

## **2010 CBICC Legislative Priorities and Policies**

The landscape of legislative issues important to Centre County business has not drastically changed over the last year. The Government Affairs Committee believes, however, that the order of primary priorities for advocacy deserves slight adjustment as follows. Moreover, the Committee believes that the membership should be kept informed on two additional critical issues.

### ***SECONDARY PRIORITIES (not prioritized)***

#### **Lawsuit Abuse**

Pennsylvania remains unfriendly to businesses and medical professionals who risk having to defend frivolous lawsuits and receiving unreasonable court judgments. Our antiquated legal system is in need of reform. Providing business a fair, predictable and even-handed legal system would provide a “stimulus” to Pennsylvania’s lagging economy.

The high legal costs paid by Pennsylvania employers stunt the Commonwealth’s economic growth and job creation. We need to inject fairness, common sense and personal responsibility into our courts by continuing to reform our antiquated legal system. Legal reform must include:

- Repeal of joint and several liability.
- Protection of innocent sellers.
- Statute of repose in product liability.
- Caps on non-economic damages.
- Limiting recovery of punitive damages.

## **Issues to Monitor in 2010**

Because they may eventually have a negative impact on the business community, the Government Affairs Committee believes the following issues should be closely monitored in 2010, The Committee may recommend taking an advocacy position in the future.

#### **Funding Municipal and State Pensions**

Currently there are no clear answers on how businesses and individual tax payer will pay for underfunded municipal and state pension plans starting in 2012. Plans soon need to be adopted to address the inevitable and unfortunate future implications.

## **On-Time Passage of the State Budget**

The constitutionally mandated June 30 deadline for a budget passage has been ignored by the General Assembly for seven straight years. The practice of treating budget adoption as a political chessboard is not productive. The result has caused uncertainty, and in some cases a slowdown in the Pennsylvania economy. The General Assembly's time and efforts should be directed toward more positive and productive changes to Pennsylvania laws.