Ohio Matters

An Official Publication of The Ohio Chamber of Commerce

By Barry James, President and CEO, and David James, Senior Vice President, James Investment Research Inc.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK 2018

This year will be stronger economically than 2017

Last year, we closed our thoughts on the economy in 2017 with “We believe 2017 will be stronger economically than 2016.” We do not want to sound like a broken record, but we believe the same for 2018.

We have excellent momentum in the economy, our research points to few red flags and we have tax cuts and regulatory reform giving businesses more confidence in the future. When it comes to momentum, key aspects of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have shown improvement in the last year. Whether it is in the consumer, business or exports, all have grown while at the same time seeing a slight dropoff in government spending. While a decrease in government spending may not sound like an improvement, in the past we have found the economy actually accelerated at a faster rate when government spending was cut. We also track a number of tripwires that could signal trouble ahead, and none of these are giving any warning signs at this time.

Let us talk about tax cuts. While the final version may not be all we would want to see, tax cuts have a pretty good track record of giving a boost. The last four major tax cuts, after full implementation, had positive impacts on GDP growth, the unemployment rate, working class wages and even federal government tax receipts. Perhaps other issues brought some of these benefits, but the consistency of improvements is remarkable. (Image 1)

Ohio should benefit from corporate tax reductions. Nearly 65 percent of the publicly traded companies in Ohio have an effective federal tax rate above 20 percent. In addition, the average company pays a rate above 30 percent and above the national average. Pass-through income is also critically important to Ohio, and we estimate a number of the pass-through companies in Ohio should see a benefit. (Image 2)

The regulatory environment has been a constant topic of concern to business, and it may be a surprise, but the new administration has already had a significant impact on reducing regulations. The president signed an executive order to cut two regulations for every new one imposed, but the track record is an astounding cut of 16 to one. Clyde Crews Jr., from Fredericksburg, Virginia, also reports the Federal Registry of Regulations has been cut by over 26,048 pages. These changes have moved worries about regulation down the list of concerns for business.

Of course, armed conflicts, trade wars and asset bubbles bursting could provide hurdles for growth. Still, we believe 2018 will be better than 2017, and businesses should be able to make up some ground from the slower growth decade just behind.

STOCKS

Heading into 2018, we find stocks expensively priced by many measures. For example, Shiller’s CAPE, Tobin’s Q and Buffet’s Market Value-to-GDP ratios are quite frothy by historical standards. One measure, the typical company’s price-to-sales ratio, is said to be at an all-time high, a disquieting sign. While expensive valuations are not an all-time high, a disquieting sign. These readings are often associated with market tops. Investors just now putting money to work in stocks will likely be disappointed. (Image 4)

A reason for the high level of optimism is tax cuts. The last four major tax cuts (Kennedy, Reagan I, Reagan II and Bush) saw stocks, on average, strongly advance before the tax cut signing. However, in each case, stocks underperformed in the year after the signing. This appears to be a classic case of “Buy the rumor and sell the fact.” Fortunately, the long-term impact of tax cuts is helpful for investors. (Image 5)

Currently, our tripwires do not indicate a recession in 2018. Some may wonder about the likelihood of a major market correction in the absence of a recession. Surprisingly, since 1959, we find roughly half of the corrections (a decline of 15 percent or more) occurred during a non-recessional time. Previously, the Federal Reserve initiated a policy of Quantitative Easing (QE), which flooded the economy with cheap money. Not surprisingly, the stock market took advantage of this new liquidity. In fact, our research found a 95 percent correlation between the QE era and stock gains. Recently, the Federal Reserve has embarked on a new policy of Quantitative Tightening (QT), restraining money supply. Where QE was helpful for stocks, investors should not be surprised if QT disappoints.

There are, of course, positives for the stock market. Investors often find the market moving in long-term trends. The current advance is the second-longest bull market in history. This continues to provide some upward assistance for stock prices.

Additionally, we have seen a rebound in S&P 500 continuing earnings growth. Over the past year, earnings have grown more than 7 percent, compared to 4.5 percent in the previous four years. Although last year’s gains came from the low base of an earnings recession, such growth is encouraging.

Our recommendations for stock investors are to hold below-average equity levels. Further, investors are advised to concentrate on bargain securities. Bargain securities typically are characterized by better relative value, profitability and price appreciation. Recently, bargain stocks have regained the leadership role from speculative securities. In the past, we have seen such leadership changes last for years.

James Investment Research Inc. is a member of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. Reach Barry and David James at (937) 426-7640.
You’re building a stronger business.

We’re all building a better state.

We’re All for Ohio!

In 2018, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce will celebrate 125 years!

For 125 years, through 28 governors, 63 General Assemblies and thousands of pieces of legislation and agency regulations, we have aggressively championed free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans. We will strive to continue this mission for at least the next 125 years!

Thank you for your continued support, and we wish you a successful and prosperous New Year!

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce
2018 PRIMARIES AHEAD

2018 is going to be a critical year in Ohio politics, with many new faces angling for the governor’s office, to a whole new slate of statewide officeholders, all the way down to the legislature. 2016 continued a trend of Republican domination in Ohio in both national and statewide contests. While Donald Trump won our state by a healthy margin, he is widely unpopular nationally (38 percent approval as of Dec. 1). With recent election results in Alabama and Virginia, Ohio Democratic Party Chairman David Pepper is probably quite bullish on his party’s chances of having a good cycle this year. His chairmanship likely depends on it.

In the Ohio House, there are 20 open seats due to term limits. Some of the current seats are in marginally Republican-leaning districts, especially in suburban Cuyahoga, Franklin and Summit counties. Getting primaries back into double digits would help build some momentum as they head into the 2020 presidential cycle and 2021 redistricting.

While I am not suggesting Ohio is Virginia, there is enough evidence to suggest that Statehouse Republicans will be playing heavy defense, and while Democrats may not be able to flip the chambers, they could be much more competitive than in previous cycles with good candidates and adequate resources.

FOLLOWING BIZARRE YEAR, BUSINESS PRIORITIES QUEUED UP FOR ACTION IN 2018

It was, to say the least, an unusual second half of 2017 around the Ohio House Statehouse.

The legislative year began routinely, with the Senate and House both passing the state’s biennial budget at the end of June, followed immediately by members departing Columbus for their summer break.

Typically, lawmakers don’t return until after Labor Day following completion of the budget. However, just over a week later, the House was back. The purpose of this unusual July session was to attempt to move forward on the 47 items Gov. John Kasich vetoed from the budget bill. Taking up 11 of the vetoed items, lawmakers successfully override all 11.

The House’s action prompted a similar return in September as the Senate, for just one day, solely to consider six of the 11 items the House had previously acted on. The Senate ultimately voted to override the governor on all six. Prior to this year, the last time the legislature even attempted to override multiple budget bill vetoes was 40 years ago, in 1977.

This, however, was just the beginning of what would be an atypical six months.

Though the General Assembly did return in September as normal, routine work on legislation, with committee hearings and legislative sessions, didn’t last long. That’s because, in mid-October, a popular veteran legislator, Sen. Cliff Hite, resigned after admitting that he participated in inappropriate – albeit consensual – conduct in his Statehouse office.

Partly as a result of these circumstances, numerous scheduled session days were cancelled, and the Senate met only nine times and the House one fewer between Labor Day and the end of the year. Not surprisingly, several public policy objectives important to Ohio businesses weren’t addressed.

Left undone at the end of 2017 was a longstanding Ohio Chamber legislative priority, restoring balance to Ohio’s employment discrimination statutes. This is particularly frustrating given that House Bill 2 was favorably reported out of committee in early May and yet — eight months later — still awaits assignment to the House calendar for a vote by the full House. This despite the fact that HB 2 underwent numerous changes in committee and the parties that initially opposed the bill are now neutral.

Also left undone — and even farther behind in the process — is a plan to fix Ohio’s broken unemployment compensation system. Reforms are urgently needed to update and strengthen the system for the benefit of Ohio’s employers, employees and economy.

Unfortunately, opposition by labor unions to virtually all potential reductions in benefit levels has stymied pursuit of a legitimate solution. Their solution is to pour more money into the system without addressing the cost drivers.

Conversations continue, but the political will to back organized labor and pass a balanced bill that addresses both the revenue and spending sides of the equation simply has yet to materialize. Furthermore, as we head into an election year, political resolve will likely be in even shorter supply.

More optimistically, two bills the Ohio Chamber helped author were introduced late in the year. Senate Bill 221 in October and House Bill 450 in mid-December. SB 221 builds on the existing authority of the successful Common Sense Initiative, created in 2011 to help create a more jobs-friendly regulatory climate in Ohio. SB 253 would further minimize the negative impact that agency regulations have on businesses and could see quick action in the New Year.

HB 450 is designed to provide relief on health insurance premiums, ultimately making health insurance even less affordable and accessible.

With health care costs being a top concern of most businesses, relief is needed. HB 450 would ensure that existing mandates and their costs are periodically reviewed, provide health insurance purchasers with additional transparency about the cost impact of mandates and put common-sense guardrails around future mandates.

The General Assembly will need to move quickly when it returns in January on these and other bills that would improve Ohio’s business climate. It is an election year, and this usually means significant legislative work comes to a halt prior to the primary and often doesn’t resume in earnest until after the November general election. In addition, that assumes a sense of normalcy returns to Columbus. If it doesn’t, and 2018 is as unusual as 2017 was, all bets are off.

Ohio business reports a lack of professional or “soft” skills as a barrier to hiring talented workers. To help address this challenge, the state of Ohio surveyed business leaders to identify which professional skills are in highest demand among employers.

Beginning with the class of 2018, high school students who demonstrate the top 10 professional skills, validated by three or more mentors, will be eligible to earn the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal on their transcripts and diplomas.

Graduates who earn the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal are competitive; they are prepared to contribute value to your business by demonstrating the strong work ethic, experience and professional skills required for success in the workplace.

To learn more, visit http://www.education.ohio.gov/SuccessBound.

Ohio HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EARN RECOGNITION FOR DEMONSTRATING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS
Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. In Ohio, there are nearly 186,000 small businesses employing close to 2.1 million employees. Small business accounts for 98 percent of all businesses by number and generates more than $82.3 billion in payroll. Eighty-six percent of small businesses in Ohio have fewer than 20 employees.

When it comes to compliance with federal regulations, the Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy’s research shows that the burden falls mostly heavily on these small businesses.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a top priority of the Trump Administration, and President Donald Trump has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first requires each agency to take two regulations off of the books before a new major regulation is introduced and requires that the cost of compliance is less. The second requires each agency to form a task force to identify all unnecessary, irrelevant and redundant regulations.

This burden on small business was first recognized by Congress, and in 1996, created the Office of Advocacy as the voice of small business in the federal government. Advocacy is an independent office within the SBA that represents small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts.

Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. Most small business owners do not have the time or expertise to sift through the vast volumes of federal regulations and keep up with the ever-shifting sands of change. Advocacy acts as your voice in Washington, monitoring these changes and engaging small business in the regulatory process.

The Office of Advocacy has three primary roles: economic research, regulation and outreach.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Advocacy’s Office of Economic Research is the government’s pre-eminent data house for information pertaining to small business. It releases numerous pieces of research annually. Its website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.
We often speak of four key best practices for effective medical management, referred to as the “4 Rs” — Reporting, Referring, Remaining in Contact and Returning to Work.

REPORTING
It is critical that you report a workplace injury to your MCO as soon as possible after the incident. Early reporting allows your MCO to become involved with the claim quickly to collect all necessary information and evaluate the injury and overall situation. This early intervention can result in an effective medical management with an eye toward a quicker return to work, which helps minimize medical costs incurred in the claim.

To make this process work as easily as possible, it is helpful to have a plan in place before an accident happens. For example, personnel policies can establish parameters for claim reporting — when, to whom, etc. Employers can also provide Injury Reporting Packets to their employees that provide instructions for the employee, supervisors and medical providers, reducing the chances for reporting errors and unnecessary delays.

A CHANGE IN FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES
Last year, the Trump administration began the process of rescinding regulations, priorities and enforcement strategies of the Obama administration. It’s likely these reversals will result in laxer federal enforcement of laws, such as equal employment laws, the Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act and more. While this may come as welcome news to many Ohio employers, there is always some concern it could lead to an uptick in private lawsuits.

As federal enforcement of employment laws takes a backseat to President Trump’s and Congressional Republicans’ legislative priorities in 2018, Ohio employers can expect new legislation to be introduced at the state level. In preparation, they should continue to monitor the growing patchwork of differing state and local laws and regularly update their policies and procedures as needed to comply with these laws.

GROWING BAN-THE-BOX MOVEMENT
Ban-the-box laws typically prohibit inquiries about a job applicant’s criminal history in an employment application. They are designed to prevent employers from eliminating applicants with a criminal record from the hiring process, with employers considering their qualifications for the position. While criminal history still comes into play under ban-the-box laws, these inquiries delay their consideration until later in the hiring process. Support for these laws has grown exponentially in recent years. In fact, 39 states — including Ohio — have already introduced some form of a ban-the-box law. While Ohio’s law only applies to public-sector employers, it wouldn’t be surprising if this law is extended to private employers, given the national trend.

THE FIGHT FOR PAY EQUITY
States and localities continue to evolve their strategies to curb pay discrimination, including recently introduced laws restricting inquiries into an applicant’s salary history during the hiring process. Last year, the majority of equal pay bills were introduced at the state level. In 2018, Ohio employers can expect these efforts to continue, especially following the House’s rejection of the EEO-1 reporting requirements, which would have substantially expanded the ability to include data on pay and hours worked. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs had planned to use the new data to increase enforcement of federal wage bias laws. Although Ohio currently allows inquiries into salary history when filing with the Ohio Court of Appeals — which covers Ohio — has interpreted the federal Equal Pay Act to prohibit employers from relying on salary history as the sole justification for differing pay among otherwise equally qualified employees.

A CHANGE IN FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES
Last year, the Trump administration began the process of rescinding regulations, priorities and enforcement strategies of the Obama administration. It’s likely these reversals will result in laxer federal enforcement of laws, such as equal employment laws, the Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act and more. While this may come as welcome news to many Ohio employers, there is always some concern it could lead to an uptick in private lawsuits.

As federal enforcement of employment laws takes a backseat to President Trump’s and Congressional Republicans’ legislative priorities in 2018, Ohio employers can expect new legislation to be introduced at the state level. In preparation, they should continue to monitor the growing patchwork of differing state and local laws and regularly update their policies and procedures as needed to comply with these laws.

Mathew Parker is an associate attorney at the office of Fisher Phillips, a national management-side labor and employment law firm.
We have also been busy forming new relationships and endeavors. We started with five founding board members, and through relationship building and strategic guidance, we have expanded that number to 10. The board of directors has been instrumental in cultivating relationships to strengthen our capacity and the organization.

Looking ahead, we have specific goals, but ultimately we are passionate about serving the members of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

• Convening community initiatives to promote the economic well-being of Ohio
• Developing and disseminating reports, studies, programs and/ or findings that impact Ohio’s economy, job creation and long-term competitiveness
• Creating educational opportunities and information for the general public regarding civic and public policy

“Our work has only just begun,” says Brian Hicks, president of the board. “We plan to be an invaluable resource to the members of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and Ohio policy-makers. Thank you to all who have helped get the Research Foundation off the ground. We look forward to creating new relationships that will move the research forward and help drive our vision of an Ohio where businesses thrive, communities are strong and safe, and public policy supports economic freedom.”

If you or your company has an issue that you would like to see the Ohio Chamber Research Foundation address, please contact Katie at (614) 629-0921 or kkoglman@ohiochamber.com.

To learn more about our projects or to support our work, visit our website at www.ohiochamberfoundation.com.

FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE HACK

Are you prepared to deal with a cyber-attack or other business data breach?

No business or industry appears to be immune from making headlines as the next victim of a cyber-attack or data breach.

The massive breach of Equifax is only the latest in a long string of data breaches that includes a reported 85 percent of Fortune 500 companies. Government agencies including the IRS, CIA, Defense Department, Federal Office of Personnel Management and even the White House have all been hacked or had data compromised. But for every large business that makes the headlines, thousands of small to mid-sized businesses have experienced a data breach of some kind but were never in the news.

Small businesses have become attractive targets because they maintain the same type of confidential information about their customers and employees as larger companies, but they don’t have the same high-profile security measures in place. They are easy prey.

If the largest of the large corporations and the massive infrastructure of the federal government can’t keep their data safe, how is a small to mid-sized Ohio company supposed to deal with this threat?

A SOLUTION

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce, along with Gallagher Affinity, is offering members exclusive access to a diverse suite of cyber and data breach solutions, including threat and risk assessments, ongoing security and compliance tools, and cyber insurance. These special member-only rates and programs are offered exclusively through the Ohio Chamber.

InfoSafe, a cyber compliance and protection tool, makes it simple and affordable for businesses to protect against a data breach and meet the complex compliance requirements for safeguarding customer information. Reduce overall data breach risk and liability exposure, increase customer trust and attract new businesses by being InfoSafe Certified.

Cyber and data breach liability insurance provides the critical coverage necessary to help protect Ohio companies of all sizes from the high costs and implications of a cyber or other type of data breach-related incident. It also helps your business comply with state and federal regulations and insures against costly fines and penalties that can be levied on a company following a breach. Cyber insurance will not protect you against an attack — but will allow you to survive one.

Cyber and data breach liability insurance helps tame the significant financial hardship of a cyber-attack and/or data breach by offering coverage to help you with the associated costs of an event. The response costs associated with minimizing the damage of a data breach or cyber-attack can be extensive and can even put a company out of business.

More information on these cyber insurance and compliance tools may be found at ohiochamber.com/cyber-insurance. As a member, you can see your actual rates by simply answering a few short, online questions about your business. Each of the programs can be implemented online and put into effect within minutes.

Every business is at risk. But with some basic preparation, planning and insurance coverage, a cyber-attack or data breach on your business doesn't have to be lethal.

For more information, visit ohiochamber.com/insurance, or contact Laz Picciano at lpicciano@ohiochamber.com.

On Dec. 6, our board of directors held its December meeting. After hearing a presentation on Job Readiness, the board broke up into workgroups to further discuss the role the Ohio Chamber can play in workforce development issues.

On Nov. 29, Ohio Small Business Council members Tom Secor and Emily Rennert testified in the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee in favor of SB 221. This bill is a vital step in rule and regulatory reform for our state.
Teconomy Partners, Columbus
Littler Mendelson P.C., Decatur Diamond LLC,
CBD Advisors, Beavercreek
Lewis Center
August Mack Environmental Inc.,
to the Ohio Chamber!
and Dec. 14, 2017. Welcome
Commerce between Oct. 20
the Ohio Chamber of
new members that joined
Welcome to the following
NEW MEMBERS

Jennifer Osburn
Jennifer Osburn keeps our office
together, overseeing the finance and administration operations. She joined our team in May 2015
after working for our auditing firm, GBQ Partners, where we were one of her clients. Thus, she was well aware of the financial operations of the Ohio Chamber when she joined our team.

Jen, as she’s known in the office, received her bachelor of science degree in business administration from Bowling Green State University and her master’s of accounting degree from The Ohio State University. She and her husband, Keith, have two active boys, Hunter, 11, and Jacob, 2, and live in Beavley.

Do you have any pets? My husband and I have had three Labrador Retrievers over the past 15 years, two of which were rescues. We just adopted a Lab puppy now that our 2-year-old is potty-trained.
Where did you grow up? I was born in Columbus and we moved down to Lebanon, Ohio, when I was 7, which was where I lived until college.
What is your favorite part of your job? The variety. I handle the finances for the chamber and several other entities, work with the IT consultants, ensure HR compliance, worked on the implementation team for our CRM database and deal with building issues, among other day-to-day tasks.
What do you do when you are not working? My oldest son is involved in soccer and Scouts. My husband and I were very involved with Cub Scouts during the past five years with him, leading his den, planning the calendar and den meetings, running the popcorn sale and serving on the leadership committee. That took up most of our free time, but it was very fulfilling.
What is your favorite quote? “Life is a beautiful book for those who choose to read it.”
If you could have dinner with two people, living or dead, who would they be? Both of my grandmothers. I didn’t get to spend enough time with them as an adult before they passed. They were both very strong women in their own unique ways, and I would love to just chat with them.
If we asked your family and close friends to describe you in one word, what do you think they would say? Loyal

What is your career highlight? I have two. One is passing the CPA exam early in my career, back when it was paper and pencil and you had to study for all four sections at the same time. The second is being named to Columbus Business First’s Forty under 40 in 2013. It was such an honor and a very humbling experience to be recognized with so many great leaders in our community.
What are your three favorite things? My family, cheesecake and reading a good book.
Tell us one thing that most people don’t know about you. I earned the Girl Scout Gold Award when I was in high school, which is the equivalent to the Boy Scout Eagle Award, requiring a lot of work over many years and culminating in a service project where I worked with a domestic violence women’s shelter. 

Meet Our Staff
Jennifer Osburn, Vice President, Administration

New BWC website
The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation will launch a new website in 2018. The first phase, expected to go live in early 2018, will focus on the areas users see prior to logging in to their accounts. Content and services that exist after logging in will be updated later in 2018. The website changes may impact the bookmarks that you have set.
Visit the website at www.bwc.ohio.gov.

Ohio Safety Congress & Expo
The annual Ohio Safety Congress & Expo is March 7-9, 2018, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. This is a free event, but attendees must register (using your BWC policy number) at https://bwc.expoplanner.com. There will be more than 200 free educational sessions at which attendees can earn continuing education credits and BWC program credits, along with hundreds of exhibitors.

Ohio Chamber members on a Great Lakes cruise sponsored by the Cleveland Chamber. 1958
One of our original members, Standard Oil (now BP America)
An ad for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce thought to be around the time of World War II.
An ad from one of our original members, Goodrich, started in Akron, Ohio.

For our 125th anniversary, we will be sharing photographs from our archives in each issue of Ohio Matters.

Annual Meeting at the Hilton DeShler in Columbus in the 1950s. Pictured left to right: Ralph Boidendorf, executive vice president of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Cy Weaver of Columbus Gas, and Fred Merrill of the Zanesville Chamber of Commerce.

Ohio Chamber members on a Great Lakes cruise sponsored by the Cleveland Chamber. 1958
One of our original members, Standard Oil (now BP America)
An ad for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce thought to be around the time of World War II.
An ad from one of our original members, Goodrich, started in Akron, Ohio.

Upcoming educational conferences
The Ohio Chamber of Commerce partners with the Manufacturers’ Education Council to provide educational conferences throughout the year. Below are the conferences for the first quarter of 2018. Registration and additional information are online at www.mecseminars.com.

27th annual Ohio Tax Conference – the Largest & Best Business Conference in the Nation
Tuesday, Jan. 23 and Wednesday, Jan. 31
Hyatt Regency Columbus, 310 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43215
This conference has been approved for 14 CEU credits; two hours of attorney professional conduct instruction and 16.5 hours of CPA credits. The Ohio gubernatorial candidates have been invited. $685 per person, with discounts for companies that send two or more attendees.

22nd annual Ohio Energy Management Conference
Tuesday, Feb. 20 and Wednesday, Feb. 21
The Columbus Renaissance Hotel, 50 N. Third St., Columbus, OH 43215
This conference has been approved for 10 Ohio Professional Engineers PDH credits, two Certified Energy Managers credits and 10.75 CLE credits for attorneys. $625 per person, with discounts for companies that send three or more attendees.

27th annual Sustainability & EHS Symposium
Tuesday, March 27 and Wednesday, March 28
Duke Energy Center in Cincinnati, 525 Elm St., Cincinnati, OH 45202
This symposium has been approved for many continuing education credits; see the website for details. $495 per person, with significant savings for organizations sending multiple attendees.

Ohio Chamber of Commerce
www.ohiochamber.com
7
At the 12th annual meeting of the Ohio State Board of Commerce in 1893. The Ohio Chamber from 1898 to 1902, spoke about the formation of the Ohio State Board of Commerce in 1893.

“I am perhaps the only one present who has been in attendance at all of the meetings of this body from the preliminary meeting in Cleveland in 1893.

“...I do not know of another organization anywhere that has been able from the start to enlist so many representative citizens, so many men of ability, men who do things and bring them to pass, as has this Ohio State Board of Commerce. It has from the start demanded the best thought and expression in all of its lines of actions, and we are beginning to realize that our organization has gone over the breakers unharmed, that it has gone through the fire unscathed, and has shown that it can be trusted to do what it starts out to do.

The men who are here represent the leaders of thought and progress in this great state of Ohio, and we may justly expect them to carry on this work to still greater success in the future than we have achieved in the past.”

A quote from the Cleveland Plain Dealer on Thursday, Nov. 6, 1893, on the creation of the Ohio State Board of Commerce stated, “From among the various commercial organizations throughout the state, there was organized in this city yesterday a new institution known as the Ohio State Board of Commerce. Although but a few hours old, the infant is one of the most healthy specimens of its kind. It is as vigorous as a young colt and promises to become a great power throughout the state.”

And so it began. What was originally known as the Ohio State Board of Commerce was changed to the Ohio Chamber of Commerce in 1934. Over the years, the Ohio Chamber has led the fight for the Good Roads Law in 1906, legislation that supported the war effort during World War II, insurance pool law in 1963, state debt limit in 1977, workers’ compensation reform in 1986 and tort reform in 1996, 2004 and 2006, while continuing to advocate for a competitive tax climate, reduction in regulations, affordable health care, education accountability — the list goes on and on.

This month, we kick off our 125th year with great plans for our members and the organization. Throughout the year, we will be celebrating our history while announcing great plans for our future. It is my hope that you will help us celebrate this once-in-a-lifetime accomplishment by participating in at least one event, webinar, committee meeting or business symposium this year. Watch your email and this publication for more information as we celebrate 125 years of advocating for Ohio’s business community.

We’ve got you covered.

INTRODUCING THE OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INSURANCE PROGRAM—DENTAL BENEFITS

We are excited to announce our partnership with Delta Dental of Ohio to offer dental benefit plans exclusively for Ohio Chamber members!

Delta Dental of Ohio benefits provide:
• Coverage for small businesses with two to 99 employees
• Multiple plan designs to fit your company’s needs
• The largest dental network with Delta Dental of Ohio

Member-exclusive dental benefits from Delta Dental of Ohio can be purchased as a standalone plan. If you already have a plan with Delta Dental, you can switch to this new one at any time.

For more information, go to www.ohiobusinessvotes.com/insurance.