



SBAC Legislative Agenda

The Small Business Advocacy Council (SBAC) is a non-partisan, member-driven, organization representing hundreds of small business owners in Illinois. We actively engage in shaping public policy to reflect the interests of the small business community. To create a better business climate in Illinois, the SBAC proposes the following measures for the General Assembly to consider.

Pass a responsible budget and enact the reforms necessary to revive the IL economy

The SBAC urges our state's elected officials to pass a responsible budget and enact the reforms necessary to revive the Illinois economy. On June 30th, the Illinois General Assembly passed a short-term spending plan, which funds education for full year and state services for six months. While this partial budget temporarily averts a shutdown of many essential services and institutions, Illinois needs a full budget along with long-term solutions that will help revive the state's economy.

Our politicians' inability to reach a compromise and pass a responsible budget is having a devastating impact on the Illinois economy and driving the state deeper into debt. It is also causing remarkable uncertainty in the small business community and driving entrepreneurs out of our state. Leadership's inability to find common ground is also hurting non-profits, college students and causing many others to endure unnecessary pain. We ask our legislators to compel leadership to come together, hash out their differences, and pass a responsible budget before more damage is done to Illinois economy and its people.

Workers' Compensation Reform

The SBAC urges legislators to pass fair workers' compensation reform. Illinois was named the No. 7 costliest workers' comp state in the 2014 Oregon Workers' Compensation Premium Rate Ranking Summary. The manner by which Illinois handles causation is one of the reasons for our state's high workers' compensation premiums. Currently, Illinois has a 1 percent causation standard, meaning that if the workplace is responsible for the injury in any way, the employer pays in full.

The SBAC and several coalition partners have been advocating for a workers' compensation proposal that charges arbitrators with apportioning damages and compensating injured workers to the extent a work-related accident caused their injuries. For example, if an arbitrator determines 20% of an injury was caused at work and the remaining condition was caused by other factors, a petitioner would collect 20% of the award for damages. If an arbitrator determines that an injury was 80% attributed to a work injury, and 20% to other

factors, an employee would recover 80% of the damages award. More than half the states have adopted percentage-based or proportional causation systems.

Pension Reform

The SBAC urges legislators to support a bi-partisan pension bill sponsored by Representative Mark Batinick. Under this proposal, eligible retirees will be offered the option to take a lump sum payment in exchange for all or a portion of their annuity, at a 25% discount to the state. Only those retiring will be presented this option. While Illinois faces a growing \$111 billion pension shortfall, this bill could potentially net the state billions in long-term savings. Most importantly, this legislation provides a voluntary and constitutional approach to addressing the state's pension obligations, while giving retirees greater control over their money. We ask our elected officials to make it a top priority to pass constitutional pension reform in 2017.

Lowering LLC Fees

The SBAC urges elected officials to support legislation that lowers Limited Liability Company (LLC) fees to match what corporations pay. The fees associated with filing and operating an LLC in Illinois are among the highest in the nation and substantially higher than what corporations pay. Forming as a LLC is the right choice for many small businesses as it provides the limited liability features of a corporation and the tax efficiencies and operational flexibility of a partnership. Unfortunately, far too many business owners do not form LLCs because excessive fees prompt them to form as a corporation or to simply file in other states. Lowering LLC fees is supported by Democrats, Republicans, and over 50 trade and business organizations.

Allow Restaurants that are Within 100 ft. of a Church to Sell Alcohol

We urge our elected officials to support allowing restaurants that are within 100 ft. of a church to sell alcohol. Under State law, a liquor license cannot be issued when a licensee is within 100 feet of a church or place of worship. Every community is unique and faces different challenges, therefore, the SBAC supports giving local governments discretion over this standard. Eliminating this requirement will help spur economic development and job growth, especially in underserved communities, who experience a high concentration of places of worship. It is important to note that such an exemption would be strictly limited to restaurants where the sale of alcoholic liquor is incidental or secondary to the business' primary activity.

Term Limits on Leadership

The SBAC urges legislators to support limiting a person's total service in the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives, President of the Senate, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives and Minority Leader of the Senate. Reform is important to ensure no one individual accumulates too much power or influence over our state's government. It will also help curb the influence of entrenched interests in the political process and give it back to voters.