VOTE NO ON ISSUE 2: OHIO’S MISLEADING RX BALLOT ISSUE

By now, virtually everyone’s heard of Issue 2, a statewide ballot issue that proposes to regulate state government prescription drug purchases. Ohio voters will decide Issue 2 on Election Day this November.

In May, the board of directors of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce voted to oppose the “ill-conceived and poorly written” ballot issue, recognizing it as a serious concern to employers and business advocates. As stated by Andrew E. Doehrel, president and CEO of the Ohio Chamber, “This proposal would almost certainly lead to cost-shifting to private payers, including employers. Further, the proposal runs counter to the free market values that the Ohio Chamber stands for and is nothing more than an attempt to artificially fix drug prices.”

As Nov. 7 draws near, it is critical that Ohio’s employers understand the impact this proposed legislation could have on their health care costs. The Ohio Chamber encourages employers to contact the campaign fighting against Issue 2 for materials they can use to educate their employees and communities. Employers should also urge their employees to arm themselves with the facts by visiting www.noonissue2.org. There, they can read reports written by three former Ohio Medicaid directors and a former budget director, and gather information on why more than 70 organizations — including other business groups, organized labor, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, hospitals, veterans and the faith community — are urging Ohioans to vote no on Issue 2. Finally, employers must oppose Issue 2 with a no vote, and motivate employees, colleagues and those in their communities to also vote no on Issue 2, the ballot issue that The Columbus Dispatch has labeled as “bad public policy” that is “dangerous” and “won’t work.”

If passed, Issue 2 would require state government to pay no more than the lowest price paid by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for prescription medications needed for state-run programs, including Medicaid beneficiaries, state workers, public retirees, prisoners and people in other state health care programs. However, Issue 2 will not do what it promises. In fact, it will make the issue of prescription affordability even worse by causing drug costs to increase for 64 percent of Ohioans — including those who rely on Medicare, private insurance or employer-based insurance — while reducing access to needed medications for the state’s most vulnerable citizens.

Issue 2 will negatively impact Ohio private employers for two major reasons. First, the supply chain that supplies those covered by this ballot issue also supplies those not covered by it. Therefore, even if it were possible to implement Issue 2, as soon as one area of the supply chain is squeezed, costs would shift to make up for reduced drug costs for those covered by the ballot issue. Whether large or small, employer-insured or self-insured, private employers will experience significant cost shifting. Second, this legislation will undoubtedly impact Ohio private employers participating in prescription benefit purchasing collaboratives. All employers currently participating in these collaboratives benefit from the size and collective purchasing power of established arrangements. If entities are forced to leave these collaboratives, employers will be harmed by the reduced purchasing power of the collectives.

Finally, the Ohio Chamber and many other employers across the state worry about the potential for costly lawsuits that could significantly impact Ohio taxpayers. The promoters of Issue 2 wrote into it a provision giving themselves the unprecedented right to intervene at taxpayer expense in any legal challenges that may be filed against it if it becomes law. The provision gives the four named sponsors of the ballot initiative (three of whom work for the controversial California activist whose foundation is bankrolling the effort) a blank check to involve themselves in lawsuits — and requires taxpayers to pay their attorney fees, win or lose.

Issue 2 is being promoted by a billion-dollar California-based nonprofit, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), which makes 80 percent of its revenue selling prescription drugs at pharmacies it owns.

Quick Glance

Chamber opposes “ill-conceived and poorly written” ballot issue

Would increase drug costs 64 percent

Would reduce access to medications

AFH’s controversial CEO, Michael Weinstein, has been accused of using millions of tax-exempt dollars generated by AHF for political purposes completely unrelated to the mission of the foundation. Last year, Weinstein and AHF supported a virtually identical version of the Ohio proposal, Proposition 61, which was soundly defeated on the November ballot in California. Notably, every major California newspaper, regardless of political or ideological orientation, editorialized against the ballot issue.

Issue 2 is unworkable and could lead to more bureaucracy and excessive litigation costs. In addition, it could increase drug costs for those not covered by the proposal.

On Nov. 7, vote no on Issue 2.

Supporting Ohio’s job creators and entrepreneurs

Avoiding wage and hour violations

Dashboard features workforce development

Defining ‘decisive unit’ in workforce reduction

Member spotlight: Bristol-Myers Squibb

Meet Keith Lake, VP: Government Affairs

New members

Meet Chuck Sulzerzycki, CEO: Peoples Bank

Visit our member companies

Chamber sets fall priorities

GET INFORMED.

Vote no on misleading Rx ballot issue

Sharing your learning stories

Chamber foundation measures Ohio’s Prosperity Pulse
You believe in our mission.

We carry it out every day.

As the state’s leading business advocate and resource, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce aggressively champions free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

Thanks to your continued support, we were recognized by the Association of State Chamber Professionals for our membership investment and retention.

With members ranging from small businesses to international companies, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce represents Ohio’s business voice. Founded in 1893, the Ohio Chamber is one of the state’s oldest business organizations. The Ohio Chamber is led by a volunteer board of directors that consists of 66 business leaders from all over the state.
ENGAGING STUDENTS IN WORK-BASED LEARNING: YOU SPOKE, WE LISTENED

Businesses in every Ohio industry are looking for qualified graduates to help them stay ahead in today’s ever-changing economy. In fact, today’s students will likely hold jobs that don’t even exist today.

The talent needs of business will be changing quickly, which means workers will need to be flexible, adaptable and ready to acquire new knowledge and skills in real time. Now is a great time for business and education to come together to address skills gaps, build a talent pipeline and help students identify their passions and build the competencies they will need to succeed in in-demand career pathways.

So, how can we do these things effectively? A great place to start is through work-based learning. Work-based learning experiences empower students to build important skills for success in the workplace or higher education.

The partnership allows The Adecco Group to help businesses team up with schools by taking on the role of the employer of record for work-based learning participants ages 16 or older. In other words, The Adecco Group will relieve the liability and administrative burden associated with employing high school students, allowing employers to focus on offering work-based learning opportunities. You spoke, we listened.

To initiate this collaboration, we are challenging Ohio’s businesses to take the lead by reaching out to local schools. If you need help developing a partnership, please contact the Ohio Department of Education’s Cassandra Palsgrove, education program specialist, cassandra.palsgrove@education.ohio.gov. Once that partnership is established, The Adecco Group will help build a plan. For more information, contact Tyla Tutor@AdeccoGroup.com.

Emerging talent is all around us, and it’s our job to work together to capture the imaginations of students and build Ohio’s future workforce.

Work-based learning experiences empower students to build important skills for success in the workplace or higher education.

OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Measuring Ohio’s Prosperity Pulse

Business leaders are bombarded with surveys. And while the Prosperity Pulse is a survey, it’s not just any other survey: it’s a survey from Ohio business leaders to Ohio business leaders. It seeks to pinpoint your views on the state economy, overall business climate and key challenges, and forecasts future issues of concern. More important, the Prosperity Pulse is a tool the Ohio Chamber of Commerce uses to develop our priorities and policy agenda, and investigate solutions — all with the insight you provide. So while it takes about five minutes to complete, your business will benefit from our findings.

Brian Hicks, president of the Research Foundation, noted, “the Second Quarter 2017 Prosperity Pulse provided two key takeaways. First, the prosperity level is steady, and second, employers continue to face worrisome workforce issues.”

Over time, we expect the Prosperity Pulse to show us trends in business profits, capital investments and expenses. In the meantime, after just two quarters of information, we already observe an obvious correlation between business and government.

Our second quarter results showed a decreased concern about health care issues. At the time of the survey, the U.S. Senate was on the cusp of health care reform, and many assumed some sort of reform would be passed and implemented. Ultimately, nothing happened, but your expectations were revealed in the survey. We project that in the third quarter, health care will resource as one of the highest worries.

Additionally, we saw a dramatic uptick in concern over state and local taxes. It’s not a coincidence that, at the time of the survey, the legislature was debating the state budget, with many business tax implications in play. Now that the budget is set, we look to third quarter results to reflect your concern levels about what was passed and what was overlooked.

Workforce was the biggest concern revealed in the second quarter Prosperity Pulse. Every industry that responded showed a mid to high level of concern about the future workforce. We asked an open-ended question: “What are specific barriers you face when hiring/attracting employees?” We analyzed the answers and found these were the top 10 barriers.

It may seem that Nos. 2, 5 and 6 are the same, but so many employers responded with specifics such as lack of industry experience, and lack of skilled trades, and lack of overall qualifications such as reading and writing, that we thought it imperative to separate them. We also believe that through this data, we can sum the answers up as lack of character or lack of competency. Finding both qualities is difficult for Ohio employers.

How are we addressing this issue for you? We are working on a new project, a cross-generational talent acquisition and retention toolbox. By studying employee habits and thought processes, and employer policies and procedures, we will be putting together a toolbox of proven best practices for hiring and retaining your best talent. This project will be completed by the end of 2017.

To learn more about the Prosperity Pulse, including FAQs and Q1 and Q2 summaries and data, visit www.ohiochamberfoundation.com. To participate in the Q3 Prosperity Pulse survey, email research@ohiochamber.com with the subject line, “I'd like to help!”

WWW.OHIOCHAMBER.COM
**WAGE AND HOUR VIOLATIONS:**

More common (and costly) than you think

Studies show that wage and hour lawsuits have increased by more than 450 percent in the past 15 years, significantly outpacing any other employment-related litigation. Nearly all wage and hour cases are filed as procedurally complex class actions and/or collective actions, which are similar to class actions but available only in certain employment-related cases, including cases brought under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The staggering increase in wage and hour litigation has been attributed, in part, to employee awareness. Media attention to large verdicts and record-breaking settlements has also been credited for the increase in these cases. For example, FedEx has paid more than $450 million to settle wage and hour cases in the past two years. The fact is, these cases can be lucrative—if not for workers, then for their attorneys. When employers violate the FLSA, they must pay the employees “reasonable” attorneys’ fees, and what constitutes “reasonable” is left up to the judge. Minor violations that result in small awards for employees can still result in large awards for their attorneys.

The exposure of employers is not limited to unpaid wages and attorneys’ fees. Under the FLSA, employers are liable for employees for “the amount of their unpaid minimum wages, or their unpaid overtime compensation, as the case may be, in an additional equal amount as liquidated damages” 29 U.S.C. § 216(b). In cases of unpaid minimum wages, Ohio law provides for “an additional two times the amount of the back wages.” O.R.C. § 4111.14(G).

This is in addition to the fees charged by the employer’s own attorneys. While some employment practices liability (EPL) insurance policies cover the cost of defense, employers are not provided coverage for actual verdicts and attorney fees. As such, employers bear the entire cost of the jury award or settlement.

To reduce the risk of liability, employers should routinely review compensation policies and practices. Some of the most litigated wage and hour issues are discussed below.

**MISSCLASSIFICATION**

Misclassifying a worker as an independent contractor, or a nonexempt employee as exempt, is a common and costly mistake. Whether a worker can be classified as an independent contractor depends on the degree of control the employer exercises over the worker. The degree to which the worker is economically dependent on the employer and the extent to which the employer pays the worker’s regular home-to-work commute. The degree to which the worker is economically dependent on the employer and the extent to which the employer pays the worker’s regular home-to-work commute. The degree to which the worker is economically dependent on the employer and the extent to which the employer pays the worker’s regular home-to-work commute.

Nonexempt employees cannot be required, or even be permitted, to perform work off the clock. Most commonly, this includes small travel time, work-related calls, travel, meetings, and/or position in management are relevant considerations but are not determinative. When in doubt, classify employees as nonexempt and pay them hourly.

**OFF-THE-CLOCK WORK**

Nonexempt employees cannot be required, or even be permitted, to perform work off the clock. Most commonly, this includes small travel time, work-related calls, travel, meetings, and/or position in management are relevant considerations but are not determinative. When in doubt, classify employees as nonexempt and pay them hourly.

Employers should adopt policies expressly prohibiting nonexempt employees from working off the clock and from submitting generic (e.g., “9 a.m. to 5 p.m.”) timesheets.

Timesheets should accurately capture all work time, which includes meal and break periods under 20 minutes, or during which the employee performs a job duty (e.g., a receptionist answering incoming calls during lunch). Work time may also include time before the employee’s scheduled shift starts. If employers require nonexempt employees to arrive 10 minutes before their shift in order to put on uniforms, receive briefings, or for other reasons, the 10 minutes is probably compensable.

**IMPROPER DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY**

Employers must be cautious when making deductions from employees’ pay. The FLSA provides a comprehensive list of the permissible deductions from exempt employees’ pay. The list is short. While the FLSA’s strict rules do not apply to nonexempt employees, deductions are still unlawful if they result in nonexempt employees being paid less than minimum wage for the hours they worked. Common deductions to watch include those for company-provided uniforms, cash register shortages and missing or damaged company property. Deductions for advance wages and paid time off are also problematic, even if addressed in a handbook.

Understanding the applicable law in each state where your company operates is necessary to limit potential liability. Unfortunately, wage and hour compliance is complicated, and keeping up with changes in the law is a full-time job. To that end, employers should not hesitate to ask an employment law attorney or other professional about performing a compliance audit and/or providing relevant training to the company’s management team.

**VIOLATIONS:**

Wage and hour violations are a major threat to companies of all sizes.
**NEW DASHBOARD HIGHLIGHTS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

The Ohio Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation is pleased to announce the launch of Ohio’s Workforce Success Measures Dashboard, a new interactive tool to allow Ohio’s policymakers to measure the success of Ohio’s largest workforce development programs.

Policymakers and Ohioans alike can use the new Workforce Success Measures Dashboard to see statewide, county and provider-level data on the number of Ohioans enrolled in and completing workforce employment and training programs. The dashboard empowers program administrators and policymakers to evaluate program performance and identify best practices by measuring four common goals.

- **Employment**: Do the programs’ participants find short- and long-term employment?
- **Skills**: Do programs provide jobseekers with access to training that results in industry-recognized certificates and credentials?
- **Wages**: What are participants’ overall earnings?
- **Value to Business**: Do program participants consistently hold the same job over time?

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

**Bristol-Myers Squibb**

At Bristol-Myers Squibb, we work every day to advance science for patients with serious diseases. We are delivering for patients today, while developing and transforming medicinal medicines for patients tomorrow.

We believe in the power of science to address some of the most challenging diseases of our time. We have a high bar for innovation focused on areas where our medicines can truly make a difference for patients. Our focus on these unmet needs comes at an unprecedented time, where scientific breakthroughs are advancing the treatment of disease like never before.

Fueled by robust research and development capabilities, we are advancing science in each of our four therapeutic areas — oncology, immunoscience, cardiovascular and fibrosis.

Our scientists are passionate in their pursuit of new and better medicines, knowing that there are patients who currently have few or no options.

We were responsible for pioneering a class of medicines that harness the power of the immune system to treat cancer, and these agents are changing the way cancer is treated. We also have a legacy of transforming patient outcomes in other major diseases such as cardiovascular disease, HIV and HCV.

However, our work is far from done. Today, we continue to pursue medicines with transformational potential in diseases such as cancer, heart failure, liver fibrosis and rheumatoid arthritis. There have been incredible advances in technology and diagnostic capabilities, and we are leveraging these insights to understand how we can deliver the right medicine to the right patient at the right time, with the ultimate goal of achieving the best outcome for each patient taking our medicines.

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**LET THE EMPLOYER BEWARE**

Defining the ‘decisional unit’ in a reduction in force

Many times, employers engaging in group terminations seek a release of federal age discrimination claims in exchange for a severance payment. In order to accomplish this, employers need to release any claim under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the release must comply with the requirements of the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act (OWBPA).

If an employer requests a release in connection with an exit incentive or other employment termination program offered to a group or class of employees, the OWBPA requires an employer to provide affected employees with certain details about the Reduction in Force (RIF). Significantly, these disclosure requirements apply whenever a business covered by the ADEA makes a decision to reduce staff or lay off employees in the termination of as few as two employees.

Strict compliance is required when making these disclosures. Otherwise, an employer runs the risk of paying severance for an unforetable release while simultaneously defending itself in court against allegations of age discrimination.

A few particularly challenging pitfalls for employers in this area include defining the “decisional unit” of employees considered for the RIF and disclosing certain data regarding these same employees.

This information must be provided in “a manner calculated to be understood by the average individual eligible to participate” and must be given “at the commencement of the period specified in subparagraph (F)” of the ADEA (which is 45 days). The program and the employer cannot be described in a way that gives those individuals deciding whether to sign a release enough information (and time) to assess the possible discrimination in the employer’s termination selection process. The “group or class” of employees associated with an employment termination program is not defined by the ADEA. However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s (EEOC) governing regulations indicate that the scope of these terms is determined by examining the “decisional unit” at issue.

According to the EEOC’s regulations, a decisional unit is “that portion of the employer’s organizational structure from which the employer chose the persons who would be offered consideration for the signing of a waiver and those who would not be offered consideration for the signing of a waiver.” The term “decisional unit” has been developed to reflect a process by which an employer chose certain employees for a program and ruled out others for that program. 29 C.F.R. § 1625.22(f)(3)(i)(B).

Thus, the scope of the decisional unit can vary depending on the process and criteria developed by the employer to identify employees for a particular RIF. Importantly, if the employer identifies the decisional unit as broader, or narrower, than it actually was, it may invalidate the release.

While the EEOC’s regulations offer general examples to assist employers in selecting the proper decisional unit, the regulations do not provide a great deal of practical guidance except in the most simplistic layoff situations.

Even if the decisional unit is properly defined, the employer must be careful to disclose the mandated information about all individuals in that particular unit. This includes “the ages of each person eligible or selected for the program and ruled out others for that program.”

Even a slight error can invalidate the release. For example, in Behr v. AADG, Inc., 2016 WL 4119692 at *11 (N.D. Iowa, Central Division, July 29, 2016), the court invalidated a release that the employee only provided terminated employees with information that identified the ages of individuals “facility-wide” who were not terminated as part of the RIF program. As the court observed in Behr, “common sense tells anyone looking at this list … that it provides insufficient information to discern whether there is a pattern of age discrimination in the selection of those terminated and those who were not.” (Id.)

Understanding and complying with the OWBPA’s release provisions in a RIF context can be one of the most challenging employment law issues an employer can face. Given the lack of detailed guidance in this area, defining the “decisional unit” can also be a risky endeavor. In light of this reality, advanced planning (where possible) and early consultation with employment counsel is highly recommended.

Bill Edwards is chair of the Employment & Labor Group for Ulmer & Berne, a firm focused on delivering superior, customized legal solutions with offices in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Chicago and Boca Raton. Edwards routinely represents employers in all aspects of the employment relationship. He has extensive experience representing employers in matters ranging from EEOC collective action litigation to single-plaintiff wrongful termination claims. As a seasoned trial lawyer, he also assists employers in taking proactive steps to stay out of the courtroom through, among other things, constructing robust employment policies and proactively advising employers on ways to avoid litigation.

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**Provided by the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation**

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

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Journal Entry:

I have many, so it's difficult to call

What is your favorite quote?

keeping in shape by lifting weights.

supporting my daughters at their

issues that impact Ohio employers.

The constant variety of interesting

What is your favorite part

of 2016 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

northern Illinois and the hometown

Where did you grow up?

month-old foster daughter.

Jenna and Mary, and their seven-

in political science. He and his wife,

He graduated from the University of

Reds and University of Illinois fan.

health care policy.

Affairs team while also specializing in

several years to work for one of our

he then called our P.A.C.E. program —

Political and Candidate Education.

He was then named director of that

program before stepping away for

several years to work for one of our

member companies. He returned in

2012 to head up our Government

Affairs team while also specializing in

health care policy.

Lake is our in-house Cincinnati

Reds and University of Illinois fan.

He graduated from the University of

Illinois with a Bachelor of Arts degree

in political science. He and his wife,

Julie, live in Westerville with their

three teenagers: Elizabeth, Jenna and Mary; and their seven-

month-old foster daughter.

Get to know Lake in this issue’s Employee Spotlight.

Where did you grow up?

Rockford, Illinois, a blue-collar city in

northern Illinois and the hometown of 2016 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

inductees Cheap Trick

What is your favorite part of your job?
The constant variety of interesting

issues that impact Ohio employers.

What do you do when you are not working?

Most of my spare time is spent

supporting my daughters at their

sporting events or school activities,
taking care of my foster daughter and

keeping in shape by lifting weights.

What is your favorite quote?

I have many, so it’s difficult to call

just one my favorite. One of them, though, is from

former British Prime Minister

Sir Winston Churchill, who said, “However

beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.” And,
since former college football coach

Lou Holtz was the Ohio Chamber’s

featured Annual Meeting speaker this

year, I also have a favorite from him:

“Don’t be surprised, when all is said and
doing it, if more is said than done.”

What do you think has been the most significant change in society during your lifetime?
The decline of the traditional family

Which books do you consider a must-read for everyone?
The Bible and Washington

The Indispensable Man, by James

Thomas Flexner

Where is your favorite place to dine out?

Ringside Cafe

What are your favorite sports teams?

Cincinnati Reds, University of Illinois

Fighting Illini basketball and football, and

whatever teams my daughters are
currently playing on.

What is your career highlight?

Perhaps it’s yet to come, but so far it’s probably getting the opportunity to

meet President Bush 41 in the Oval

Office. (There’s more to this story,

including a photo — ask me about it

sometime!)

Are you afraid of anything?

I’m afraid of having any of my

children not turn out to be self-

sufficient, productive members of

society.

At Bristol-Myers Squibb, We Are

Working Together for Patients

Our mission is clear — we discover,
develop and deliver transformational

medicines that help people prevail over serious diseases.

Our sense of urgency is real — we work every day to push the boundaries of

scientific discovery and to make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients.

It’s what we do. It’s why we do it.

The following companies have joined the Ohio

Chamber of Commerce since the first of the year.

We welcome them to the chamber and look forward to

advocating on their behalf.

AbbVie, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Alloy Insurance Co., Dayton

American Consulting Inc., Indianapolis

Apex Clean Energy, Charlotteville, Va.

Ardent Mills LLC, Plymouth, Minn.

ARS Recycling Systems LLC,

Lowellville

Atkins & Stung Inc., Cincinnati

B & B Farm Service Inc., Fredericktown

Belkun Granite Concrete LLC, Brookville

B & K Contracting LLC, Dayton

Boss Display Corp., Columbus

Brilliant Electric Sign Co. Ltd.,

Brooklyn Heights

Bristol-Myers Squibb,

Lawrenceville, N.J.

Brize-O-Matic Manufacturing Inc.,

Arlington Heights, Ill.

Brown Memorial Home Inc., Circleville

Bruce & Merrilles Electric Co.,

New Castle, Pa.

Brumbaugh Construction Inc., Arcanum

Cadle LLC, Warren

Colgone Corp., Matthews, N.C.

Clout Research, Dublin

Craysor Corp., Piqua

CSL Behing, Naperville, Ill.

Dave Fox Remodeling Inc., Columbus

David & Michael Brunemann Inc.,

Miamintown

Deep Well Services, Zeleponen, Pa.

Ekart Inc., Loveland

Ed Broermans Heating & Cooling Inc.,

Tipp City

EMBI LLC, Cincinnati

Enginetics Corp., Dayton

Euro Trucking Inc., Circleville

Fanning Howey Associates Inc., Celina

Family Ireland & Cox P.I.L., Dayton

Finnum USA Inc., Columbus

Flex-Temp Employment Services Inc.,

Sandsbury

Ford Development Corp., Sharonville

Franz Ward LLP, Cleveland

Gallagher Affinity, Lakewood Ranch,

Fla.

Gallogly Building Supply, Gallogly

Gene Pracik and Son Fire Equipment

Co. Inc., Cleveland

Healthsouth Rehabilitation Hospital

Dayton, Birmingham, Ala.

ilab, Indianapolis

Jae’s Towing & Recovery, Hebron

Johnny’s Auto and Truck Towing Inc.,

Akron

K & B Acquisitions, Dayton

Kohrman Jackson & Krantz LLP,

Cleveland


Littlefex LLC, Englewood

Massillon Plaque, North Canton

McDonald Will & Emery LLP, Chicago

Mcgovney Ready Mix Inc., Portsmouth

Medtronic Sofamor Danek USA Inc.,

Minneapolis

Merrick & Co., Hershey, Pa.

Meridian Machining Inc., Kettering

Moraine Mechanica Inc., Lowellville

Neukin Construction Co. Inc., Bedford

Ohio Public Transit, Canton

Paymax Services Inc., Cleveland

People Working Cooperatively Inc.,

Cincinnati

Plastic Suppliers Inc., Columbus

Posh Cleaners Inc., Avon Lake

Precision CNC LLC, Lancaster

Premier Bandag #8 Inc., Alliance

Priority Custom Molding Inc.,

Beavercreek

R & R Leasing Inc., Cuyahoga Falls

Rito’s Inc., Brunswick

RWK Services Inc., Independence

SE Stone Group LLC, Silver Lake

Site Supply Inc., Columbus

Sugar Valley Partners LLC, Bellbrook

Tech Mold & Tool Co., Tipp City

Tee Jeyes # 4 Inc., Columbus

The Maynor-Oleyani Trail Management

LLC, Delaware

The Mannik & Smith Group Inc.,

Maumee

Unipac Inc., Hebron

Valley View Clubs Inc., Lancaster

Westlake Hospitality Inc., Fairview Park

OhioVatter's
We help protect businesses with businesses to grow and prosper. Ohio business community? the Ohio economy/benefit the Peoples stands for. are known for our long-standing been in business since 1902 and – Peoples Bank and Peoples solutions through our subsidiaries offers a complete line of banking, What does your company do? What are some of the latest goals/objectives of your company? Our motto of “Working Together. Building Success.” epitomizes how we will all be working together. We remain focused on gathering clients, getting them to stay longer, having them use more of the products and services we offer and having them refer others because we have served them well. Peoples Banks cares about our communities. We want them to be better places to live and work, and where businesses thrive because we are there. How has the Ohio Chamber helped your company achieve those goals/objectives? The chamber’s mission of being a champion of free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all core values. We conduct business with integrity, develop trust among our clients, are committed to continuously striving to drive the excel. It is encouraging to know that there is a team of chamber advocates on the front lines, fighting to create a positive business climate for the benefit of all Ohio businesses.

MEET A BOARD MEMBER
Chuck Sulzerzycki leads Peoples Bank to success

In each issue of this publication, we feature a member of the Board of Directors for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. In this issue, we spotlight Chuck Sulzerzycki, president and CEO of Peoples Bancorp Inc.

What does your company do? We are a community bank that offers a complete line of banking, investment, insurance and trust solutions through our subsidiaries – Peoples Bank and Peoples Insurance Agency LLC. We have been in business since 1902 and are known for our long-standing dedication to improving the lives of the communities we serve. This commitment is at the center of what Peoples stands for.

How does your company impact the Ohio economy/benefit the Ohio business community? We provide capital that allows businesses to grow and prosper. We help protect businesses with our suite of insurance, treasury management and online services that allow them to better manage risk, and we provide a broad set of employee benefit services that allow them to attract and retain talent. And our associates are dedicated to quality service that will help ensure the success of local business owners throughout our footprint.

What is your role at your company? I’ve served as president, CEO and director of Peoples Bancorp Inc. since 2011. I’m proud to work with a team of individuals who are committed to constant improvement, which ensures we take great care of our clients and stockholders.

What do you hope to gain from your membership with the Ohio Chamber? It is important to us to develop relationships with fellow chamber members to gain perspective on business across the state. We also participate so that we can help to influence public policy on issues important to the financial sector. For example, we support the chamber’s recent advocacy on House Bill 106 that requires all Ohio high school graduates to complete a full-semester course on financial literacy. And we think the work of the chamber’s Opiate Addiction Task Force is crucial to helping Ohio’s businesses conquer the impact of opioid addiction on health care costs and employing a drug-free workforce.

How has serving as a member of the board helped you or your company? The Ohio Chamber does a great job of keeping members informed on policy positions affecting the Ohio business community – information we take back to our local chambers and government officials. Serving as a board member has widened our reach and helped us develop valuable new business relationships and initiate referrals to other chamber partners.

How long have you been on the board or committee? I have been on the board for more than 10 years and currently serve on the chamber’s Executive Committee.

SECOND STOP
On Aug. 10, the Toledo Zoo & Aquarium hosted the Ohio Chamber of Commerce at the second stop on our 2017 tour. The Toledo Zoological Society has been a member of the Ohio Chamber since 2012. The Toledo Zoo was founded in 1900 with the donation of a single woodchuck. Ownership was transferred from the city to the Toledo Zoological Society in 1982, and this wildlife facility has continued to expand ever since. Chamber members toured new developments that are being created as part of a 10-year construction plan that started in 2016. The visit kicked off at the Aerial Adventure Course, a recent addition located among the African exhibit. Complete with a challenge course, zipline and 80-foot jump called the Flight Line, this new development helps Toledo stand out among the top zoos in the country. The tour also included the newly renovated aquarium. Other exhibits in the 10-year plan include new displays for the tigers and hippos, as well as more interactive exhibits that will allow visitors to engage with wildlife.

In an attempt to stay increasingly relevant throughout the year, the Toledo Zoo is also introducing a new fall lights event this year, which includes animal-themed lanterns 15 to 50 feet tall throughout the zoo, starting Oct. 13, before the Christmas lights begin.

In addition, the Toledo Zoo strives in its sustainability practices and conservation efforts and received the 2017 Wildlife Diversity Conservation Award by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife. The zoo serves as a role model with its ecologically sound and energy-efficient green practices, including approximately 28,500 solar panels that provide about 30 percent of obvious complements our usage. Its energy needs and plans served as an important point in the policy discussion between Ohio Chamber and Toledo Zoo staff.

In addition, zoo Director of Conservation Science Sharja Ali talked about how important fundraising and state funding are to the zoo and will continue to be to these new developments and overall expansion of the zoo. As home to more than 9,000 animals that represent more than 400 species, the Toledo Zoo strives to create an educational and fun experience for more than 1 million visitors each year.

www.ohiochamber.com

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PREFERENCES FOR FALL

The General Assembly was on its summer recess. However, that will all change with the beginning of the seasons. As the members of the House and Senate get back to work, there will be pressing issues we will be focusing on this fall.

Our top priority is passing House Bill 2 which would bring balance and predictability to Ohio’s employment discrimination laws by harmonizing state law with federal law. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Bill Seitz and passed out of the House Economic Development, Commerce and Labor Committee in May. However, it has not yet made it to the House floor.

We will continue to advocate for this bill to be passed by both the House and Senate.

Second, Ohio still needs to overhaul the state’s broken unemployment compensation system. During the last recession, Ohio had to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars from the federal fund. During the last recession, Ohioans broke and broken.

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