

# Ohio Matters

An Official Publication of *The Ohio Chamber of Commerce*

## GET INFORMED. 1

Former Speaker of the U.S. House John Boehner reflects on his time in office

Lieutenant governor lauds business accomplishments at Annual Meeting

## SHARE SUCCESS. 4

Legislation introduced to legalize medical marijuana

Ohio Chamber launches middle-market task force

OBSC leads on rule relief legislation

2016 election: Analysis and recap

Legalized marijuana should worry employers

## STAY CONNECTED. 7

Committees in action

Chamber works for the good of all

## IT'S STILL JUST ME

Former U.S. Speaker of the House John Boehner reflects on his time in office

In his opening remarks to attendees at the Ohio Chamber's Annual Meeting, former U.S. Speaker of the House John Boehner told the crowd, "It's still just me" when addressing his recent retirement from Congress.

From his time in the Ohio House to his October retirement from his position as U.S. Speaker of the House, Boehner spent years as an elected official, something he hadn't really considered growing up as the son of a bar owner in Cincinnati. Boehner credited his family of 11 brothers and sisters and his work in his dad's bar for teaching him everything he needed to know about being in politics.

"You have to learn to work with everyone who walks in the door, whether that is a sibling, a bar customer or an elected official from the other party," he said.

Boehner worked his way through Xavier University at a packing and plastics small business — a business he worked for after graduation. He worked his way up, bought out the person who had become his business partner and over the years, the company grew.

"The last thing I ever thought in my wildest dream I'd ever do was be a part of public service," Boehner said. "Like many small businesspeople, I thought government was too big, they spent too much, and the

regulatory process was out of control."

However, after being involved in his homeowners association, he ran for township trustee because someone was needed to fill the position. Then when his state representative retired, party leaders asked him to run for the Ohio House.

"I told them they were out of their minds, I had a business to run," he said. "But I was frustrated and bored to death, so I thought I could do both, and I ended up serving in the Ohio House for six years."

He made a lot of friends at the Statehouse, both in the House and Senate, Republican and Democrat.

"Vern Riffe and I were friends, even though he was on the other side of the aisle," he told the crowd at the theater in the Vern Riffe building. "I learned something from Vern — say it like it is."

In 1991, he ran for U.S. Congress and began a 25-year career in Washington, D.C. Boehner's accomplishments include being a member of the Gang of Seven, working with Newt Gingrich to craft the "Contract with America," helping elect Ohioan Deborah Pryce to Congress and being elected to a leadership position in the House.

It wasn't always easy. Boehner talked about the House Republican defeat in 1998, when the Republicans were



expecting to add to their majority and ended up losing it. When asked by Gingrich, then Speaker of the House, what to do, Boehner said, "Newt, you've led the team as far as you can. I think it's time to go." The Republican caucus election didn't bode well for Boehner, either, as he lost the election for chairman of the Republican caucus.

"Most members in that situation would just pack their bags and leave," he said. "I decided I wasn't that smart. I was never going to let them see me sweat, never going to show them one ounce of disappointment. I was going to let my work speak for itself, and I was going to work my way back into leadership."

He became a committee chairman and worked on many issues with Democratic Sen. Ted Kennedy; other politicians called them "political bookends."

In 2010, the Republicans took back the House, and Boehner was elected Speaker of the House, a job Boehner calls "a marvelous experience."

"I cut a deal with President Obama to save \$2.4 trillion in spending over 10 years," he said. "That's the reason the deficit dropped four years in a row, and it's the reason federal spending as a percentage

### QUICK GLANCE

John Boehner

Graduated Xavier University

Worked as a small businessman

Served as township trustee

Served in the Ohio House

Served 25 years in Congress

Recently resigned as U.S. Speaker of the House

of our Gross Domestic Product dropped five years in a row.

"We were able to make changes to Medicare, which were the first entitlement changes made in 20 years. We worked with Nancy Pelosi to make small tweaks to help preserve and protect Medicare."

He also put a stop to earmarks.

"Not all earmarks are bad," he said, but he disagreed with the way the process was used to corrupt the legislative process.

*Continued on page 3*

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*You want up-to-date  
information.*

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our members on the  
latest, policy, political and  
business news.*

*We're all for Ohio.*

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## **VISIT ALLFOROHIO.COM**

As many of our members and readers know, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to championing free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

We created the allforohio.com blog site to update our members and the Ohio business community about the latest business, public policy, political and member happenings from around the state.

We invite you to take a look at our new format and encourage you to share our message on your social media platforms.

We're all for enhancing economies and creating jobs.  
Because when we stand together, we all see stronger results.

**WE'RE ALL FOR OHIO.**



# LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR LAUDS BUSINESS ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT ANNUAL MEETING

**QUICK GLANCE**

*Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor talked about:*

The elimination of the state's overwhelming deficit

The creation of more than 400,000 jobs

The challenge of combatting opiate drug addiction

Lt. Governor Mary Taylor addressed the attendees of the Ohio Chamber's Annual Meeting touting her business knowledge and the administration's accomplishments on behalf of the business community. The former state representative was endorsed by the Ohio Chamber Political Action Committee when she ran for the House in 2006 due in part to her business experience.

"I've walked in your shoes, I've been around business decision makers and seen them make decisions," Taylor told the crowd of more than 500 people in the Capitol Theatre. "I've had a great partnership with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and all chambers across Ohio."

This business experience has served her well not only as our state's lieutenant governor, but also as she oversees the Ohio Chamber-backed Common Sense Initiative (CSI). Since its inception in 2012, all proposed state agency rules that impact Ohio businesses must undergo an analysis and be subject to review by the CSI

Office to determine if the regulatory intent of the rule justifies the impact to businesses. According to Taylor, CSI has reviewed 7,700 rules, with 58 percent being eliminated or changed.

The lieutenant governor also talked about the turnaround Ohio has seen since 2010 when she and Gov. John Kasich took office. In addition to speaking about the elimination of the state's overwhelming deficit and the creation of more than 400,000 jobs, Taylor spoke of the challenge of combatting opiate drug addiction, which is impacting not only Ohio families but also employers that support drug-free workplaces.

Infrastructure is another challenge for Ohio, Taylor said.

"We have overlooked infrastructure issues for far too long, both above and below ground," she said.

Taylor said she wants to hear from Ohioans when it comes to our state's continued improvement.

"I hope you'll call us because I do want to hear from you," she said. "If you call with a problem, I would also like your feedback on how to fix the problem. Status quo has never been acceptable to me."

Taylor backed up her statement by giving out her phone number, (614) 644-0935, and encouraged attendees to call.

As she looks back on her past years as the state's second in command,



*When I think back to 2008, 2009 and 2010, I am proud of the work we have done and the progress we have made in Ohio.*

she told the audience she is making every minute count.

"Regardless of what you do in life, make your time count," Taylor

said. "I am working every single day here to make sure I'm making a difference. When I think back to 2008, 2009 and 2010, I am proud of the work we have done and the progress we have made in Ohio. I'm committed to implementing the common-sense, conservative policies that benefit all of you, your business, our families and our communities across the state of Ohio to make our state better for future generations of Ohioans." 🗣️

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**IT'S STILL JUST ME**

However, his greatest accomplishment was arranging for Pope Francis to address a joint session of Congress this past fall, something he'd been working on for 20 years.

"It doesn't get much better than the Pope," he said.

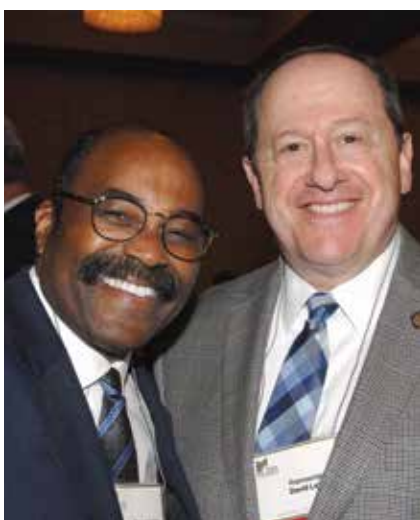
It was one of the highlights of his career, and the next day, he resigned from Congress.

The biggest question on everyone's mind, however, was what he thinks about this year's presidential election.

"Don't ask me to make any sense out of this election season," he said, although he did say he voted for Gov. John Kasich in the Ohio primary. He said he believes that if no one on the Republican side gets the required 1,237 delegates prior to the Republican Convention in July in Cleveland, and there is no majority consensus after the first vote at the convention, then anyone should be eligible for the party nomination.

He closed the program by talking about what he sees in our nation today.

"We have a healthy democracy," he said. "We've got an economy that could be better, but it's better than anything else we've got going. We have an environment around Ohio and the country that allows anyone to do anything they want to do — get an education, succeed in business, innovate, etc. Our country allows you to climb a ladder as high as you want to climb. It's the only country I know where a son of a bartender can grow up to be Speaker of the House." 🗣️



Attendees enjoyed our Legislative Reception following the Annual Meeting.

By *Samantha Cotten, Director, Public Policy Communications*

# LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO LEGALIZE MEDICAL MARIJUANA



Earlier this year, an Ohio House Medical Marijuana Task Force was created to conduct extensive hearings on the topic of legalizing marijuana for medical purposes in Ohio. The task force of 15 people was made up of three state representatives and 12 public members, including representatives from law enforcement, the medical community, marijuana legalization

advocates and business. Linda Hondros, the former chair of our board of directors, was the Ohio Chamber's representative on the task force.

The task force heard more than 23 hours of testimony from more than 100 witnesses. Over the course of six hearings, a wide spectrum of individuals provided the committee with different perspectives on this difficult issue. Medical experts, mothers of children with epilepsy, experts with experience in marijuana legalization from states such as California and Maryland and, most importantly, our member companies testified.

Ohio Chamber members Charlie Conner, CEO of Alcon Tool Co., Mark Swepston, CEO of Atlas Butler Heating & Cooling, and Tom Secor, president of Durable Corp., testified before the task force. They detailed the safeguards needed to protect both employers and employees if medical marijuana is legalized. These include workplace safety, human resource policy, drug screening, workers' compensation coverage and costs, unemployment compensation and avoiding costly litigation.

Phil Parker, president and CEO of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, also testified on behalf of the greater business community. Parker laid out the key concerns for employers and how to best protect businesses should medical marijuana become legal. The Ohio Chamber and our metro chamber partners are in no way endorsing medical marijuana; however, we adamantly advocated that the legislature provide safeguards to the business community.

As a result of the work of the task force, Reps. Steve Huffman, Kirk Schuring and Dan Ramos introduced House Bill 523, which would legalize medical marijuana and lay out a framework to govern its recommended use and regulation by creating a Medical Marijuana Control Commission. The commission would include nine members, with one representative from the business community, and have broad authority to create rules governing and implementing the law.

The legislation would allow physicians to recommend medical marijuana to patients in edible form, as plant matter and in oils or patches. Smoking is not included in the bill at this time but will be discussed through the committee process. The growing, processing, testing and dispensing of medical marijuana would be regulated through rules decided by the commission.

Due to our efforts with the task force, HB 523 has many of the employer protections that were suggested in our testimony. The bill makes it clear that employers are not required to accommodate an employee's use of medical marijuana. It also specifies that an employer can discharge, refuse to hire, or take adverse employment action against an employee who uses medical marijuana. If an employee is discharged for medical marijuana use, he or she would be ineligible for unemployment compensation benefits. HB 523 also outlines that legalizing medical marijuana would not change an employer's ability to receive rebates or discounts from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation's drug-free workplace program.

Again, the Ohio Chamber is not endorsing the legalization of medical marijuana. However, we believe that this difficult issue should be addressed in the legislature, not through a ballot initiative process that amends the Ohio Constitution.

Ohio House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger says HB 523 will quickly move through the legislature, with the goal of having it on the governor's desk by June. This expedited timetable is meant to discourage groups from continuing to amend the state's constitution. However, two groups continue to push ballot initiatives to legalize medical marijuana. As of this writing, they are continuing to collect signatures to get the issue on the ballot for this November's election. The proposed amendments look vastly different from what the legislature is proposing through HB 523, and they do not provide the extensive protections to the business community that are included in HB 523.

The Ohio Chamber will continue to update you on the progress of HB 523, as well as on the ballot initiatives, through *Legislative Update* and our [allforohio.com](http://allforohio.com) blog. 📧

# OHIO CHAMBER LAUNCHES MIDDLE- MARKET TASK FORCE

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce is partnering with Plante Moran to spearhead a program aimed at providing a voice to Ohio's middle-market companies.

## WHAT IS THE MIDDLE MARKET?

The middle market is an economic segment of businesses with gross annual revenue between \$10 million and \$1 billion. There are about 200,000 of these businesses nationwide, which is approximately 3 percent of U.S. businesses. These businesses employ more than one-third of the U.S. workforce and account for one-third of private sector GDP. If middle-market companies were a country, they would be the fifth-largest economy in the world. The numbers are similar in Ohio — middle-market companies employ 37 percent of Ohio's workforce and account for \$26 billion in annual revenue.

## HOW IS THE OHIO CHAMBER HELPING MIDDLE-MARKET BUSINESSES?

It's obvious that the middle market is important to the U.S. and Ohio economies, but the specific needs of these businesses are often overlooked. As a result, the Ohio Chamber is introducing our new Chamber Partner program to better address the needs of our middle-market member companies. The Chamber Partner program is for middle-market companies that want to have a larger footprint on Ohio's economic climate and supply a collective voice in public policy discussions.

Through the partner program, middle-market members will have the opportunity to participate in an ongoing task force designed to help bring together middle-market employers to discuss the needs and challenges specific to this business demographic.

*The Chamber Partner program will hold its first task force event 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 7, 2016, at the Boat House Restaurant in Columbus.*

The Ohio Chamber recently partnered with The Ohio State University's National Center for the Middle Market to help collect data for the study, State of the Middle Market in Ohio, which helped define the needs of Ohio's middle-market employers. This research, along with member input, will guide task force meeting topics, which will include technology, innovation, talent acquisition and succession planning, to name a few.

## HOW CAN MY BUSINESS GET INVOLVED?

The Chamber Partner program will hold its first task force event 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 7, 2016, at the Boat House Restaurant in Columbus. We are partnering with Plante Moran and Columbus 2020 for the event that will focus on middle-market companies expanding internationally. Attendees will hear remarks from industry experts on the current business climate overseas, and there will be a panel discussion with business leaders who have successfully expanded their business internationally. The keynote speaker will be Lou Longo, consulting partner at Plante Moran, who leads the firm's International Business Consulting Services offices in Chicago, Detroit, Shanghai, China, and Monterrey, Mexico. 📧

*To attend this meeting or learn more about upcoming middle-market events, contact Laz Picciano at (614) 228-4201 or [lpicciano@ohiochamber.com](mailto:lpicciano@ohiochamber.com).*

**Middle-market companies  
have annual revenue of**



*Approximately 10% of our members  
are considered middle-market companies.*

By Samantha Cotten, Director, Public Policy Communications

# OSBC LEADS ON RULE RELIEF LEGISLATION



Members of the Ohio Small Business Council (OSBC) have spearheaded ideas for legislation aimed at simplifying the process for implementing and reviewing the government agency rules that regulate small businesses. As a result of input from OSBC members, state legislators recently penned two pieces of legislation, Senate Bill 303 and House Bill 503. These pieces of legislation are companion bills, meaning the language in each is nearly identical. Their purpose is to prevent state agencies from overreaching by treating department policies, information releases, memos or other documents as if they are official rules.

*It expands the definition of an adverse impact on business to include any rule that is likely to reduce revenue or increase expenses.*

Additionally, the legislation contains five key objectives to protect businesses from costly and burdensome policies.

- It prevents a state agency from improperly creating a rule through policy, instead of through the formal rule-making process.
- It requires that any external document referenced within a rule be available at no cost to the requester.
- It expands the definition of an adverse impact on business to include any rule that is likely to reduce revenue or increase expenses.
- It allows rules to be reviewed in between the current five-year review period if a rule is deemed to have an unforeseen negative impact on business.

*Tom Secor, president of Durable Corp., speaks at the press conference introducing SB 303 and HB 503. Joining Secor are the bills' sponsors, Rep. Mike Duffey and Sen. Joe Uecker.*

- It adds new criteria to potentially invalidate a rule if it is not reasonable or related to a cost incurred by the state agency.

All rule reviews are conducted by the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review, whose primary function is to review proposed new, amended and rescinded rules to ensure they do not exceed the state agency's rulemaking authority.

At a recent press conference to announce the introduction of SB 303 and HB 503, OSBC member and Durable Corp. President Tom Secor spoke regarding his experience with a state agency. Secor described a run-in his business experienced with the Ohio EPA in the 1990s. His business had been using scrap tires as a raw material for certain product lines, and he was unaware that the Ohio EPA was going to begin regulating the storage and discarding of scrap tires. This new regulation caused such a significant negative impact on his business that he ultimately had to lay off dozens of employees. If SB 303 or HB 503 had been in place at the time, the accelerated five-year rule review provision would have allowed for the possibility of the destructive rule being repealed. 📌

*We will continue to be involved as the legislation advances through the General Assembly. If you would like to be involved in this process, or have an experience with a state agency to share, contact Brandon Ogden at bogden@ohiochamber.com to become involved with the Ohio Chamber's OSBC.*



Endorsed candidates who were successful in the March primary attended the April 21 Public Affairs meeting.

## 2016 ELECTION: ANALYSIS & RECAP

### ANALYSIS

The possibility of Donald Trump at the top of the ticket has the potential to impact Republicans on the ballot in down-ticket races for federal, state and local seats. Some polling suggests that Trump will negatively impact a generic Republican ballot by as many as eight points. This "Trump Effect" could make races that are traditionally not in play competitive general elections. The effect will be most evident in Ohio House and Senate races, but it could be a significant factor in the U.S. Senate race between incumbent Sen. Rob Portman and his challenger, former Gov. Ted Strickland. This race could very well determine the balance of power in the U.S. Senate. Anti-Trump voting, combined with Strickland's name recognition (especially within Appalachia), makes it a difficult re-election bid, even for someone as widely popular as Portman.

*It will be interesting to see how things play out as the campaigns ramp up their efforts leading into November.*

The political climate in 2016 is certainly a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence. It will be interesting to see how things play out as the campaigns ramp up their efforts leading into November.

### RECAP

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (OCCPAC) endorsed 13 candidates for the General Assembly, and all but two were victorious in their primary bids. Incumbent Rep. Tony Burkley came up short, losing to Craig Riedel by a margin of 53 to 46 percent. Additionally, OCCPAC endorsed Middletown City Councilman Joe Mulligan, who was defeated by first-time candidate Candice Keller by a margin of 59 to 40 percent in an open seat for the 53rd House District.

The primary also finalized the field of candidates for the always important Ohio Supreme Court contests. Pat Fischer, a judge on the Ohio Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, defeated Colleen O'Toole by a margin 54 to 46 percent for the Republican nomination to the Ohio Supreme Court. The seat is being vacated by retiring Justice Judith Lanzinger. Fischer will go on to face Democrat John O'Donnell in the general election. Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor will be unopposed in November as she seeks a final term. Two other Appeals Court judges, Republican Pat DeWine of Cincinnati and Judge Cynthia Rice of Warren, will square off for the right to replace term-limited Justice Paul Pfeiffer.

On the federal side, businessman Warren Davidson won the GOP mega-primary to replace former Speaker John Boehner in the 8th Congressional District. The special election will take place June 7. There were no surprises in former Gov. Strickland's primary for U.S. Senate. He defeated both Cincinnati Councilman P.G. Sittenfeld and Kelli Prather with 65 percent of the vote. Strickland's victory sets up what is likely to be one of the most competitive general elections in the U.S. Senate with incumbent Sen. Rob Portman (also victorious in his primary). 📌

# DESPITE RECENT BALLOT DEFEAT, LEGALIZED MARIJUANA SHOULD STILL BE HIGH ON THE LIST OF EMPLOYER CONCERNS

Despite the overwhelming defeat of Issue 3 in November 2015, new efforts to legalize marijuana in Ohio have quickly materialized in the form of new ballot initiatives and proposed legislation. The language of two different ballot initiatives has already been certified by the Ohio Ballot Board. Both of those initiatives would allow the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes and provide constitutional protections to medical marijuana users, growers and processors. One of the initiatives also includes a constitutional right to grow and process industrial hemp. House Bill 523 was recently introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives to legalize medical marijuana in Ohio. If any of these initiatives pass, Ohio would become the 26th state (in addition to the District of Columbia) to legalize medical marijuana.

It appears that the proposed legislation will move quickly in an effort to blunt the more expansive ballot initiatives. HB 523 contains some level of protection for Ohio employers. HB 523 provides that employers are not required to accommodate an employee's use of medical marijuana. Moreover, under the proposed legislation, employers can still maintain drug-free workplaces and drug testing programs and would not be prohibited from refusing to hire or discharging employees because of marijuana use or positive drug tests. Additionally, discharge for using marijuana would constitute just cause for the purposes of denying unemployment benefits. This last provision is certainly an improvement for Ohio employers over the manner in which Michigan unemployment benefits have been awarded.

Because marijuana remains a Schedule I illegal drug under the federal Controlled Substances Act, the passage of legalized medical and/or recreational marijuana in other states has not affected an employer's right to prohibit employees from reporting to work under the influence of marijuana or testing positive for marijuana metabolites. However, the law in this area is rapidly evolving as the courts interpret recently passed state laws and federal legislators seek modifications to existing law. In a Colorado case, *Coats v. Dish Network*, an employee was discharged after a positive drug screen revealed his use of marijuana, which was prescribed for medical reasons. Colorado's law legalizing marijuana specifically states that employers are not required to modify their drug-free workplace policies to accommodate employee drug use. Nonetheless, the employee argued that the company did not prove that he was "impaired" at work, despite testing positive, and therefore he could not have been lawfully terminated under another Colorado statute prohibiting the termination of an employee for engaging in lawful activities outside of work. The Colorado Supreme Court upheld the employee's termination because marijuana is still illegal under federal law and, therefore, the employee was not engaged in "lawful activities." Some states specifically prohibit employers from terminating employees for lawful marijuana use. These are the types of issues employers will continue to face as courts and legislators balance the right of employers to create and enforce reasonable work rules against marijuana use with employee use of marijuana for medical or recreational purposes.

Closer to home, in *Casias v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a decision interpreting Michigan's medical marijuana statute and held that Michigan's statute does not prohibit employers from terminating employees under an employer's drug-free workplace policy — even if the employee is using marijuana pursuant to a lawfully obtained medical marijuana card. The court reasoned that Michigan's statute did not apply to private employers. However, a Michigan state court of appeals ruled that an employee terminated for violating an employer's drug testing policy was still entitled to unemployment compensation. That court reasoned that Michigan's medical marijuana statute restricted the government from penalizing lawful medical marijuana users and, because unemployment compensation was a government benefit, the denial of that benefit was prohibited even though the termination of the employee by the private employer was lawful.

It remains to be seen whether Ohio will be added to the ever-growing list of states that legalize marijuana for medical or recreational use. In any event, now is a good time for Ohio employers to review and revise their drug testing policies and procedures to address the potential impact of legalized marijuana in their workplaces. 🍷

*James Yates and Sarah Pawlicki are members in Eastman & Smith Ltd.'s Labor and Employment group and are both Senior Professionals in Human Resources (SPHRs) and SHRM Professionals Senior Certified (SHRM-SCPs). Between them, they have more than 35 years of experience partnering with human resource professionals to make workplaces better (and legally compliant). They can be reached at (419) 241-6000 or jyates@eastmansmith.com and sepawlicki@eastmansmith.com.*



*It remains to be seen whether Ohio will be added to the ever-growing list of states that legalize marijuana for medical or recreational use.*

## THANK YOU

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# THE OHIO CHAMBER IN ACTION

Photos from left to right:

1. OSBC member Charlie Connor testifying in front of the Medical Marijuana Task Force.
2. Public Affairs Committee
3. OSBC committee



## COMMITTEES IN ACTION

See how the Ohio Chamber is working to help your business.

Learn how to get involved.

### HEALTH CARE

**Last Meeting:** December 2015  
**Next Meeting:** TBD  
**Contact:** Keith Lake – klake@ohiochamber.com

#### Recent Work:

Ohio Drug Price Relief Act

- Committee voted to oppose the act
- For more information on the Drug Price Relief Act, visit our blog, allforohio.com

**Key Speakers:** Kevin Orr, Pfizer; Jenny Camper on behalf of PhRMA

#### Important Legislation:

- HB 248
- HB 350 – Autism health care coverage mandate
  - Increases small employer health insurance premiums and limits their plan design options by forcing health insurers to include coverage for the screening, diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder in all grandfathered plans and group plans offered to employers with more than 50 employees.
  - The Ohio Chamber has testified in opposition to both bills and is meeting with lawmakers individually to express its concerns.

### OSBC

**Last Meeting:** April 2016  
**Next Meeting:** July 13, 2016  
**Contact:** Brandon Ogden – bogden@ohiochamber.com

#### Recent Work:

HB 503/SB 503

- OSBC lead to have this legislation introduced
- See *OSBC Leads on Rule Relief Legislation* in this edition for details.

#### Key Speakers:

Sen. Joe Uecker, Sponsor of SB 303; Scott Lipps, candidate for the 62nd House District

#### Important Legislation:

- HB 387 – Would raise the small claims court maximum from \$3,000 to \$6,000, allowing the expedited system to be utilized in more cases
- HB 394 – Comprehensive changes to fix the broken unemployment compensation system in Ohio

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**Last Meeting:** April 2016  
**Next Meetings:** June 22, 2016 – The meeting will feature candidates from the Ohio Supreme Court.  
 • Aug. 30, 2016 – Campaign updates from party leaders  
 • Sept. 21, 2016 – Chamber Choice endorsed candidate reception

**Contact:** Keith Lake – klake@ohiochamber.com

#### Recent Work:

Endorsements

- After the successful endorsement of primary candidates for the General Assembly, the committee heard from six open seat candidates that won their March 15 primary elections.

**Key Speakers:** Wes Goodman, Derek Merrin, Darrell Kick, Scott Wiggam, Rick Carfagna

### ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

**Last Meeting:** March 2016  
**Next Meeting:** May 4, 2016 – The meeting will cover energy mandates and the extension of the current freeze.

**Contact:** Keith Lake – klake@ohiochamber.com

**Recent Work:** Overview of major air rules pending in court that could impact Ohio businesses

**Key Speakers:** Rep. Tim Schaffer, Chair of the House Public Utilities Committee; Sen. Bill Seitz, Chair of the Senate Public Utilities Committee; Bob Hodanbosi, Chief of the Division of Air Pollution Protection, Ohio EPA

**Important Legislation:** HB 176

### EMPLOYMENT LAW

**Last Meeting:** March 2015

**Next Meeting:** June 9, 2016 at 1:30 p.m.

**Contact:** Don Boyd – dboyd@ohiochamber.com

#### Recent Work:

- SB 268 – Employment Law Uniformity Act
  - See allforohio.com for more details on this legislation.
- HB 394 – Structural fixes to the unemployment compensation system
  - Visit ohiochamber.com and allforohio.com for more details.

#### Important Legislation:

- HB 355 – Employee misclassification
- SB 301 – Pregnancy Reasonable Accommodation Act
- HB 511/SB 307 – Paid Family and Medical Leave

### WORKERS' COMPENSATION

**Last Meeting:** December 2016

**Next Meeting:** June 30, 2016 at 1:30 p.m.

**Contact:** Don Boyd – dboyd@ohiochamber.com

#### Recent Work:

BWC policy changes, such as other states' coverage and successor liability; BWC rate reduction

#### Important Legislation:

- SB 5 – Increases workers' compensation costs by, for the first time, eliminating the physical injury requirement for workers' compensation eligibility for a specific category of workers
- HB 207 – Subrogated claims involving motor vehicle accidents caused by a third party
- HB 355 – Employee misclassification

### TAXATION AND PUBLIC EXPENDITURES

**Last Meeting:** April 2016

**Next Meeting:** TBD

**Contact:** Dan Navin – dnavin@ohiochamber.com

**Recent Work:** HB 343 – Repealing the employment services tax

**Key Speakers:** Sen. Bob Peterson and Rep. Jeff McClain regarding the 2020 Tax Commission

#### Important Legislation / Issues:

- HB 343 – Repealing the employment services tax
- SB 264 – Establishes the weekend beginning on the first Friday in August as a sales tax holiday for purchases up to \$75 for clothing and up to \$20 for school instructional materials
- SB 288 – Reduces the withholding tax rate on the business income of owners, shareholders and partners of pass-through entities
- HB 466 – Exempts digital advertising services from sales tax
- 2020 Tax Commission
- Providing testimony and recommendations to the commission regarding tax policy

### EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Last Meeting:** March 2016

**Next Meeting:** TBD

**Contact:** Dan Navin – dnavin@ohiochamber.com

#### Key Speakers:

Doug Lumpkin, director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), outlined the department's plans for launching the Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program.

#### Important Legislation:

- HB 474 – Higher education mid-biennium review bill (MBR)
- HB 383 – Requires a one semester/one-half credit of financial literacy course/instruction for high school graduation



# CHAMBER WORKS FOR THE GOOD OF ALL



As I was listening to former U.S. Speaker of the House John Boehner speak at our Annual Meeting about how it has gotten harder and harder to get things done in Washington, D.C., I couldn't help but think about the work the Ohio Chamber does to build compromise and collaboration to achieve our goals. One thing the former speaker said really struck me — "A leader without followers is simply a person out taking a walk."

The former speaker spoke candidly about the changes he saw in the House from when he started in 1991 to what it is like today. According to Boehner, there has been an increasing lack of reaching across the aisle, and even working within one's own party has become a challenge.

He attributed the difference between then and now to the explosion of media. In 1996, there was one talk radio host. Now there are dozens, all trying to get their voices heard by talking louder than the next one, and many "stir things up unnecessarily." In 1991, there was one cable news network that broadcast the news 24/7. Now there are several, which seem to cover politics more than news. Finally, the explosion of social media has really been a game changer. Boehner said the American people are

getting 100 times more information about government than they ever have before, and not all of it is true.

He said, "There are some politicians that use social media avenues for their own political purposes and with their own version of truth. This massive amount of information is pushing or pulling people to the left or right, leaving fewer and fewer people in the middle." Thus, less and less is getting done.

At the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, we represent businesses of all sizes, in all areas of commerce, from all areas of the state. Sometimes we have members on both sides of an issue. What may be good for one company may not be good for another. That's when we have to consider what is best for the state's business community as a whole.

Sometimes we also find ourselves weighing in on controversial social issues that would impact Ohio's businesses. Case in point is the newly introduced medical marijuana legislation. We led the campaign to defeat recreational marijuana in November 2015. Earlier this year, the Ohio House put together a special task force to discuss the possibility of making medical marijuana

available in our state. Because of our reputation as the voice of Ohio's business, chamber member and past chair of our board of directors, Linda Hondros, CEO of Hondros Family of Companies, was appointed to the task force to represent the concerns of the business community. In addition, many of our members testified in front of the task force about the problems that legalization presents to employers when it comes to worker safety.

Because we have a 123-year history of garnering respect at the Statehouse, the concerns our members voiced during the task force hearings were heard and included in the legislation. It's because of our collaboration that the proposed legislation included employer protections, and we will continue to advocate that those protections stay in the bill. We hope that by working together, the final legislation will be something that all Ohioans can live with.

It's very gratifying when hard work allows both sides to come together for the benefit of the whole. I can only hope those in Washington will do the same. 🇺🇸

*Andrew E. Deebul*

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## HR ACADEMY UPCOMING WEBINARS

ALL WEBINARS ARE FREE AND TAKE PLACE  
10 TO 11:30 A.M. ON THE FOLLOWING DATES.

### Wednesday, May 18, Ohio's Proposed Medical Marijuana Laws: A Smart Approach for Employers

Presented by Christopher J. Lalak,  
Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP

### Wednesday, May 25, Train Your Supervisors and Managers About Your Ohio Workers' Compensation Program!

Presented by Bill Wahoff, Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

### Wednesday, June 22, Top 10 Overtime and Minimum Wage Mistakes

Presented by attorneys with Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP

Register at [www.hracademyohio.com](http://www.hracademyohio.com) and click on Webinars.  
For more information on the HR Academy, contact Michelle Donovan at  
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