

# “Kick Start Our Economy”

April 1, 2014



How do we kick start Connecticut's economy? That's the question posed in a statewide public awareness campaign launched this week by CBIA.

The campaign, which includes [radio spots in all state markets](#), a series of high profile billboards, and transit and online advertising, supports CT20x17, [a multiyear, broad based movement](#) designed to raise awareness about Connecticut's economic challenges.

CT20x17, which is supported by a diverse alliance of business organizations, small and large companies, community groups, and residents, offers solutions for addressing those challenges and building a strong, vibrant state economy.

## Potential

Connecticut has the potential to be one of the best states in the country to grow a business and create jobs.

Yet national studies like [CNBC's "America's Top States for Business"](#) and [Forbes' "Best States for Business"](#) rank our overall business climate poorly, based on a number of key factors, including high taxes and costs, an aging transportation system, and the state's regulatory climate.

“We must address those weaknesses,” says CBIA president and CEO John Rathgeber. “If we don’t commit to improving our business climate, companies will look to other states to invest, grow, and create jobs, further shortchanging our economic recovery.”

“It’s critical that all of us—elected officials, businesses, employees, and residents—come together and embrace the goal of moving the state into the top 20 across a number of national economic rankings by 2017.”

## Top Priority

The CT20x17 campaign [reflects overwhelming public opinion](#) that the economy and jobs—in a state that now [ranks 44th nationally for job growth](#)—should be the top priority for state lawmakers.

Improving our business climate means nurturing our many strengths, including a highly skilled, productive workforce, an enviable quality of life, and a remarkable legacy of innovation.

At the same time, we must address barriers to growth, including:

- **Talent.** Fully implement education reforms and continue improving public higher education to create a pipeline of skilled talent.
- **Fiscal Policy.** Adopt balanced state budgets that support critical public services and stay within taxpayer means, reduce long-term debt, and create a more competitive tax structure.
- **Transportation.** Identify and accelerate priority investments in roads, bridges, transit systems, and air and sea ports—and protect the Special Transportation Fund.
- **Business Costs.** Reduce the cost of doing business in Connecticut, including lowering energy costs and dropping unnecessary employer mandates.
- **Red Tape.** Continue expanding efficiency practices to all areas of government, follow through on comprehensive regulatory reforms, and make state agencies more user-friendly.

## Brighter Future

Everyone benefits from making Connecticut a top state for business.

A strong, growing economy means more opportunities for good, well-paying jobs.

It means protecting our quality of life.

And it means guaranteeing a better future for generations to come.