

## SC Grassroots Tour starts in IL

**Slug:** LANNWS-08-12-23 SC GRASSROOTS TOUR

**Print depth:** 23.20 (3457 characters)

**Start date/time:** Aug 7, 2023 07:15 PM

**Section tags:** nc-lan  
nc-lan/news  
nc-lan/news/business  
nc-lan/news/government

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### Content

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The S.C. Chamber of Commerce is hosting its Grassroots Tour all over the state to engage with local business leaders and gather information on what the top challenges are for local business owners.

The first stop was in Indian Land on Aug. 3 at the Sharonview Credit Union in Edgewater.

“The information gathered will serve as a critical component in developing the South Carolina Chamber’s competitiveness agenda representing the South Carolina business community’s top priorities,” said Hannah Hopewell, membership and communications manager for the S.C. Chamber of Commerce.

“The agenda is released every year before the state legislative session begins and will guide the SC Chamber’s advocacy efforts that year,” she said.

President and CEO of the S.C. Chamber of Commerce Bob Morgan said the chamber hopes to engage more than 1,000 business leaders from across the state during the tour.

“Tonight (Aug. 3) is our first (stop),” Morgan said. “This is like opening night of the tour for like The Rolling Stones at Madison Square Garden.

“We are very excited to be back with an updated version that focuses on the challenges the South faces going forward, finding out and listening to business leaders,” he said.

The event, hosted by the Greater Indian Land Chamber of Commerce, drew about 50 attendees from many different businesses. Dinner and wine were included, along with a QR code interactive survey to crowdsource strengths and weaknesses for business owners.

“We think we know the No. 1 challenge is workforce development,” Morgan said. “Unemployment is at near record lows, with 90,000 jobs coming back, and we will be engaged in the conversation (on) what the state can do to help companies address that shortfall.”

Morgan’s presentation included about 20 different polls, asking business leaders a variety of questions regarding challenges, feelings about the state and national economy, gas taxes, infrastructure, education and health insurance and care options for small business owners.

“Part of the reason that we go out of our way to spend time with local chambers of commerce like yours is that it really matters when business people at the local level are engaged in the process of advocacy and policy,” Morgan said.

“I’m a firm believer that more businesses gets done in settings like this, where you’re talking over a glass of wine, coffee, dinner, where you get to meet people develop those relationships, than when you’re in the trenches of your day-to-day life,” said Mike Neese, Greater Indian Land Chamber of Commerce president and CEO.

“Indian Land was just a blink of spotlight on Apple Maps like 20 years ago; we’ve had dramatic growth,” Neese said. “If we were a city, we would now be the eighth largest city in the state of South Carolina. In 20 years, (Indian Land has had) 372% growth.”

“I think I’ve heard somebody say that the Indian Land ZIP code is maybe the fastest-growing ZIP code in the United States, certainly in South Carolina,” Morgan said. “So there’s a vibrancy here. The challenges that we face are challenges of growth.”

Neese encouraged participants to be active members of the community, both inside and outside of the chamber.

“What we have to do as business leaders is come together and figure out ways to work together to look at those challenges, as well as opportunities to where it makes our community stronger,” Neese said.

The tour’s next area stop is 8 a.m. Aug. 24 at the Gateway Conference Center in Richburg.

## **Child images**

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### **LANNWS-08-12-23 SC GRASSROOTS TOUR 1**



**LANNWS-08-12-23 SC GRASSROOTS TOUR 2**





**LANNWS-08-12-23 SC GRASSROOTS TOUR 3**



