue to invest in the modernization of all of the infrastructure in the country. The USHCC supports infrastructure development through both federal initiatives and public-private partnerships.

In 2021, the U.S. Government and Congress signed the largest bipartisan infrastructure deal in American history, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This bipartisan infrastructure law is historic in its size and the largest investments in the following sectors:

- **Transportation**
- **Climate, Energy, and the Environment**
- **Broadband**

### Other Programs:

- **Regional Commission Program**
- **Department of Commerce, Agriculture, and Energy Programs**
- **Department of Health and Human Services and Interior Programs**
- **Department of Transportation Programs**

- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Programs**
- **Solid Waste Management and Recycling Programs**

As stated in Executive Order 14052, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law programs are subject to the “Justice40 Initiative,” which provides that 40% of the benefits of relevant climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, clean water, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities.

The following programs represent some of the most highly impactful sources of funding that will give priority to underserved, disadvantaged, low-income, and overburdened communities in America. The USHCC supports these initiatives with the intent of adding Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) to obtain government procurement contracts and become part of major U.S. supply chains:

- **Clean Drinking Water State Revolving Funds:** The law contains nearly \$44 billion to strengthen the nation’s drinking water and wastewater systems through the EPA’s State Revolving Funds program.
- **Superfund Clean-up Program:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$3.5 billion for the EPA’s Superfund Program to clean up some of the nation’s most contaminated sites.
- **Reconnecting Communities:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law creates a new \$1 billion program at the Department

of Transportation to reconnect communities divided by transportation infrastructure.

• **Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure, Safety, and Modernization Grants:** This new \$1 billion Department of Transportation program provides funding to municipalities or community-owned utilities to repair, rehabilitate, or replace natural gas distribution pipeline systems or to acquire equipment.

• **Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas:** This new Department of Energy program will provide \$1 billion to entities in rural or remote areas (areas with less than 10,000 inhabitants) to increase environmental protection from the impacts of energy use and improve resilience, reliability, safety, and availability of energy.

• **Advanced Energy Manufacturing and Recycling Grants:** This new \$750 million program at the Department of Energy provides grants to small and medium-sized manufacturers to enable them to build or retrofit manufacturing and industrial facilities to produce or recycle advanced energy products in communities where coal mines or coal power plants have closed.

• **Solar Research and Development Cooperative Agreements:** This existing program at the Department of Energy received \$40 million under the law to fund research, development, demonstration, and commercialization activities to improve solar energy technologies.

“How investing in American infrastructure aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”

Across the United States, roads, bridges, transit systems, and electrical grids are in a state of disrepair, negatively impacting business owners. When power and power transit systems run inefficiently, businesses suffer. America needs to lead the way again in infrastructure investment, fostering economic growth in the process. The USHCC firmly believes that building out our most critical needs related to the new bipartisan infrastructure law will allow for the evolution of minority communities.

## CALL TO ACTION

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law presents a unique, once-in-a-generation opportunity, to apply for and receive significant federal funding for the Hispanic community. The USHCC will continue to advocate for equity and accountability in the distribution of these funds at local, state, and federal levels. Furthermore, this funding allows for new access points to government and private sector procurement, public-private partnerships, and the establishment of new enterprises to participate in building the American infrastructure of the 21st Century. The USHCC urges federal agencies across the U.S. Government to develop procurement goals and practices that are equitable and inclusive of the more than five million Hispanic-owned and 32 million small businesses in our country to become government suppliers.

IN THIS TEMPLE  
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE  
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION  
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER





# USHCC SUPPORTS INVESTING IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR PUERTO RICO'S REBUILDING EFFORTS

## OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC urges swift and strong support from the public and private sectors to increase investments and economic development resources in Puerto Rico. As a U.S. territory, which is still recovering from a series of natural disasters as well as a fiscal and debt crisis, the 3.2 million Hispanic Americans in Puerto Rico need help now.

With the recent announcement of Puerto Rico completing its debt restructuring, and the disaster recovery funding now starting to flow, there is a unique window of opportunity to revitalize the island's economy. Now more than ever, the USHCC is committed to leveraging its resources to ensure its fellow small and medium sized businesses on the island can capitalize on this unique moment to increase Puerto Rico's competitiveness and maximizing the island's economic potential.

### **"How supporting Puerto Rico's economic development aligns with the USHCC mission and values."**

The USHCC supports Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) in all 50 states and U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico. Under the current territory status, U.S. Citizens in Puerto Rico are denied equal treatment by the U.S. Government compared to other states. Helping Puerto Rico's economy recover and grow is not just in the interest of the thousands of small businesses on the island working hard to grow the local economy and increase local employment opportunities, it will also generate growth for Hispanic businesses stateside through increased interstate commerce and trade. If Puerto Rico succeeds, America succeeds.



## CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC advocates for the quick and effective distribution of federal recovery funding to repair and enhance Puerto Rico's infrastructure, increase resilience, and help reposition the local economy for sustained growth. The USHCC also advocates for HBEs to have robust participation in public and private contracting opportunities for Puerto Rico's post-disaster reconstruction.

Additionally, the USHCC recognizes that the inequality inherent in Puerto Rico's current territory status is an impediment to sustainable economic growth. Resolving the issue of Puerto Rico's status will provide businesses with the certainty that they need to maximize investments on the island. It will also help policymakers have a clear direction of how best to make significant investments in growth, such as sustainable infrastructure, public education, healthcare and workforce development, which will help the Puerto Rican economy grow in the long-term.

# USHCC SUPPORTS PRIORITIZING IMMIGRATION AS AN ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

## OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC recognizes that immigrants make vital contributions to the American economy. Also, immigrants are twice as likely as the native-born population to start a business.<sup>20</sup> Over 43 percent of Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants or their children.<sup>21</sup> Immigrants added \$2 trillion to the U.S. GDP in 2017 and \$459 billion to state, local, and federal taxes in 2018.<sup>22</sup>

Our government must craft policies that help immigrants enter the workforce and join the fabric of American society.

Immigrants comprise 17.4 percent of the American workforce overall,<sup>23</sup> and they are much more likely than native-born employees to work in industries experiencing a labor shortage such as service, construction, manufacturing, or agriculture.<sup>24</sup> The USHCC firmly believes that the expansion and expedition of processes for H-1B, H-2B, J, and L work visas will immensely help the American economy to stay ahead by having a diverse and culturally rich workforce. Furthermore, we must expand the opportunity to attract foreign capital and let families visit their relatives in the United States through non-immigrant visas. According to the U.S. Travel Association, direct spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averaged \$3.1 billion a day in 2019.<sup>25</sup>

**IMMIGRANTS ADDED \$2 TRILLION TO THE U.S. GDP IN 2017 AND \$459 BILLION TO STATE, LOCAL, AND FEDERAL TAXES IN 2018.<sup>22</sup>**

## CALL TO ACTION

We urge the Administration to support American businesses by facilitating opportunities to leverage the economic power of temporary visas and green card holders. Furthermore, we urge Congress to define a clear bipartisan path to citizenship for individuals who are living in America and have some type of protective status.

There is currently a scarcity of manufacturing labor in the United States. Historically, we have relied on immigrants to fill these positions, leveraging their skillsets and contributions to American supply chains, which enhance economic activity. We urge the Administration and Congress to define a clear bipartisan path and immigration status for these workers who are contributing to our economic vitality.

The USHCC supports immigration policies that facilitate the legal immigration of workers of all skill levels. Limiting immigration to "high-skilled workers" would undermine the demands of our complex workforce and harm key American industries. Instead, we encourage policymakers to facilitate legal immigration to meet the needs of our workforce: streamlining the visa process, improving guest-worker programs, and ensuring that visa caps meet the needs of employers.

### **"How supporting immigration reform aligns with the USHCC mission and values."**

The United States has always benefited from immigrants who come with the motivation and ambition to economically prosper. This is the foundation of what America was built upon, the opportunity to work hard for a better life. The U.S. immigration system is also a founding principle and defining parallel of American democracy. Necessary solutions are needed in an immediate way to address the prevalent need of immigrants living in the shadows of American society and those who continue to arrive seeking a better life for themselves and their families.



# THE USHCC SUPPORTS INVESTMENTS GEARED TOWARD THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF HISPANIC-OWNED BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC

## OVERVIEW

In 2020, Congress acknowledged the critical role that minority chambers of commerce have when it authorized federal funding for the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) to provide additional resources to Minority Business Development Centers (MBDCs) and minority chambers of commerce. This funding supported their critical technical assistance and counseling services provided to minority-owned businesses. The USHCC continues its work to implement technical assistance programs to provide information on federal resources available, improving financial literacy, business training, and educational information on how to safely operate a business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The USHCC recognizes that all small businesses continue to face enormous challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, minority-owned businesses continue to suffer at a disproportionate rate. A survey conducted by the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) found that, throughout the pandemic, Hispanic and Black businesses were more likely to apply for federal loans, but far less likely to receive funding.<sup>26</sup> We believe that additional technical assistance and counseling resources are needed to ensure the survival of our most vulnerable businesses across the country.

Reimagine Main Street, a partner of the USHCC, fielded a national survey of small business owners in 2021 to provide insights into how small businesses are faring and to under-optimism prevails fueled by availability of vaccines, confidence in the overall trajectory of the economy, and backstopped by relief. In spite of this optimism, signs of recovery are not experienced equitably. Looking ahead, addressing demand for relatively small dollar business financing and addressing bias and barriers in access to capital for entrepreneurs



of color are imperative. When asked about an estimate on when their business would return to pre-pandemic revenues, Hispanic business owners expressed that their revenue generation would take longer than any other minority group.<sup>27</sup>

## CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC urges Congress and the Administration to take immediate action to help revitalize small and minority owned businesses and consider the following policy recommendations:

**1. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Forgiveness:** Designed as a forgivable loan, Congress explicitly promised that PPP funds spent properly would not have to be repaid. However, over one million micro-businesses that received emergency funding of \$25,000 or less in 2020 have been denied full forgiveness and must repay all or a portion of their loans. This is especially troubling given that more than 90% of businesses of color are non-employer firms.<sup>28</sup> This means that for over one million of America's smallest, most vulnerable businesses, the PPP lifeline that rescued them during the pandemic now threatens them with debt.

**2. Reauthorization of the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF):** Congress should work in a bipartisan manner to appropriate more funding to the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF) at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). During the first round of the RRF, more than 278,000 applications were submitted, but the SBA was only able to fund approximately 101,000 businesses.<sup>29</sup> This means that only about one third of the applicants were able to leverage this lifeline to save their business. In fact, the restaurant industry has been one of the hardest hit during the pandemic and continues to suffer with labor shortages, supply chain issues, inflation, and reopening safely.

**3. Resource Partner Grants:** Set forth an appropriation to expand Section 1103 (c) of the existing CARES Act to fund grant programs for resource and technical assistance support in the areas of business revitalization, new business technologies, expanded customer service, supplier diversity trainings, supplier diversity matchmaking, financial services, and lending to national organizations with business memberships. These organizations should include minority chambers of commerce, Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs), Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), minority asset managers, and not exclude other non-profit groups that have the ability to provide technical assistance to distressed businesses during and after the pandemic.

**4. Debt and Equity Options:** Congress should work to ensure that all financial institutions, especially Financial Technology (FinTech) firms, asset managers, Hispanic capital providers, and diverse capital funds, are treated fairly in the lending process. Financial facilities should be allocated to Treasury, the SBA, and the Federal Reserve Bank to help our economy recover.

**5. Expanding Financial Ecosystems:** Expand lending for minority and community banks, debt, and equity capital for minority asset managers to address the capital needs and lending abilities of Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs), Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs), community banks, and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) that serve minority and low-income communities. These entities represent some of the most vulnerable businesses as it pertains to cash flow and liquidity, by expanding their lending ability they will be able to save struggling businesses. According to the SBA, the \$30 billion that were earmarked for lenders that hold less than \$1 billion in assets and "non-banks" which include CDFI funds and other micro-lenders have nearly been exhausted. Legislative action is needed to expand the \$30 billion of funding that were allocated so that these financial institutions can continue to serve their customers, including businesses who may not have existing relationships with traditional lenders.

**6. Establish a Minority Equity Fund of \$65 billion to have the ability to fund Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs),** and minority managers to participate in any Economic Relief Programs as implemented by the U.S. Treasury, SBA, or other government agencies.

**7. Require more transparent reporting on SBA's PPP and Disaster Relief Programs:** Require lenders of all types to ask the ethnicity of loan applicants and report to the SBA to track demographic data that includes the total number and dollar amounts of loans or grants approved and disbursed through the PPP, Emergency EIDL Program, and the EIDL Program as well as the amount of remaining funding in each program. Weekly reporting should include a breakdown by industry, ethnicity, and loan/grant size. Furthermore, the SBA should require the top fifteen financial institutions who are managing the lending of these loans to provide a good faith effort and set aspirational goals for a certain percentage of funds to serve small minority-owned businesses and report these results annually.



**FOCUS AREA #2:**  
SUPPORTING THE BROADER  
U.S. HISPANIC COMMUNITY

## USHCC SUPPORTS EMPHASIZING STEM CAREERS AND MORE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC believes that preparing Hispanic students for careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) will help increase participation in a growing workforce where Hispanics are severely underrepresented. Exposure to STEM fields and access to STEM curriculum in early childhood education are prerequisites to increase awareness and instill interest in STEM prior to entering college. According to the Smithsonian Science Education Center, 2.4 million STEM jobs went unfilled in 2018. At the same time, only 2.2 percent of Hispanic college graduates have earned a university degree in a STEM field, and only 67 percent of Hispanic students have access to a full range of STEM courses. To increase Hispanic representation in STEM, we must increase access to higher education and create programs that both encourage and incentivize Hispanic students to pursue STEM education and help them graduate with a degree in the STEM fields.

The USHCC also advocates for increased access to career and technical education for Hispanics seeking to further their careers with a new skillset. Career and technical training provide students with tangible skills that translate directly into employment in industries facing a shortage of skilled workers.

**“How supporting STEM and Career and Technical Education aligns with the USHCC mission and values”**

The USHCC believes that the Hispanic community has an indispensable role to play in the American economy. Invest-

ing in STEM education will yield higher-earning workers. According to the Joint Economic Committee in the U.S. Senate, STEM workers earn an average of \$14,000 more per year than non-STEM workers at nearly every education level. In addition, increasing minority participation in STEM fields is essential in boosting the earnings among workers of color and narrowing wage gaps.<sup>30</sup>

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC supported Senate Bill 737, the “Building Blocks of STEM Act,” that was enacted in December 2019. This bill modified several National Science Foundation programs that provide grants to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations to support STEM education research focused on early childhood development. The USHCC continues to advocate on the expansion of STEM related programs, education, and evaluation tools to further evolve the attainment of STEM education and career paths.

## USHCC SUPPORTS ENSURING ACCESS TO AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION AT EVERY LEVEL

### OVERVIEW

**O**ne in four children born in the United States is Hispanic. To invest in the education of Hispanic youth is to invest in the future of the American economy.<sup>31</sup> The USHCC advocates for education policy that prepares students for a competitive global workforce. Our leaders in government must increase funding for schools in historically underserved areas and improve standards in educational curricula. Also, investments should be made for Hispanic students to access college and career-ready courses in high school. In addition, it is essential that Hispanic students have access to affordable higher education through federally mandated initiatives such as Pell Grants and student loan subsidies. It is imperative that the cost of higher education is reduced to increase accessibility and equity. The USHCC supports minority-serving scholarship programs and encourages the expansion of loan forgiveness programs. Furthermore, the USHCC understands the critical role that Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) play in the development of communities and students. We encourage the Administration to continue making substantial investments in HSIs and further developing the communities in which they operate.

**“How investing in education aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Education is at the heart of preparing a competitive workforce and a prosperous nation. According to the Pew Research Center, individuals that attain a bachelor’s degree will earn \$550,000 more than workers who only have a high school diploma or an associate degree.<sup>32</sup> As the Hispanic community acquires more and better education, there is increased opportunity for rising wages and more productivity.<sup>33</sup> This translates into a stronger economy, bolsters the outcome of Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs), creates more employment, expands wealth-building opportunities, and evolves entrepreneurial development for all Hispanics in America.





# USHCC SUPPORTS BUILDING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

## OVERVIEW

**T**he American Melting Pot offers U.S. companies a distinct economic advantage by bringing together people with unique perspectives and different backgrounds.

The USHCC supports policies that address economic security for the workforce while at the same time ensuring that small minority-owned businesses can stay competitive in the marketplace. Policies that include support for working families through advancements in childcare investments and comprehensive paid family leave policies, will address the economic needs of our workforce while also fostering a more competitive workforce that favors diversity and inclusion of Hispanic employees, especially women.

The first step in building a diverse and inclusive workforce is addressing wage gaps. Women in the workforce are paid, on average, 84 percent of what their male colleagues in similar positions are paid.<sup>34</sup> When looking at women's wages across broad racial and ethnic categories among full-time, year-round workers, Hispanic women experience the largest pay gap, having earned just 57 cents for every \$1 earned by white men in 2020.<sup>35</sup> If we are to build a robust workforce, wage gaps must be eliminated. It is equally important that workplace harassment is eliminated. The USHCC supports policies that foster healthy and productive work environments and does not tolerate any type of discrimination.

Studies by Scientific American demonstrate that diversity is correlated with better corporate performance. Companies

with one or more women on their board deliver higher average returns on equity and better average growth.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the relationship between racial/ethnic diversity and financial performance is linear. When the leadership of an organization is diverse and inclusive, the company is better equipped to ensure diversity and inclusion at all levels. The USHCC, in partnership with the Latino Corporate Directors Association (LCDA) continues to advocate for state and federal legislation that requires corporate America to diversify board leadership and C-Suite executive opportunities for Hispanic professionals.

**“How a diverse workforce aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Building a diverse workforce has economic benefits for businesses and the American economy. Increasing diversity in the workplace is integral to the USHCC's mission. In fact, a McKinsey & Company study found that companies that place emphasis on diversity are 35% more likely to have financial returns above the industry median.<sup>37</sup> Increasing the participation of Hispanic professionals in high level positions will have a direct impact on how consumers in America respond to diversity, equity, and inclusion outcomes for some of America's largest corporations.

**DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE OFTEN LEADS TO STRONGER FINANCIAL RETURNS, GENERATES HIGHER LEVELS OF INNOVATION, AND MAKES FOR A MORE PRODUCTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT.**

# USHCC SUPPORTS INCREASING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND QUALITY HEALTHCARE

## OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC believes that a wide range of affordable healthcare options—both public and private—should be available to Hispanic families. We support policies that reduce rising premiums, lower inflated drug prices, increase market competition between private healthcare providers, and expand funding for federal healthcare programs.

Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Hispanic uninsured rate decreased more than any other demographic. In 2010, 43.2 percent of working-age Hispanic adults were uninsured. By 2016, this number fell to 24.8 percent.<sup>39</sup> The ACA's Medicaid expansion also improved coverage rates for non-citizen Hispanic immigrants.<sup>40</sup> As of 2018, there were four million Hispanic individuals insured under the ACA.<sup>41</sup> The USHCC calls for a bipartisan effort to strengthen and improve the federal healthcare system, ensure affordability, and expand coverage for all Americans that lack the purchasing power to enroll in private plans.

**“How access to affordable and quality healthcare aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Access to healthcare is pivotal to a well-functioning economy. Hispanics and other minorities are less likely to have healthcare coverage than white Americans. Reducing this disparity and ensuring Hispanics are healthy will bolster the American economy and improve the economic outcomes of the Hispanic community.



**ACCORDING TO THE KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION, AS OF 2019, THE NON-ELDERLY HISPANIC UNINSURED RATE WAS 2.5 TIMES HIGHER THAN THE UNINSURED RATE AMONG THE WHITE NON-ELDERLY POPULATION (20% VS. 7.8%).<sup>38</sup>**



## USHCC SUPPORTS ADVANCING THE HEALTH OF THE HISPANIC WORKFORCE



### OVERVIEW

**C**ompared to the non-minority population, Hispanics in the U.S. have limited access to quality care and unique barriers to healthy livelihoods. Hispanic Americans are less likely to have healthcare and more likely to suffer from conditions such as diabetes and obesity.<sup>42</sup>

Such health discrepancies are caused, in part, by inadequate social determinants of health. These are both quantitative and qualitative factors that determine a family's living conditions and, consequently, health. For example, zip code, income, education, occupation, and social norms are all important social determinants of health.<sup>43</sup> The USHCC advocates for a holistic approach to improving health in the Hispanic community. We encourage our leaders in government to increase access to affordable healthcare and craft policies that improve social determinates of health for Hispanic families.

**“How advancing the health of the Hispanic workforce aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Hispanics currently make up almost 19 percent of the overall U.S. labor market. In 2030, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects Hispanics to account for one out of every five workers in the labor force, at 21.2%.<sup>44</sup> With Hispanics making up a large percentage of the U.S. workforce, access to quality healthcare is essential for improving productivity and working toward economic growth in the Hispanic community.

## USHCC SUPPORTS BUILDING A COMPASSIONATE AND ECONOMICAL APPROACH TO BORDER SECURITY USING TECHNOLOGY

### OVERVIEW



**A**ll Americans can agree that our nation's immigration system is in serious need of reform. The USHCC believes that border security is essential while keeping trade circularity intact through the use of modern technology. The United States and Mexico have been longtime trading partners. Building and maintaining a wall on our southern border has always been a primitive and ineffective approach to our nation's security.

The Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT) estimates that a border wall could cost the U.S. a total of \$40 billion<sup>45</sup> and is largely ineffective due to geographical and topographical conditions. Instead of constructing a 30-foot wall along the border, the United States should only develop physical barriers where necessary. Alternatively, policymakers should invest in better technology along our southern border that will modernize ports of entry, expedite the processing of asylum seekers, and help federal agents identify actual threats to our national security.

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC strongly opposes the adoption of policies by the U.S. Department of Justice that facilitate the separation of immigrant families. The actions of immigration enforcement officials under the “zero-tolerance policy” violate both basic human rights and American values. We implore the Administration to adopt a border security strategy that is both compassionate and economical, allowing hard-working immigrant families to pursue and achieve the American dream while protecting against threats to our national security.



## USHCC SUPPORTS CONTINUING DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA) AND TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)

### OVERVIEW

**D**ACA recipients and DACA-eligible individuals—known as DREAMers—are immigrants who were brought to the United States without documentation at a young age. They did not intentionally violate immigration law, nor should they be punished for the actions of their parents who wanted to provide their children with a better life and economic opportunity. Thanks to DACA, established by executive order in 2012, 800,000 DREAMers have been able to live and work in the U.S. legally. It is estimated that an additional one million individuals are eligible for this program.

Deporting DREAMers would negatively impact the U.S. economy and would be costly for American taxpayers. Ninety-seven percent of DREAMers are employed, in school, or in the United States military.<sup>46</sup> Throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic, it is estimated that nearly 203,000 DACA recipients are working in occupations at the forefront of the COVID-19 response in healthcare, education, and food services.<sup>47</sup> Each year, DREAMers pay approximately \$2 billion in state and local taxes.<sup>48</sup> If DREAMers are forced to leave the country, America will face a \$433 billion reduction in economic growth over the next decade.<sup>49</sup>

Like DACA, there are significant economic detriments to rescinding Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipients. TPS is a legal immigration status “granted to individuals from designated countries facing ongoing conflict, disaster, or other exigent circumstance.”<sup>50</sup> There are more than 320,000 people living in the U.S. with TPS status and approximately 275,000 U.S.-born children of TPS recipients. If TPS recipients were forced to leave the American workforce, the U.S. would lose \$164 billion in Gross Domestic

Product (GDP) over the next decade and employers would experience \$967 million in turnover costs.<sup>51</sup>

#### “How DACA and TPS align with the USHCC mission and values.”

Ending the DACA program is not in the best interest of the U.S. economy, as DACA recipients are key investments toward the nation’s future workforce. The Center for American Progress recently estimated the potential wasted economic benefits to be a staggering \$433 billion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the next decade. More importantly, ending DACA would disrupt and forever change the outcomes of close to 800,000 young people who have followed the law and pursued a higher education in the United States.<sup>52</sup>

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC calls for bipartisan legislation that allows DREAMers and TPS recipients to maintain their legal status to live, work, and learn in the United States, as well as the creation of a pathway to citizenship for individuals under these programs.

The elimination of both programs has been delayed by federal courts, but both could be subject to an appeal, creating instability in the lives of DREAMers, TPS recipients, their families, and their employers. In order to permanently secure the legal status of DACA and TPS recipients, their livelihoods must be protected by law.

**THE USHCC FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT IMMIGRANTS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY AND FURTHER EVOLVE OUR ECONOMIC VITALITY.**

## USHCC SUPPORTS PROVIDING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR WORKING AMERICANS

### OVERVIEW

**T**he main component of individual capital for the United States middle class has historically been property ownership. To support both the national economy and lower income workers who contribute to the American economy, we propose major reform to make housing more affordable and accessible. The USHCC is a strong advocate for an increase in housing credits, as we recognize that equitable access to home ownership is a critical pathway towards building wealth and equity which provide access to loans to start or scale businesses in our community. The approval of bipartisan legislation to strengthen the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is essential to ensure a controlled expansion of the United States economy.

The Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2019 (AHCIA) represented a bipartisan effort to modernize the backbone of the American household economy. This bill, if passed, would provide a tremendous economic opportunity to SMBs through the building of over 550,000 affordable homes within ten years and generate \$48.5 billion in new wages and business income. Moreover, this legislation would directly generate \$19.1 billion in additional tax revenue and over 500,000 jobs. The correct implementation of a comprehensive Housing Credit Reform can be extremely beneficial to the American economy. Furthermore, it can protect future investments by guaranteeing the stable development of the labor force and create vast procurement opportunities for HBEs in both the public and private sectors.

#### “How affordable housing aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”

According to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, affordable housing contributes to significant economic impacts, including increases in local purchasing power, job creation, and new tax revenues.

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC supports the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2019 (AHCIA) and other bipartisan legislation that strengthens housing credits for lower income families to achieve home ownership in America. We are also committed to working with financial institutions to facilitate equitable mortgage lending for Hispanic consumers.

**ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS VITAL TO THE AMERICAN ECONOMY.**





**FOCUS AREA #3:**  
INTEGRATING HISPANIC BUSINESS  
ENTERPRISES (HBEs) INTO A  
PROSPERING AND SUSTAINABLE  
GLOBAL ECONOMY

## USHCC SUPPORTS HELPING HISPANIC BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (HBEs) ACCESS INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

### OVERVIEW

**T**he tapping into international markets creates growth opportunities that are not available in the United States alone. Nearly 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States, and two thirds of the world's purchasing power is in foreign countries. However, it is challenging for small businesses to access international markets. The USHCC supports federal programs and provisions within international trade agreements that help small businesses export and access international markets.

The U.S. Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration (SBA) both offer online resources and guidance to small business owners looking to export their products. Additionally, the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EX-IM Bank) is a resource for small businesses. This independent federal agency provides financing solutions to empower exporters of U.S. goods. EX-IM Bank resources include export credit insurance, working capital

guarantees, and guarantees of commercial loans to foreign buyers, all of which are important tools that facilitate access to foreign markets. The USHCC encourages these federal agencies to make a concerted effort to engage HBEs that may be unaware of such resources.

**“How helping HBEs access international markets aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

HBEs have strong advantages when it comes to international business including cultural ties, the ability to speak more than one language, and networks outside of the United States. Yet a report by the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) found that minority-owned firms accounted for a disproportionately smaller share of exporters relative to their numbers, but exports accounted for a larger percentage of their receipts when compared to non-minority export firms. Helping to reduce this disparity will improve economic outcomes, diversify markets, and connect HBEs to the global economy.

**TRADE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO IN 2019 SURPASSED \$615 BILLION. IN 2020, BOTH MEXICO AND CANADA BECAME THE UNITED STATES' LARGEST TRADING PARTNERS.**

## USHCC SUPPORTS STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL TRADE RELATIONS THAT BENEFIT HISPANIC BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (HBEs)

### OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC recognizes that international interconnectedness is an opportunity for the American economy. Now more than ever, the sharing of ideas, culture, and commerce is occurring on a global scale.

The United States must build international trade relationships and help Hispanic-owned businesses—big and small—access international markets.

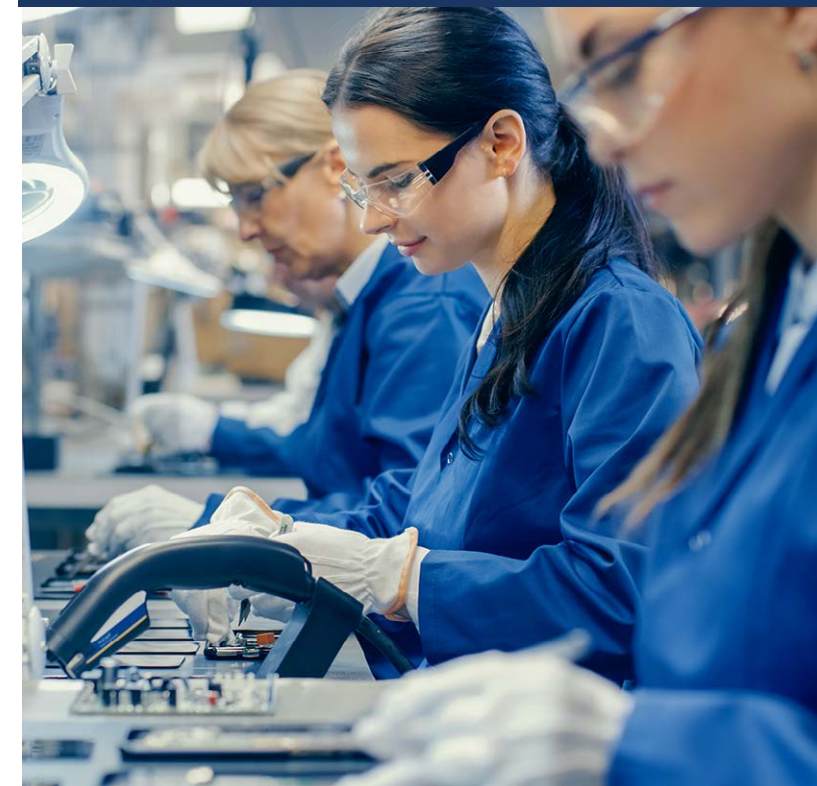
The USHCC previously supported the U.S.'s participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The TPP is a multilateral trade agreement between twelve countries that border the Pacific Ocean, spanning from North and South America to Asia and Australia. By exiting this trade agreement, the United States missed an opportunity to build relationships with nations that, combined, represent 40 percent of the world's economic output.<sup>53</sup>

**“How stronger trade relations aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

Trade deals increase the amount of export opportunities for HBEs and make it easier to access global markets. Furthermore, imports economically benefit small businesses in allowing them to grow and scale while reducing costs. The USHCC supports bipartisan policies that establish trade agreements that support small businesses and broader economic growth by reducing tariffs and barriers to accessing new markets. Such agreements can help HBEs access new markets and integrate into the global economy.

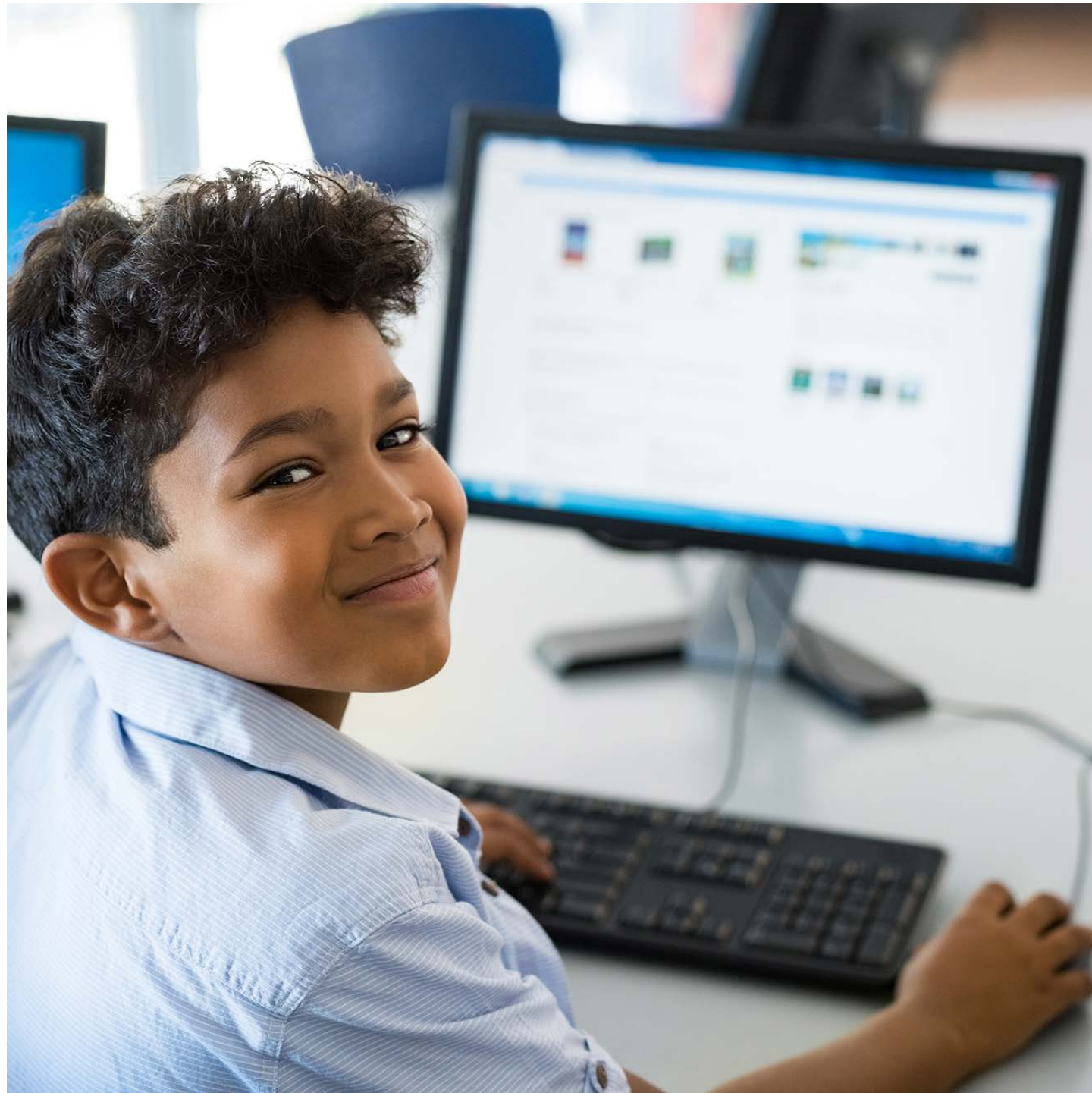
### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC supports trade deals that allow HBEs to access new markets, increase exports, and benefit from programs like the National Export Initiative and multilateral trade deals. Furthermore, we support federal agencies who have the ability to provide technical assistance grant programs to our network of Hispanic chambers across the country to educate the Hispanic business community on the benefits of exporting their goods and services.





## USHCC SUPPORTS DEVELOPING ACCESS TO SECURE TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE



### OVERVIEW

American businesses are growing increasingly dependent on technological infrastructure. In a recent survey, 80 percent of consumers said that they are more likely to shop at a business if the business has an easy-to-use website. An additional 60 percent said that they preferred to be contacted by a business through a digital channel, such as e-mail or website banners. Finally, 78 percent of consumers ranked a digital payment method, such as a credit card or phone, as their preferred payment option.<sup>54</sup>

#### “How strengthening technological infrastructure aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”

The digital transformation of Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBEs) is necessary to ensure their success, but there is a discrepancy in both quality and accessibility of tech infrastructure between urban and rural areas and within historically unserved communities, creating a “Digital Divide.”<sup>55</sup> A strong, bipartisan, and comprehensive legislative solution is needed to preserve the internet as an open platform for ideas, investments, and innovation. This can and should be done in a way that protects the rights of consumers, supports consumer choice, prioritizes public safety, and incentivizes broadband infrastructure build out to deliver affordable service options and create greater economic opportunity for historically disconnected communities. As one of the youngest user groups in the country, Latinos/as have benefited from the transformative power of the internet leading to some of the highest rates of digital entrepreneurship, and the consumption of digital media at rates that far outpace other demographic groups.

New technology can create opportunities for business owners, but it can also make the businesses and customers vulnerable to cyberattacks such as viruses, piracy, and information breaches. It is critical that businesses are aware of the steps they can take to prevent cyber-vulnerability, including firewall security protection, and password authentication. The USHCC encourages the Federal Communications

Commission (FCC) and leaders in the technology industry to take appropriate action to inhibit hackers and prevent future cyberattacks.

Technology also presents an opportunity to bring efficiency not only to businesses, but to government entities as well. Blockchain is a powerful new technology that allows multiple parties to engage in secure, trusted transactions with one another without the need for an intermediary. The implementation of this technology can improve efficiency, transparency, and bring accountability to government agencies that process thousands of lending requests. The digitalization of lending contracts would also dramatically decrease fraudulent practices in an automated way.

### CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC supports federal initiatives and public-private partnerships aimed at eliminating the “Digital Divide.” The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) has the potential to bridge the digital divide and provide the necessary access to high-speed internet to students, entrepreneurs, and other essential workers in unserved communities. Small Minority Businesses (SMBs) need to be able to compete fairly with big corporations to access global markets. The USHCC supports an open internet as it is a driver of commerce offering entrepreneurs a platform for reaching customers and suppliers worldwide. We strongly believe that infrastructure investment and innovation are cornerstones in supporting the growth of HBEs in all sectors.

The USHCC advocates for technology policy rulings that will also consider important policy areas including intellectual property, balance hate speech, address the spread of misinformation, and the suppression of civic participation of targeted populations. Restoring accountability on the internet is an effective mean to ensure that our HBEs and their agents seize to be subjected to abusive and harassing activity online. At the federal level, we must incentivize accountability and policing of illegal and offensive activity, including hate speech and misinformation, across all digital platforms and ensure there are equitable mechanisms in place to protect the user-experience of the Hispanic business community.



# USHCC SUPPORTS INNOVATION AND PRIVACY IN THE DATA ECONOMY

## OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC represents Hispanic-owned businesses in every sector of the economy, and we understand the importance of technology and telecommunications resources and how they are a critical component to their success to create growth and opportunity for the U.S. economy. The internet offers consumers more choices and better prices, provides businesses of all sizes more opportunities to sell their products and services across state and national boundaries, and encourages entrepreneurs to create new products and platforms.

The USHCC advocates for federal privacy rules to protect businesses and consumers. Our 2022 innovation agenda promotes market-based solutions, policies that foster investment in technology research and the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure to historically-unserved markets, and a balanced regulatory treatment of online platforms. We are committed to

advancing policies that safeguard U.S. information and technology assets and protect consumer data while promoting innovation and growth in the digital economy.

The USHCC supports federal data privacy legislation that fosters innovation and regulatory certainty while respecting individual privacy and choice. Providing clarity to consumers and businesses about how to appropriately leverage data would support innovation, consumer confidence, and Hispanic Business Enterprises (HBE) who rely on the exchange of information to improve the availability and quality of their goods and services. Congress must enact bipartisan legislation that creates an environment where businesses know the rules of the road, and consumers feel comfortable sharing their data. Moreover, rules governing privacy and data collection should be consistent regardless of who collects this data and how it is collected.

Specifically, social media, technology-based advertising, and digital tools are now the primary way that Hispanic businesses reach their customer base and run their day-to-day operations.

Technology and social media regulation must not cripple our small minority-owned businesses, their entrepreneurs, innovators, job-creators, and customers. We have all come to depend on various technologies and social media platforms in order to ensure our economic survival.

U.S. Hispanic consumers are embracing technology faster than any other consumer segment and are online using search engines, devices, and applications, connecting to peers and family through social media, and participating in the digital economy at rates that continue to outpace other consumer groups. The internet is a natural first resource for U.S. Hispanics, as 60% were born or grew up during the internet age, versus only 40% of whites. Furthermore, U.S. Hispanics over-index on the U.S. total population by 9% for smartphone ownership, giving us a competitive edge with the use of these technologies.

With a combined over \$2 trillion in purchasing power, Hispanic businesses and consumers are a critical engine for the internet economy and represent an important stakeholder group in the policy discussion to protect consumer privacy.

## CALL TO ACTION

We urge Congress to carefully consider the unintended consequences that any technology related legislation could have on the communities that depend on these channels to keep their businesses open and afloat. We believe that these consequences could disproportionately harm small and minority-owned businesses as we have adopted these technologies at a far greater rate than our non-Hispanic counterparts.<sup>57</sup>

# USHCC SUPPORTS DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT

## OVERVIEW

**A**s the U.S. develops a national broadband strategy, much is at stake for Hispanic consumers, our country's economy, as well as future innovation and its many benefits. Various challenges with dynamic issues from infrastructure deployment, broadband adoption, to digital literacy, all play into the growing "Digital Divide" and stalls the pace of innovation and economic opportunity for the Hispanic community nationally. Reliable and affordable broadband access, coupled with smart digital readiness tools and information, are key to ensuring that minority businesses and the people they serve are able to fully participate and benefit from our digital economy. For rural and unserved areas in particular, barriers to broadband build out can needlessly slow down deployment efforts and jeopardize getting timely connectivity to communities with the greatest need.<sup>58</sup> After experiencing the digital effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the USHCC believes that it is essential for every American household to have an affordable and stable internet connection.

## CALL TO ACTION

The USHCC supports Congressional action and collaboration with agencies like the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to establish policies that:

- Empower the FCC to improve our current broadband map by appropriating the necessary funding to facilitate more granular reporting that shows the actual contours of a provider's service area.
- Streamline and reduces regulatory barriers to 5G, wireline, wireless, and other communication infrastructure.
- Expand broadband infrastructure to rural, unserved, and historically unserved communities through smart funding, regulation, reasonable pole access, and permitting.
- Assure the availability of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) for all American households, regardless of citizenship.







# USHCC SUPPORTS IMPROVING ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

## OVERVIEW

**T**he USHCC supports policies that improve energy, affordability, and efficiency, easing burdens for American business owners. Efficient energy use, by definition, allows business owners to reduce the amount of energy required to operate, thereby keeping costs low. Federal resources such as the SBA's Energy Efficiency Loan Program can help fund improvements that lead to a reduction in energy usage.

**“How supporting energy infrastructure aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

The USHCC supports federal regulation that allows small and minority business owners to access energy supplies at globally competitive prices. Each year, small businesses in the United States spend more than \$60 billion on energy.<sup>59</sup> Everyday energy costs are burdensome, and the rapidly changing energy market creates instability. Even basic expenses such as vehicle operation and heating/cooling can devastate a small business when prices go up.

# USHCC SUPPORTS POLICIES THAT PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## OVERVIEW

**B**oth the public and private sectors are making sustainability a top priority. The effects of human carbon emissions are evident and as we approach the deadline of action to prevent irreparable damages to the environment, consumers are increasingly buying from businesses committed to environmental sustainability.

As policy makers consider bipartisan legislation to address energy and sustainability issues, the USHCC is advocating to ensure legislative action that supports Hispanic-owned businesses having opportunities to participate in the transition to a cleaner energy future. This should include all aspects such as procurement opportunities, issues of equity and inclusion, and the impact of energy legislation in underserved communities. The transition toward a circular supply chain will disrupt the market and the companies who pioneer this change will be rewarded by consumers. This inevitable trend will lead up to the government holding environmentally irresponsible businesses accountable for the damages done to our planet through their operations.

Recent legislative discussions suggest an unprecedented mobilization to transition the entire United States economy to become carbon neutral. To counter the economic effects of this change, the establishment of mechanisms to assist businesses and workers to transition with stability are fundamental. Legislative measures that will lay out the road to the reduction of carbon emissions are already taking place. Tax breaks for sustainable practices and the switch to clean energies represent a great opportunity to develop a profitable and long-lasting business model.

**“How supporting environmental sustainability aligns with the USHCC mission and values.”**

The USHCC is committed to supporting all Hispanic businesses who anticipate the massive upcoming legislative challenges to all industries as policymakers address this situation. The strategy to confront the disruption on industrial generated carbon emissions must be comprehensive and efficient to avoid excessive, ineffective, and costly regulations.

## ACHIEVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IS PARAMOUNT TO BUSINESS AND SOCIETY.



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## USHCC ADVOCACY COLLABORATING PARTNERS

American Business Immigration Coalition (ABIC)

American Investment Council (AIC)

Broadband Equity for All

Center for Responsible Lending

Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR)

Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF)

Hispanic Technology & Telecommunications Partnership (HTTP)

Latino Business Action Network (LBAN)

Latino Corporate Directors Association (LCDA)

Latino Donor Collaborative (LDC)

Latino Restaurant Association

Latino Voices for Boardroom Equity

Latinos For Education

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

Let Families Visit Coalition

Modern Medicaid Alliance

National Business Inclusion Consortium (NBIC)

National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC)

Page 30 Coalition

Proyecto 20%

Public Private Strategies Institute

Reimagine Mainstreet

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council (SBE Council)

Small Business Majority

Small Business Roundtable (SBR)

UnidosUS

**The USHCC has a proven track record of collaboration with the business community and other key national partners representing the advocacy needs of our small and Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs).**





UNITED STATES HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
**POLICY PLATFORM**  
**2022**

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