

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.

PRIMARY PRIORITIES

4. Energy

Abundant, reasonably priced energy is a critically important component of a healthy business economy. Lack of this resource significantly hampers economic development efforts as well as efforts to retain existing employers.

The Chamber supports efforts to secure a ready supply of reasonably priced energy. This can be best accomplished by the following:

- Ensuring that energy policies are competitive with other counties and states.
- Encouraging greater use of Pennsylvania's natural resources.
- Promoting energy conservation efforts by all businesses and industries.
- Avoiding the placing of price controls on any energy sources.
- Supporting the exploration of domestic natural gas and oil supplies using appropriate environmental controls.
- Allowing the market to select the most appropriate energy technologies and avoiding governmental agencies selecting or forcing favored technologies.
- Providing incentives to research and make use of alternative energy sources.

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.