



STRATEGIC VISION PLAN

OK2030: A STRATEGY FOR ADVANCING OKLAHOMA

Despite incredible people and resources, Oklahoma ranks near the middle or bottom on many national measures for education, health and economic indicators. These rankings negatively affect our ability to attract new businesses to the state and provide the quality of life Oklahomans deserve. OK2030 is a business-led initiative of the State Chamber Research Foundation to address these and other core issues facing our state.

In developing the OK2030 plan, we surveyed thousands of business leaders across the state, and hundreds of Oklahomans shared their input at one of six regional forums or submitted their ideas at OK2030.org. In addition, we conducted nearly 150 in-depth interviews with Oklahoma business, community and government leaders statewide to determine what Oklahoma was doing right – and what Oklahoma could do better.

The result is a bold plan centered around four foundational components that provide a framework for moving our state forward:

FOUNDATIONS OF A FORWARD MOVING ECONOMY



**BUSINESS CLIMATE &
COMPETITIVENESS**



**FISCAL STABILITY &
GOVERNANCE**



**WORKFORCE &
TALENT DEVELOPMENT**



QUALITY OF LIFE

Anchored in these four foundations, OK2030 is a strategic vision and action plan to put Oklahoma at the top of national rankings by the year 2030.

For questions regarding these recommendations, contact **Dr. Jennifer Lepard** at jlepard@okstatechamber.com.

WHAT'S HOLDING OKLAHOMA BACK FROM ITS FULL POTENTIAL?

If we want a stronger economy, a more robust workforce and a better quality of life, it's time to make systemic changes.

It's time to modernize, to restructure flawed processes and put Oklahoma on an unstoppable upward trajectory.

This OK2030 strategic vision plan is a comprehensive, actionable blueprint for solving our state's challenges.

We're proud of the OK2030 strategic vision plan, and the business community stands behind its recommendations. But OK2030 isn't our plan. Rather, OK2030 is the product of a year-long effort to gather insights from all across Oklahoma. The result is a comprehensive strategy to begin building the Oklahoma we want by the year 2030.

This strategic vision plan contains bold policy recommendations for advancing Oklahoma's future. The State Chamber will work with state leaders to implement these reforms over the coming months and years to bring about real, sustainable change.

Please join us as we work to enact these much-needed changes to move Oklahoma forward.

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OK2030 Co-Chair
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma

J. LARRY NICHOLS

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Manhattan Construction

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OGE Energy Corp.

H.J. REED

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CHARTING A NEW COURSE

“What’s holding Oklahoma back? What would foster a stronger, more resilient economy? What policies would improve the quality of life for all Oklahomans? How can we create a thriving business climate that grows jobs for our state?”

The OK2030 Framework tackles these essential questions and makes policy recommendations for a comprehensive plan to advance Oklahoma’s future. We believe these reforms are urgently needed, and we’ll be fighting hard to see these policies and improvements implemented.”

DR. JENNIFER LEPARD

Executive Director, State Chamber Research Foundation

jlepard@okstatechamber.com



OK 2030 >>>

A STRATEGY FOR
ADVANCING OUR STATE

OKLAHOMA

BUSINESS CLIMATE & COMPETITIVENESS

Oklahoma is competing for jobs every day. Businesses considering moving to or expanding in Oklahoma are looking at a variety of factors, from taxes and regulations to the cost of labor and our legal climate. While our state has made marked improvements in recent years, Oklahoma's business climate still lacks in many key performance areas. To be truly competitive, we must strive to maintain hard-won gains and seek to further improve in areas that limit growth and investment. If we are to keep, attract and increase the number of good jobs in Oklahoma, we must have policies and strategies in place that encourage business growth and development.



GOALS

- » Promote an attractive and sustainable tax environment
- » Provide a smart, effective regulatory environment
- » Ensure the flexibility of the workforce to meet business needs
- » Give Oklahoma a competitive edge to attract new jobs

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Modernize Oklahoma's tax code

For more than a century, Oklahoma has kept the same basic system of revenue and taxation. However, our economy has drastically changed since Oklahoma's early years of statehood. It's time to comprehensively restructure Oklahoma's tax code to fit today's modern economy, provide a stable source of revenue and make Oklahoma more competitive for business.

Create an independent body to review regulations

Properly designed regulations protect consumers and help enforce a level playing field. As industries evolve, however, regulations tend to only increase, creating an ever-growing regulatory burden that stifles innovation and leaves businesses with fewer resources to grow. Oklahoma businesses need tailored regulations based on business activity, use and risk. Oklahoma must create an independent body to evaluate and make recommendations on regulations identified as redundant, outdated or overly burdensome.

32ND

Oklahoma's business tax climate ranks 32nd in the country

(Tax Foundation, 2018)

Reform occupational licensing

Some jobs have a direct impact on the public's health or safety and are therefore regulated by the state. Over the years, however, some of these licensing requirements have grown beyond their intended purpose and have become barriers to employment. We must reform occupational licensing to remove unnecessary obstacles to licensure and put Oklahomans back to work.

Create a one-stop shop for businesses to meet their workforce development needs

Access to a highly qualified workforce is crucial to employers. In Oklahoma, however, business and education tend to operate in silos, which can prevent the communication and coordination necessary for success. Business leaders need a one-stop shop to connect with workforce development and training programs in the state to ensure we can fill our state's current and future workforce needs.

Employ smart, flexible incentives to attract business

Competition between states is fierce for investments and jobs, and incentives remain a key part of states' economic development strategies. Dozens of states – including Oklahoma – are now evaluating these incentives to ensure the incentives are successful, cost-efficient and achieve the expected outcomes for communities and taxpayers. We need to invest in smart, flexible incentives to give Oklahoma a competitive edge in recruiting businesses to grow jobs and diversify the economy.

"Oklahoma needs a stable regulatory and policy environment if it wants to attract business and gain the trust of the business community."

- Northwest OK2030 Regional Forum Participant



FISCAL STABILITY & GOVERNANCE

OK2030 will bring together Oklahoma's political, business and community leaders to tackle the tough and often-overlooked issues related to fiscal stability and governance. Good fiscal stewardship is crucial for an effective and stable civic infrastructure. A well-functioning governance system is essential to a fair and efficient regulatory environment. Finding solutions to these challenges is imperative to building a stronger, more stable future for our state.



GOALS

- » Ensure stability, transparency and accountability in the state's budgeting process
- » Promote long-term vision and collaboration among elected leaders
- » Empower state leaders to make bold decisions to move our state forward
- » Promote fairness, openness and efficiency in all aspects of government

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a reliable budget stabilization fund for economic downturns

Oklahoma's system for funding our state has received negative attention for being ill-equipped to substantively fill the gap during natural downturns in the economy. We must retool our process to provide a reliable source of funding that can adequately supplement the budget in down years.

Lower the supermajority threshold required in the Legislature to pass revenue raising measures

It can – and should – be difficult to raise taxes. But the extreme “supermajority” threshold needed to raise taxes that is currently in place means that a small minority of legislators can create gridlock and dysfunction. It's time to lower the supermajority threshold required for the Legislature to raise revenues to a level that is more in line with other states.

2/3

Approximately two-thirds of Oklahomans who attended an OK2030 Regional Forum feel the state budget is not equipped to handle cyclical downturns

Require the passage of line-item budgets and give the Governor line-item veto power over those budgets

State agencies fulfill an important role in serving the people and businesses of Oklahoma. Without a formal structure for oversight, however, changes to agency programs are entirely in the hands of unaccountable program administrators. The Legislature should be required to pass a budget that details line-by-line how taxpayer dollars should be used within all large agencies, and the Governor should be given true line-item veto power over those budgets.

Extend term limits for legislators

The challenges facing our state are real and complex. Progress cannot be achieved without Oklahoma's leaders coming together to execute long-term vision and collaboration. The current twelve-year term limit for legislators discourages such long-term planning, however, and instead favors short-term gains and immediate political wins. We need to extend term limits for legislators to better support sound policy decisions and the enduring leadership our state needs.

Grant the Governor direct appointment power over state agency directors

Oklahoma voters hold the Governor accountable for key outcomes such as education, health care and the economy, yet many of these issues are out of the Governor's direct control. Instead, these issues are often controlled by a number of agency directors, each with their own agendas and narrow constituencies. The Governor needs direct appointment power over most state agency directors to align the state's priorities and lead the state in a unified direction.

Align election dates to promote voter participation

Oklahoma's best asset is our people, and we are stronger as a state when voters are engaged and informed. Yet, this can be difficult under an election system with separate election dates for each level of government. We must promote civic engagement and voter participation by aligning the election dates for state, county and school board elections.

Run the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor on the same ticket

Just as a CEO is empowered to run a company, the Governor should be empowered to lead our state. Part of that empowerment should include the partnership and support of the Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor needs to be placed on the same ticket as the Governor to allow the Governor to gain a partner in executing his or her agenda.



Change the process by which judicial vacancies are filled in the state's courts to mirror the federal process

Judicial vacancies in the state's courts are appointed by the Governor from a narrow list of potential candidates. Oklahoma should shift to the federal process whereby any qualified candidate can be nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to bring more choice and accountability to the process.

Grant voters at the county level the authority to adjust their form of county government

While Oklahoma's counties vary greatly in many respects, they are all expected to adhere to a one-size-fits-all system of governance. This rigidity stifles innovation and promotes inefficiency in county government. Local county voters need to be empowered to alter their form of governance to meet the unique needs of their area.

"Until we face the need to seriously examine our Constitution and our fundamental governance structures, we are just playing in the margins."

- Tulsa OK2030 Regional Forum Participant



WORKFORCE & TALENT DEVELOPMENT

There is no better economic development tool than a talented and competitive workforce. A skilled workforce should be paramount in any plan to drive economic growth. Developing an effective workforce requires a dedication to excellence in our pre-K through 12th grade system, colleges, universities and CareerTechs across the state. Assuring access to first-class education and training can be challenging. However, investing in quality systems that produce college- and career-ready graduates will prove invaluable for business.



GOALS

- » Support effective teachers and school leaders
- » Modernize education delivery and funding for the 21st century
- » Emphasize efficiency, accountability and supports in the education system
- » Prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase teacher pay to the regional average, with additional pay for performance or need

On average, Oklahoma pays teachers less than surrounding states. Quality teachers are leaving the state and the vocation for higher paying opportunities, and our students are the ones who suffer. It's time for every Oklahoma teacher to be paid at least the regional average. In addition, exceptional teachers and teachers working in subject or geographic areas that are harder to fill should be given additional pay.

Restructure teacher and school administrator licenses to build in separate paths toward advancement

Oklahoma teachers who want to advance professionally are often forced to seek positions in administration, where they may not have the support they need as school leaders. Teachers should be given the opportunity to seek separate paths toward advancement while remaining in the classroom. Similarly, education professionals who pursue administrative positions need to be given separate opportunities for development, licensure and promotion that better suit the unique skill set required to effectively lead a school or district.

60%

60% of OK2030 Regional Forum participants favor providing additional pay for exceptional teachers, beyond the regional average

Revolutionize education by bringing competency-based learning to all classrooms

Competency-based learning embraces technology to transition away from rigid classroom time in favor of flexibility and individualized learning. Students progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place or pace of learning. This creates efficiencies in the education system by helping target the specific learning needs of each student, allowing multiple pathways toward graduation and supporting new staffing patterns based on teacher skills and interests. Most importantly, competency-based education leads to better student outcomes because the pace of learning is customized to each student. It's time for our state to take the lead and bring competency-based education to all Oklahoma classrooms.

Build a longitudinal database to drive evidence-based decisions across all levels of education

To make better decisions in Oklahoma education, we need better information. Statewide longitudinal data systems are being effectively used in other states to gauge the effectiveness of programs and design targeted improvements in education. Oklahoma needs to bring together data on student outcomes from pre-kindergarten through the workforce if we want to build the best education and workforce system for our students.

Create an independent commission to make data-based recommendations on school consolidation

When schools spend money on unnecessary buildings and administration, they are not spending money on their primary mission: educating Oklahoma's students. If we want to build a first-class education system in Oklahoma, we need to focus our dollars in the classroom with a more streamlined and efficient education system. We should appoint an independent commission to make data-based recommendations on school district or administrative consolidation.

Reform the state's school funding formula

Oklahoma's education system operates off an antiquated patchwork of funding streams that lack any strategic connection to actual need. It's time we take a step back to streamline and reform the state's school funding formula so it is student-centered, incentivizes improved outcomes and is equitable for all students.



Create a statewide turnaround district for habitually underperforming schools

When a school in Oklahoma continually fails to meet expectations, our education system often does not adequately respond or intervene. Failing schools can continue to operate with little or no change, denying students the ability to reach their full potential. Our state must create a turnaround district to temporarily intervene and assist failing schools on their path toward improvement.

Increase college and CareerTech completion through a statewide reverse transfer system

In a knowledge-based economy, post-secondary education from a college, university or CareerTech ensures a job candidate has the requisite skills and knowledge needed to compete in an increasingly global market. Many Oklahoma students enroll in four-year colleges, but drop out before graduating. Oklahoma should proactively and automatically recruit all students exiting a four-year university without a degree to complete their education at a two-year college or CareerTech.

“We cannot attain a growing and prosperous economy without an educated population.”

- Northeast OK2030 Regional Forum Participant

Prioritize concurrent enrollment and AP funding for high school students in STEM courses

In addition to preparing Oklahoma students for the high-tech jobs of the future, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education equips the next generation of leaders to innovate Oklahoma’s future economy. We must refocus our efforts by prioritizing STEM in our existing programs. This begins with fully funding concurrent enrollment for high school students who take a STEM course through a college, university or CareerTech and expanding access to STEM Advance Placement (AP) classes statewide so lack of funding is not a barrier.

Incentivize students to pursue STEM degrees and certificates in Oklahoma’s Promise program

Oklahoma’s Promise program pays for all or part of a student’s tuition at an Oklahoma college, university or CareerTech. If we want to properly prepare Oklahoma students for the STEM jobs of the future, we should provide enhanced scholarships for students in Oklahoma’s Promise who pursue a degree or certificate in the increasingly vital STEM sector.

Streamline the administrative organization and structure of the state’s public higher education system

Oklahoma’s system of higher education is currently comprised of 25 colleges and universities. While the system is coordinated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, it is governed by multiple boards of regents across the state. Oklahoma should utilize administrative partnerships and mergers or consolidate the administrative functions of state institutions to implement cost savings and allow for the more effective distribution of resources.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life factors play an important role in attracting the best talent and high-paying jobs to our state. From the health, education and public safety systems that impact our families to the cultural and recreational activities that add value to our communities, we must plan for a future that makes Oklahoma the best place to live, learn and work.



GOALS

- » Reform health care access, delivery and funding
- » Improve health outcomes for Oklahomans
- » Promote criminal justice reforms that emphasize treatment and prevention
- » Expand access to quality education options for Oklahoma families

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Enter the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

Access to health care is crucial for good health, yet many in our state live in areas without adequate access to physicians. Approximately half of all states – including two of Oklahoma’s bordering states – belong to the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, which allows eligible physicians from other compacting states to also provide care in their state. Oklahoma needs to join the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact to give access to physicians from other states who wish to practice across state lines.

Give nurse practitioners full independent practice authority

Those living in rural communities are less likely to have access to primary care, which results in delayed treatment and more expensive care. Most states have helped address this problem by expanding the practice authority of nurse practitioners. Oklahoma is now one of only a handful of states still requiring nurse practitioners to work under the supervision of a physician. We need to give nurse practitioners full practice authority to improve access to critical primary care services in our rural and underserved communities.

3/4

Approximately three-fourths of OK2030 Regional Forum participants believe we need better access to health care in rural areas

Expand Insure Oklahoma by pursuing all available funds for health care

Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of uninsured individuals. This results in millions of dollars in uncompensated care annually, threatens the stability of the state's health care industry and shifts costs to employers and other private payers. It's time to pursue any and all available health care dollars so Oklahoma can expand private health insurance coverage through the Insure Oklahoma program.

"Many hospitals are folding due to lack of funding. This needs to be remedied."

- OK2030.org Survey Respondent

Transfer regulatory authority for Oklahoma's health insurance exchange to the state

Costly loopholes in the state's health insurance exchange drive up health insurance premiums, keeping private health insurance coverage out of reach for many Oklahomans. State regulators are currently unable to intervene, leaving Oklahomans to deal with a cumbersome one-size-fits-all system. Oklahoma needs to join the other states that have regulatory control of their health insurance exchange and transfer authority from the federal government to the state.

Increase the cigarette tax

On average, Oklahomans live shorter lives than those who live in other states. Smoking remains Oklahoma's leading cause of preventable death, and increasing the price of cigarettes is one of the most effective policies a state can implement to decrease smoking. Oklahoma needs to increase its cigarette tax to reduce smoking and provide revenue for critical health programs and services.

Implement private managed care in the state Medicaid program

At any given time, nearly one-quarter of Oklahoma's population is on Medicaid. While this can be fiscally challenging for the state, it is also an opportunity to positively impact health care outcomes for a wide segment of the population. Both aspects can be improved through Medicaid managed care, which can address quality and costs through contracts with private health plans for the delivery of health benefits. The state should implement private managed care contracts in the Medicaid program with the goal of improved outcomes and fiscal stability.

Reform the criminal justice system to better focus on the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders

Excessive incarceration depletes a state's workforce, breaks up families, reduces the tax base and racks up massive costs. Moreover, it often fails to address root issues – such as mental illness or addiction – that lead to recidivism and negatively impact public safety. Oklahoma needs to turn to evidence-based programs in the criminal justice system that focus on treatment and rehabilitation to save costs and lower the likelihood an offender will commit a crime again.

Create a statewide public charter school authorizer

Oklahoma has the potential to build a top-tier education system, but significant gains will not be realized overnight. Meanwhile, families are locked into failing schools that cannot adequately meet their children's needs today. We need real solutions now, including access to public charter schools. Although already permitted under state law, there are many barriers to opening a charter school in Oklahoma. Several states have created a statewide charter authority, which gives parents additional options for receiving charter school approval. Oklahoma needs to create a statewide public charter school authorizer to reduce the barriers for charter school access in Oklahoma.

Expand open transfer policies for public schools

Open transfer policies give kids the option to attend the public school best suited to their individual needs. Several states have mandatory intra-district and inter-district transfer laws, but Oklahoma law only provides for voluntary inter-district transfers. Oklahoma should expand open transfer policies so Oklahoma students can attend the school they need, not just the school to which they were assigned.

Create Education Savings Accounts for Oklahoma families

In order to have true school choice in Oklahoma, parents need the financial freedom to choose the right learning environment for their child. Education Savings Accounts allow parents to use a portion of their state tax dollars on state-approved education services like textbooks, tutoring, private school tuition or higher education. Education Savings Accounts will help expand access to quality education options for Oklahoma families now.



REGIONAL FORUM INPUT & INSIGHTS

Through six regional forums, we gathered input for the OK2030 plan from every corner of Oklahoma. OK2030 forums were held in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Southeast Oklahoma (Durant), Northeast Oklahoma (Stillwater), Southwest Oklahoma (Lawton) and Northeast Oklahoma (Enid).

Read on for highlights and key findings from each area.

OKLAHOMA CITY METRO REGIONAL FORUM



KEY INSIGHTS

- » 71% favor giving the Governor appointing authority over more statewide officials
- » 60% agree Oklahoma should increase access to health care coverage
- » 59% feel additional pay should be given to exceptional teachers, beyond the regional average



“Oklahoma has a lot of momentum right now in many areas. But the state’s current budget shortfall has underscored some underlying issues that have been there all along. The OK2030 plan is key to resolving those entrenched, foundational issues and positioning Oklahoma for continued growth.”

J. LARRY NICHOLS, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS, DEVON ENERGY CORPORATION



“We cannot continue to rank at the bottom of most national surveys that measure our agility in business, education, innovation, fiscal stability and quality of life. We must stand up for Oklahoma’s growth and progress.”

TED HAYNES, PRESIDENT, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF OKLAHOMA



KEY INSIGHTS

- » 64% prefer to run the Governor and Lieutenant Governor on the same ticket
- » 52% would like to reform Oklahoma’s Medicaid program
- » 73% want to modernize the school funding formula

SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA

REGIONAL FORUM



“We must challenge ourselves to not just build a better Oklahoma today, but the best Oklahoma for the year 2030. What do we want our economy to look like going forward? What do we want our state to look like?”

GREG MASSEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, FIRST UNITED BANK & TRUST CO.



KEY INSIGHTS

- » 63% are in favor of giving parents more options through Educational Savings Accounts
- » 90% want a system to review and eliminate outdated regulations
- » 91% would like to consolidate school districts or school district administration

NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA REGIONAL FORUM



KEY INSIGHTS

- » 94% feel Oklahoma's state budget is not equipped to handle cyclical downturns
- » 78% think additional pay should be given to exceptional teachers, beyond the regional average
- » 63% favor giving the Governor appointing authority over more statewide officials



“People often ask about hindrances in our industry—what holds us back? The hindrances include the things you typically hear about: burdensome regulations and a tax system that can impede growth. More recently though, the biggest obstacles are avoidable, which is particularly frustrating. We have a legislative focus that relies too heavily on social issues while we are left without a balanced budget for another year.”

MARK FUNKE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BANK SNB



SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA

REGIONAL FORUM



KEY INSIGHTS

- » 81% of participants would like to see better access to health care in rural parts of the state
- » 54% want to modernize the school funding formula
- » 84% prefer a system to review and eliminate outdated regulations on business



“If we were to look at Oklahoma’s rankings in the composite, in the business world we say, ‘This is not acceptable performance.’ So we have to ask ourselves, ‘What is the plan to turn our state around, who will be responsible for the improvement in performance, what is the timeframe and what resources are needed to make it happen?’”

BRENT COPELAND, MANUFACTURING DIRECTOR, GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER CO.

NORTHWEST OKLAHOMA REGIONAL FORUM



“I’m naturally a positive person. But looking at some of the statistics for our state right now, I must admit it is disheartening. Still, I believe in Oklahoma’s ability to rally, surmount our current challenges and build a thriving state across key measurements of quality of life, business climate, workforce development and economic strength.”

MARTIE OYLER, UTILITY MANAGER, OKLAHOMA NATURAL GAS



Bonnie Vculek / Enid News & Eagle

KEY INSIGHTS

- » 69% agree Oklahoma should increase access to health care coverage
- » 74% would like to consolidate school districts or school district administration
- » 67% feel Oklahoma’s state budget is not equipped to handle cyclical downturns



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FOUNDING PARTNER LEVEL



ACORN GROWTH COMPANIES



SUPPORTERS

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Farmers Insurance Group of Companies

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National Guard Association of Oklahoma

Newton, O'Connor, Turner & Ketchum

Oklahoma Bankers Association

Oklahoma Municipal League, Inc.

Pioneer Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

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Slawson Exploration Company, Inc.



TRACK OUR STATE'S PROGRESS

OK2030 is an initiative, with the goal of bringing about radical improvements to our state by the year 2030. Over the coming months and years, we'll be posting updates on how our state is progressing on key milestones identified in this plan. Chart our progress on www.OK2030.org.

"Special thanks to all the citizens, business leaders, legislators, chambers of commerce, community leaders, government officials and others who have shared their insights on how to strengthen our state. Your passion for a better Oklahoma is inspiring, and your input has been invaluable."

FRED MORGAN

President & CEO, State Chamber of Oklahoma

OK2030

MOVING OKLAHOMA FORWARD

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