



ACCELERATING
INDIANA VISION

2025+

**A RECOVERY AND STRATEGIC VISION INITIATIVE OF
THE INDIANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION**

WE MUST ACT NOW

Indiana faces an unprecedented health, economic and cultural crisis caused by the global coronavirus pandemic. Social and political upheaval over racial inequality and policing are challenging assumptions and priorities for institutions and society. Political division and conflict are heightened. The very fabric of our system seems to be stretching and breaking at the seams, while many Hoosiers have lost their job and/or face a very uncertain employment future.



- Over 200,000 Hoosiers lost their jobs in a matter of days and a large portion are still unemployed. Many of these jobs will not return and those that do most likely will look very different, demand more from workers and require additional skills and education.
- 62% of Indiana employers indicate that they have or will be changing their business models. Nearly 80% of enterprises point to pandemic-related loss of revenue as among their biggest problems.
- Indiana lost over 15% of its economic activity as of March 2020.
- K-12 schools and higher education will be changed forever and not just because of funding challenges. Virtual learning is just one element that will have to be integrated in curriculum and teaching plans. Indiana’s pre-pandemic teacher shortage will become a much greater hurdle.
- Local governments, overwhelmingly dependent on property taxes, really haven’t seen the fiscal cliff yet to come. New visions, priorities and restructuring will be necessary throughout local governments.

Racial discrimination and economic inequity have been a heightened issue of concern in recent months. Beyond high-profile policing cases and protests focusing attention on racial justice, minority workers and families have suffered greatly from the pandemic in terms of higher infection rates, lack of access to health care and major job losses from shutdowns and layoffs. This effort to plan for Indiana’s economic future must include a substantial set of research and strategies to address issues of racial inequity, opportunity and inclusion.

Indiana and its economy will struggle for some time. It will be a very different economy and mix of industries, challenges and opportunities. The Indiana that emerges – our economy, workforce, strength of our communities and vision – will be the result of our efforts to shape that future and mitigate Indiana’s risks.

It’s simply not good enough to work towards “recovery,” trying to get back to where we were. Now is the time for Indiana, which has previously proven itself a national economic and reform leader, to energize and focus on a new vision for our state that sets a standard. That’s why the Indiana Chamber and Indiana Chamber Foundation are launching a \$2 million *Accelerating Indiana* funding initiative to help the state do just that.

INDIANA LEADS AND CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO

Indiana has come far in the last two decades, transitioning a struggling, traditional, slow-to-act, “rust belt” state to one of the most dynamic business climates in the nation. This progress is evidenced in key rankings that have put Indiana among the top of the region and nation, including:

- **1st in the nation** in *U.S. News & World Report’s* “Best States for Government;”
- **1st in the Midwest and 5th nationally** in *Chief Executive Magazine’s* annual “Best & Worst States” survey;
- **4th in the nation** in economic outlook ranking from the *American Legislative Exchange Council*; and
- **11th in the nation** in *Forbes’* “Best States for Business.”



With visionary leadership and hard work, Indiana has created one of the most competitive business climates in the nation. These rankings didn’t simply happen by accident. It took engagement and leadership by employers, government, philanthropy, research and more to build strategies – followed by a relentless, long-term push to implement, improve and drive a vision for success.

In 2000, Indiana was among the lowest ranking states by many competitive business and quality of life factors. The state lacked a coordinated, long-term strategy that focused on key measures to really move the needle on our state’s direction. Indiana needed a bold vision for the future, a strategic plan for our economic path forward and a serious commitment to put it into action.

The result was the development of *Economic Vision 2010* and then *Indiana Vision 2025* – two sweeping strategic plans. These were backed with professional research, solid policy development, relentless advocacy and engagement of stakeholders in business, government and philanthropy to not just bump the needle forward – but to drive systemic change for Indiana.

The results have been dramatic. Indiana became a national economic success story, an example of how to drive a host of transformative reforms and exhibited a new brand of leadership.

A global pandemic, racial unrest and major economic setbacks are certainly blows to our entire country, but Indiana is well-positioned to emerge faster and in better shape than most other states. We’ve done this before and it’s time to charge forward again. It’s time to extend, expand and retool the *Indiana Vision 2025* efforts.



“*Indiana Vision 2025*, produced in partnership with the Foundation in 2012, has provided a guiding star for Indiana to be the best in class to grow businesses in the nation and world. Now, the landscape is changing, and we need to pivot. We have new challenges, new opportunities and new directions to head – while also advancing our longstanding goals.

“The Chamber, supported by the Foundation, will provide public policy direction that will best position Indiana long after the pandemic so we’re at the front of the line and ready to pursue opportunities and tackle challenges better and faster than any other state.”

– Kevin Brinegar, *Indiana Chamber President and CEO*

A PLAN TO MOVE INDIANA FORWARD

Driven by our inspiring outlook for Indiana, the Indiana Chamber Foundation is embarking on *Accelerating Indiana Vision 2025+*. This funding initiative is aimed at raising \$2 million to propel four major program areas that will ensure Indiana – including our businesses, institutions and citizens – emerges from the pandemic stronger and on a path to reach its greatest potential. It will also help Indiana work toward realizing the long-range vision the Foundation has outlined for our state’s economic success.



Major research studies

Building on the Foundation’s long history of seeking sound public policy research, a series of independent research studies will be commissioned to focus on questions and areas tied to the goals in this plan. Research study areas being considered include K-12 education transformation, state and local governments structures, workforce and talent development, innovation and entrepreneurship, economic development, racial equity and economic opportunity, broadband access and more.

Rapid, targeted research and action plans

Beyond a battery of major research studies, a real need has been identified by Chamber and state government leaders for smaller, faster, problem-solving research and expert consulting support. These initiatives will include program and policy proposal evaluation, economic recovery dashboard, employer workforce surveys, and public opinion research that will ensure those needing help with innovative ideation, research on specific projects and issues, and planning and problem-solving can receive support on an expedited basis. These are targeted research projects designed to build action plans for state policymakers, agencies and coalitions of business leaders, philanthropy and community organizations.

Adaptive and future strategic planning for Indiana: Indiana Vision 2025+

The Chamber’s long-range economic prosperity plan for the state, *Indiana Vision 2025*, will be reviewed and reshaped by a volunteer task force to consider the economic, health, and social challenges and surrounding issues that have arisen in 2020 and the priorities outlined. Retooling these plans will continue to provide a critical vision for the future that drives a host of research, advocacy, outreach and political efforts of the Indiana Chamber and coalitions. Planning and outreach efforts to identify key issues and engage partners on a regional basis will be developed. The task force will also begin work on the new, comprehensive long-range plan to follow *Indiana Vision 2025*.

“Indiana is well-positioned to emerge from the pandemic much stronger relative to competing states and be an economic leader. The business community, led by the Indiana Chamber, has the critical role of helping ensure the state moves forward proactively and decisively.”

– JoAnn Brouillette, managing partner and president, Demeter LP
2021 chair of the Indiana Chamber Board of Directors



Employer and employee programming and services

Indiana businesses need resources to help them achieve success and rebuild our economy. Vaccinating Hoosiers quickly and effectively is essential to the return of our economy, jobs and winning the race with other states for the emerging economy. The Chamber is providing relevant information through a Road to Recovery Center, but needs to increase tools and assistance immediately. This includes development and support of retraining and education programs aimed at our workforce, as well as worker mental health and substance abuse intervention.

The *Accelerating Indiana* initiative will focus on practical steps that will make a real difference in shaping Indiana’s immediate and long-range future.

While Indiana’s economy, our businesses and workers will likely struggle for some time to recover from this economic body-blow, setting our state on the path to success needs to start now and proceed at an accelerated rate. This starts today.

To build and execute the *Accelerating Indiana* Initiative, the Indiana Chamber Foundation is seeking to secure \$2 million over the next two years to complete its work.

Research studies, modeling, problem analyses	\$800,000
<i>Indiana Vision 2025+</i> task force, strategic plan	\$350,000
Employer and employee programming and services	\$350,000
Racial diversity and equity research and programs	\$100,000
Coronavirus vaccination initiatives	\$100,000
Outreach and communications with stakeholders	\$100,000
Management and administration	\$200,000
Total	\$2,000,000

“Businesses alone can’t do what the Indiana Chamber does. The Foundation ensures we have a robust, well-funded, future-focused, visionary arm of the Chamber. ... While Indiana is now one of the top states in the country by many measures, we don’t have the talent and innovation needed to be ready for a post-pandemic world.

There are a lot of issues that fuel quality workforce and access to opportunities. Some would say these are society issues, but they’re not; they’re business issues because we can’t compete globally without solving them. We have phenomenal opportunities available to us. With the right kind of planning, we can jump out ahead.”

– Chris LaMothe, Elevate Ventures CEO and Indiana Chamber board member



IF NOT US, THEN WHO?

Indiana is at a remarkable point of opportunity. Many Hoosiers remain unemployed, our economic activity dropped over 15% as of March 2020, businesses are closing and our communities are struggling with social unrest and economic hardship. Yet the very pain and challenge we are experiencing is another opportunity for vision, leadership and action. For nearly 100 years, the Indiana Chamber has stood as the voice of Indiana business and few moments have had the same sense of urgency as the present.

In collaboration with one of the largest and most successful state chambers of commerce in the country, the Foundation has proven its value and effectiveness as a thought leader by commissioning practical policy research, initiating actions, and seeking solutions that positively impact Indiana’s economic future and enhance the quality of life for all Hoosiers and their enterprises.

The Indiana Chamber is:

- a nearly 100-year-old organization (formed in 1922);
- the second largest state chamber in the United States;
- the largest and most effective business advocacy organization in Indiana; and
- a partner with 25,000 members and investors in all 92 Indiana counties, representing four million Hoosiers.



Through two sweeping strategic plans, the Foundation and Chamber identified the direction Indiana needed to head. Fast forward to today: Many vital initiatives have been successful. The Foundation is well positioned – and perhaps the only organization – to drive the bold ambitions outlined by the *Accelerating Indiana Vision 2025+* statewide recovery initiative.



“The Indiana Chamber, supported by the Foundation, is a most effective engine for moving strategic priorities forward in the state of Indiana. The Chamber is thoughtful, serious and well-informed by the Foundation, and it has deep economic, social and cultural roots in Indiana.”

– Dan Elsener, Marian University President and Indiana Chamber Foundation board member

The Indiana Chamber Foundation stepped up and commissioned research to study the challenges, develop solutions and to build a strategic economic and structural reform plan for Indiana. It worked! We are prepared to prioritize the current goal of promoting a diverse and civil culture that attracts and retains talented individuals. The Foundation is ready to expand this leadership to drive short-term relief and recovery, as well as economic opportunity for all with long-term success for our state and its enterprises.

WILL YOU HELP INDIANA ACCELERATE?



The Indiana Chamber Foundation has a bold vision and plan to ensure Indiana’s residents, our employers, our economy, our public and nonprofit institutions, and our communities emerge from the pandemic stronger, more equitable and better positioned for a bright future. This vision centers on a better-educated, well-equipped current and future workforce, plus informed policymaking based on real issues and information that will make a difference.

You are invited to make a generous commitment to Indiana’s recovery and our future through the Indiana Chamber Foundation. Your investment in the *Accelerating Indiana Vision 2025+* recovery initiative will ensure the Foundation can provide relevant, responsive research and polling, useful recovery tools and information, and proactive outreach statewide. The Foundation will build on a successful history of quietly driving Indiana’s progress in recent decades and increase its capacity to continue to lead and convene well into the future.



“It takes thoughtful people coming up with thoughtful plans to help guide the state of Indiana. The Indiana Chamber Foundation and the Chamber are worried about the next decade, not just the next week. We have an obligation to help.”

– Mike Wells, REI Real Estate Services
President and Indiana Chamber Foundation
board member

Together, with your partnership, the Foundation will help Indiana continue to expand on its progress and activate a network of employers, policymakers and leaders across the state to enhance our collective quality of life and ensure we not only get back on track – but accelerate to a new, more prosperous future.



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