

THE POINT

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER



June 2018

www.okcchamber.com

OKC Lands Amazon Fulfillment Center, Adds 1,500 Jobs

Oklahoma's first Amazon.com fulfillment center will be located in Oklahoma City, the company recently announced. The more than 600,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility will create more than 1,500 full-time jobs by the end of 2019.

"We're excited to open our first fulfillment center in Oklahoma and in a city with an outstanding workforce and a commitment to providing great opportunities for employment," said Mark Stewart, Amazon's vice president of North America customer fulfillment. "Amazon is committed to creating a positive economic impact in Oklahoma City and enhancing the customer experience throughout the region."

"A facility bringing more than 1,500 new jobs is a monumental announcement," said Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt. "This is a great day for Oklahoma City and we're thrilled to welcome Amazon's investment in our community."

"I'm also thrilled to see this facility plant its flag in south OKC," Holt continued. "It's good for the whole city and we look forward to the catalyst we know this project will be for its immediate surroundings in south OKC."

"We are excited to welcome Amazon to Oklahoma City", said Roy Williams, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. "We look forward to the opening of the fulfillment center and know that Amazon will be an excellent corporate citizen and a valuable asset to our community. We are pleased that the fulfillment center will provide employment opportunities across a broad spectrum of skillsets, taking advantage of the wide range of capabilities in our work force."

Employees at the fulfillment center will pick, pack and ship small items to customers such as books, household items and toys.

Chamber Sees Success on All 2018 Legislative Priorities



All Chamber priorities were achieved at the Capitol in 2018.

During the 2018 Legislative Session, the Chamber achieved success on all its major legislative priorities including a significant pay raise for teachers and the passage of important criminal justice reform measures. Read on for a recap of the Chamber's success at the Capitol, or read a full list at www.okcchamber.com/2018sessionrecap.

Historic Teacher Pay Raise Achieved

The achievement of a teacher pay increase of at least \$5,000 per year has been a top priority for the Chamber the past two years. Although the Chamber is not in complete agreement with all the revenue measures which will be used to fund it, the increase of \$6,100 (on average) was desperately needed to retain and attract high-quality teachers in Oklahoma. The \$447 million revenue plan represented a historic outcome: it was not only the first tax increase passed by the Legislature since State Question 640 was adopted in 1992, but also it funded the largest teacher pay increase in state history.

Continued on page 2

Top Chamber Priorities Enacted (cont'd from page 1)

The enacted revenue package raised the following taxes: 1) increased Gross Production Tax (GPT) from 2 percent to 5 percent for the first 36 months of production; 2) increased the cigarette tax by \$1/ per pack; 3) increased the gasoline tax by three cents per gallon and the diesel tax by 6 cents per gallon; 4) assessed a \$5 per night hotel/motel occupancy tax (later repealed); 5) modified state tribal gaming compacts to allow Vegas-type gambling in the form of ball and dice games; and, 6) required internet sellers to collect and remit sales tax on Oklahoma sales.

Hotel/Motel Tax Successfully Repealed

The \$447 million revenue package to fund the teacher pay increase originally contained a \$5 per night hotel/motel occupancy tax that would have catapulted Oklahoma City from 71st highest occupancy tax among the 150 largest U.S. cities to the highest in the country (Tulsa would have moved up to No. 3). With Oklahoma City ready to break ground this summer on a state-of-the-art \$200 million convention center and 605-room Omni Convention Center Hotel, the imposition of such a tax would have impacted our ability to recruit conventions. The Chamber/CVB engaged with partners in the tourism and hospitality industries and successfully lobbied for repeal of this \$50 million tax, which was replaced in the revenue package by an online sales tax and the allowance of ball-and-dice games at tribal casinos.

Major Criminal Justice Reform Measures Signed Into Law

The Chamber has been a strong advocate for legislation and funding for sentencing reform and rehabilitation/treatment programs to ease the financial drain on Oklahoma's criminal justice system. The Chamber worked with Gov. Fallin, legislative leadership, the District Attorneys' Council, the State Chamber and others to negotiate and pass legislation that allowed nine key reform measures to be signed into law. There was clear recognition by all parties that Oklahoma cannot continue down an unsustainable path that was projected to increase Oklahoma's prison population 25 percent by 2026 and result in the need to construct three new prisons at a cost of \$1.9 billion to taxpayers. The Chamber applauds all stakeholders involved for the enactment of these vital measures that demonstrate meaningful progress in a short time that will change

previous practices that led to the state becoming a national leader in incarceration.

The Chamber-backed SB 363, which provides special district court judges clear authority to issue pretrial release orders in appropriate cases, was also the first policy bill signed by Gov. Fallin this session.

Economic Development Incentives Protected

As an economic development organization, the Chamber relies on a number of specific economic and community development programs to recruit companies to Oklahoma and promote the growth of our existing companies. All of these programs were protected this year. Most lawmakers now understand their value, and the Pew Evaluation Process, strongly supported by the Chamber, continues to provide a data-driven, empirical analysis that supplies legislators with facts on incentives.

Irresponsible gun legislation defeated

For the second consecutive year, the Chamber led a group of 50 businesses, associations, law enforcement groups and higher education institutions to oppose irresponsible gun measures. This session began with 83 bills to expand gun rights in Oklahoma. Only one bill opposed by the Coalition was passed by the Legislature, SB 1212, which would have allowed for open or concealed carry without a permit, also known as Constitutional Carry. However, at the request of the Chamber and others, Gov. Fallin vetoed this harmful legislation on May 11.

Quality Events Act Extended and Improved

The Chamber successfully achieved passage of legislation - SB 1252 by Sen. Gary Stanislawski (R-Tulsa) and Rep. John Pfeiffer (R-Mulhall) -- to improve and extend the Oklahoma Quality Events Act until 2021. The QEA, which was set to expire this year, is designed to help Oklahoma communities attract and retain high-quality, high-economic impact events by allowing them to capture a portion of the sales tax revenue generated by a high-economic impact event. Primary improvements include eliminating the requirement that communities perform a costly economic impact study prior to the event and the designation of a point person at the Oklahoma Tax Commission to work directly with applicants under the QEA.

Leadership Notes

The truth about SQ 788

Last month, the Chamber became one of many organizations to join the SQ 788 is NOT Medical coalition. While each group has different views on the future of medical marijuana legislation in Oklahoma, there is one thing that unites us. We all agree that SQ 788 is poorly written public policy.

The Chamber decided to join the coalition because we have grave concerns about how this public policy would burden businesses. The language of the ballot item puts a business' ability to operate a drug-free workplace in question. And with the possibility that medical marijuana could be permissible workers' compensation treatment (with required insurer reimbursement), this state question could also prove costly for employers.

On page 8 of this issue of *The POINT!*, you can read a more in-depth explanation of the dangers of this State Question, but I want to make sure you hear this: State Question 788 is NOT a medical marijuana law. Many other states have passed medical marijuana laws with thought and care; this State Question lacks both of those things. SQ 788 is really an attempt to legalize recreational marijuana in Oklahoma, with a lack of respect for businesses and Oklahoma's law enforcement community.

You can learn the truth about SQ 788 by visiting SQ788isNOTmedical.com, or by attending our upcoming Chamber Forum on June 12. Either way, make sure you educate yourself and your employees about the truth behind this so-called "medical" marijuana bill.

Sincerely,



Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber CEO & President



Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO

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Does your company have interns? Make sure they stay in Oklahoma City after graduation by enrolling them in the Greater Grads InternOKC program. In addition to offering professional development curriculum, InternOKC also highlights the benefits of starting a career in Oklahoma City. Interns will hear from Oklahoma City leaders and have the chance to network with their peers and other members of the business community.

A cost of \$125 per intern includes refreshments at three sessions throughout the summer, beginning on Wednesday, June 13. For more information or to register, visit www.GreaterGrads.com/summerintern.

The sessions will take place throughout June and July at the following locations:

- Session 1 - June 13, 2:30 to 5 p.m., Chevy Bricktown Events Center
- Session 2 - June 27, 2:30 to 5 p.m., Cox Convention Center

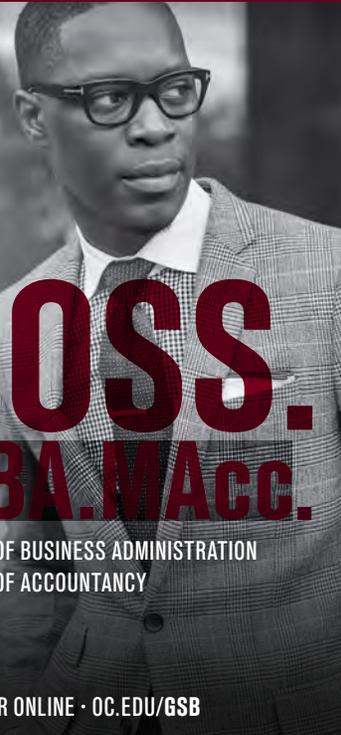
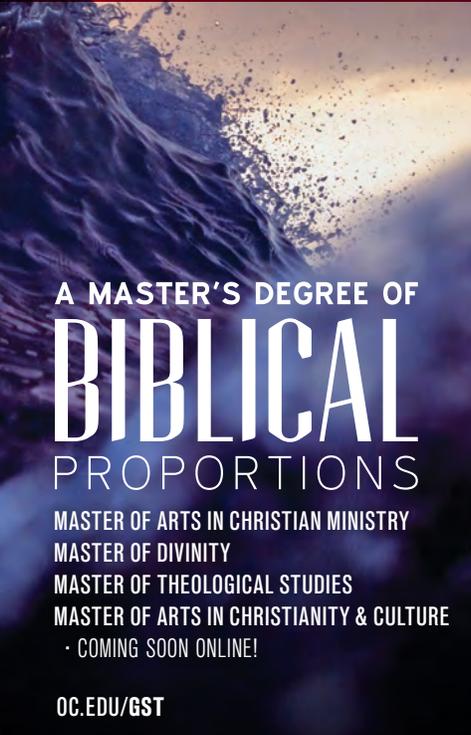
- Session 3 - July 11, 2:30 to 5 p.m., Cox Convention Center

Special thanks to Signature Sponsor SandRidge Energy and Greater Grads Benefactor Sponsors American Fidelity Assurance Company, The Boeing Company, Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, OGE Energy Corp., SandRidge Energy, and UCO College of Business.



For \$125, interns will receive professional development and learn more about the benefits of starting a career in Oklahoma City during three sessions at the Greater Grads InternOKC program.


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UPCOMING EVENTS

Learn More About Your Chamber Membership

Members of the Chamber are investing in the future of Oklahoma City. Come to the next Member Orientation to see how your investment makes an impact on our community. The event will also help you get the most out of your Chamber membership by showing you ways to get involved.

At each event, attendees will hear from Chamber staff about how the Chamber fulfills its mission as the visionary organization for the region. Attend Member Orientation on the following days:

- June 12, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Chamber offices
- July 10, 8:30 to 10 a.m., Chamber offices

There is no cost to attend this event. Please register online at www.okchamber.com/orientation.



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Discuss the Impact of State Question 788 at Upcoming Chamber Forum

Each month, Chamber Forum brings thought leaders together to discuss major initiatives, programs and current issues that impact Oklahoma City's business climate, economy and community. On Tuesday, June 12, Chamber Forum attendees will hear a discussion around the potential negative impact of SQ 788, the so-called medical marijuana bill that will appear on ballots on June 26. The event will also include a recap of the Chamber's legislative efforts at the State Capitol this year. Panelists include:

- Pat McFerron, founding partner of CMA Strategies, Inc.
- Rep. Cyndi Munson, Oklahoma House of Representatives (District 85)
- Sen. Adam Pugh, Oklahoma State Senate (District 41)
- Mark VanLandingham, Chamber vice president of government relations

The event will take place at Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave., from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are available for \$35 for Chamber members and \$55 for nonmembers. Register online at www.okcchamber.com/recap.

June 12

Chamber Forum

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave.
www.okcchamber.com/recap

June 12

Member Orientation

Time: 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Location: Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave.
www.okcchamber.com/orientation

July 10

Member Orientation

Time: 8:30 to 10 a.m.
Location: Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave.
www.okcchamber.com/orientation2

July 17

Sunset Reception

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.
Location: HeyDay Entertainment, 200 S Oklahoma Ave.
www.okcchamber.com/sunset2018

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Chamber Joins SQ 788 is NOT Medical Coalition, Warns of Negative Impact

Far from being a simple medical marijuana bill, State Question 788 would be the most liberal “medical marijuana” law in the U.S., in effect legalizing recreational marijuana use in Oklahoma. Red flags include:

- A patient only has to “articulate a medical need” to qualify for a medical marijuana license. A headache patient could receive a two-year license. In many other states where medical marijuana is legal, only specific and predetermined conditions receive medical marijuana prescriptions.
- Unlike a normal doctor’s prescription, a medical marijuana license under SQ 788 lasts two years.
- In addition to MDs and DOs, it appears that five other types of physicians (veterinarians, dentists, optometrists, podiatrists and chiropractors) will be able to sign a medical marijuana license. There is NO requirement for these physicians to attend medical school.
- This law would allow someone to carry enough marijuana to make 85 marijuana cigarettes.
- Children could be accidentally exposed to edible marijuana in the form of candy, baked goods and fruit drinks.
- SQ 788 will allow marijuana smoking in public spaces like hotels, parks and other large entertainment venues.
- Schools, landlords and employers are expressly prohibited from basing hiring/termination decisions based on positive drug tests for those who hold a license.
- Like other states that have passed similar legislation, gang activity and organized crime will increase in Oklahoma if SQ 788 passes.

The medical, faith, business and law enforcement communities all agree: SQ 788 would be bad for Oklahoma!

SQ 788 is bad for businesses

Under the language of SQ 788, the ability for most employers to maintain a drug-free workplace would be jeopardized, if not abolished. SQ 788 states that employers “may not discriminate against a person in hiring, termination...or otherwise penalize a person based upon status as a medical marijuana license holder” or “based upon the results of a drug test showing positive for marijuana or its components.” The only exception to the above mandate is unless it would “cause an employer to imminently lose a monetary or licensing-related benefit under federal law.”

In addition to the logistical and legal nightmare that SQ 788 would generate if passed, employers could see workers’ compensation rates increase. In at least five states where medical marijuana is legal, it is treated as a permissible workers’ compensation treatment that

requires insurer reimbursement. It is natural to expect on-the-job claims for injuries to increase if it becomes a way to pay for marijuana usage.

The proposal appears to create a special class of citizen that cannot be discriminated against for holding a medical marijuana license—and with disturbing consequences. Proponents of this state question recently agreed that under the law, a hotel could not be marijuana smoke-free. Some lawyers believe a restaurateur, under the Oklahoma proposal, would have no option but to allow marijuana to be smoked in a restaurant without risking a lawsuit. Furthermore, municipalities are expressly prohibited from regulating the industry. Some attorneys who have analyzed the state question believe this would include not being able to regulate where it is smoked and would open up parks and public venues like the Chesapeake Energy Arena to the use of smokable marijuana.

SQ 788 is bad for public health

Marijuana is an addictive substance and considered a gateway drug to more harmful illegal substances. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, people who are addicted to marijuana are three times more likely to be addicted to heroin. The states that have legalized medical marijuana have seen an increase in gang activity and organized crime around the industry.

If SQ 788 passes, the commercialization of medical marijuana sales will target the state's most vulnerable—those who already have addiction issues. Oklahoma already ranks second in the nation for substance abuse

disorders. We can't afford to see more lives ruined and families separated as a result of drug addiction.

SQ 788 is bad for the state's budget

The state system of mental health and substance abuse services is already beyond its capacity. With the expected increase in mental health and substance abuse treatment as a result of this proposed law, the passage of SQ 788 would strain funding for other core services of state government. SQ 788 proposes a 7 percent tax on medical marijuana sales, but that isn't enough to cover the administrative and social service costs. Most states have marijuana taxes exceeding 20 percent.

SQ 788 would also burden the already-troubled Oklahoma Department of Health with immediate and increased responsibilities. The proposed law would incentivize medical marijuana license holders to enroll in SoonerCare, Oklahoma's Medicaid program, by reducing the cost to get a license for those covered by the program. The Oklahoma Health Care Authority, the organization who administers SoonerCare, has faced budget shortfalls in recent months because of dwindling state and federal funds. The increased number of claims could lead to rate cuts to Medicaid providers in the state.

Vote NO on SQ 788

Oklahomans have been misled about the real elements of SQ 788. It's an attempt to legalize recreational marijuana in Oklahoma. To learn more about this damaging law, and how you can help stop it, visit www.sq788isNOTmedical.com.

VOTE NO
788
is NOT medical

SQ 788 IS NOT MEDICAL MARIJUANA.

It is an attempt to legalize recreational marijuana in Oklahoma.

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2020 Remington Place
Oklahoma City, OK 73111
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Oklahoma City, OK 73128
www.bestdrivetire.com

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CACI

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7725 W Reno Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
www.caci.com

CORE

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Real Estate
Mrs. Reyna Elizalde 206-9173
2200 NW 50th St., Suite 235E
Oklahoma City, OK 73112-8106

ASSOCIATE

Club Pilates Nichols Hills

Fitness Centers & Training
Mr. David Creecy 257-0025
7550 N May Ave., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
www.clubpilates.com/nicholshills

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Dwell Urban Real Estate

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Ms. Mary Hatch 573-9100
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Oklahoma City, OK 73103
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Associations / Membership Organizations
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500 NE 4th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.oipa.com

ADVISOR

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Oklahoma City, OK 73109
www.projectokiefoundation.org

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Oklahoma City, OK 73114
www.spencerfane.com

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Star Lighting & Supply, LLC

Lighting Systems & Equipment
Mr. Chris Woodworth 236-1519
1429 W Main St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
www.starlightingandsupply.com

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Steelyard Apartments

Apartments
Ms. Staci Morales 679-2300
505 E Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.steelyardokc.com

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Swan Dentistry - Pete Swan, DDS

Dentists
Dr. Pete Swan 720-2828
5700 NW 135th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73142
www.allsmilesokc.com

ASSOCIATE

TerraScapes, LLC

Lawn & Garden Services
Mr. Jason Klontz 228-0003
2832 SE 9th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73129
www.terrascapecokc.com

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Tommy Hilfiger

Retail
Ms. Maribel Castro 787-8227
7628 W Reno Ave., Suite A-150
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
www.tommy.com

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TriStar Pension Consulting

Pension & Profit Sharing Plans
Ms. Laina Davidson 848-4015
9150 N May Ave., Suite A
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
www.tristarpension.com

EMERGING LEADER

Valley Hope

Drug / Alcohol Abuse & Addiction Info / Treatment
Ms. Ashley Barcum 946-7337
6110 NW 63rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
www.valleyhope.org

GRAND OPENINGS

Congratulations to Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! All Chamber members are welcome to attend Grand Openings. To view more photos, see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings.



Farmers Bank
1300 N. Walker Ave., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73103



Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame
20 S. Mickey Mantle Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73104



The Barn at the Woods
4375 NW 178th St.
Edmond, OK 73012



Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, PC
621 N. Robinson Ave., Suite 400
Oklahoma City, OK 73102



AC Hotel OKC - Bricktown
411 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104



Peppers Ranch
9601 S. Portland Ave.
Guthrie, OK 73044



Candlewood Suites Hotel
4400 W. River Park Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73108



Wymer Brownlee Wealth Strategies
13900 N. Portland Ave., Suite 210
Oklahoma City, OK 73134

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ECONOMIC INDICATORS

OKC Ranks as No. 1 Best Large City to Start a Business

- In search of the “Best Large Cities to Start a Business,” WalletHub compared 182 cities – including the 150 most populated U.S. cities, plus at least two of the most populated cities in each state.
- WalletHub analyzed the cities across 19 key metrics including office-space affordability, financing accessibility and five-year survival rate among others.
- Metrics were grouped into three major categories: Business Environment, Access to Resources, and Business Costs. **For the second year in a row, Oklahoma City ranked No. 1!**

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division at www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – 297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com

2018 Top Ten Best Large Cities to Start a Business

Rank	City	Total Score	Business Environment Rank	Access to Resources Rank	Business Costs Rank
1	Oklahoma City, OK	62.24	8	46	26
2	Austin, TX	61.35	1	9	155
3	Sioux Falls, SD	61.12	51	11	19
4	Missoula, MT	60.52	37	26	24
5	Durham, NC	59.72	52	15	28
6	Bismarck, ND	59.60	40	4	102
7	Cheyenne, WY	59.22	2	141	40
8	Billings, MT	59.16	39	30	42
9	Charlotte, NC	59.16	23	43	56
10	Raleigh, NC	59.07	58	8	60

Source: WalletHub, 2018; A rank of one and a high total score are most desirable.

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