



JULY 2018

# Government Advocacy News

## **Making Sense of the Fall Elections; *It seems like the world is going crazy.***

*By Eileen Anderson, Director, Government Relations*

Every so often even a seasoned advice columnist turns to someone for counsel. And, so it is with “Dear Abby” asking SMC’s Government Relations Director, Eileen Anderson, “What’s up?” Here is a recently reported exchange

*Dear Abby, It seems like the world is going crazy.*

*Eileen Anderson, It is.*

*Abby, What can we do?*

*Eileen, For starters, read this election article in SMC Business Councils’ Newsletter.*

*Abby, Why?*

*Eileen, Because elections have consequences. Know who you are voting for this fall.*

[Read More>>](#)

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## **SMC Business Councils’ Tax and Energy Event: Energy Recap**

*By Colleen O’Laughlin, SMC Government Relations Assistant*

Two of the most important subjects to small businesses are energy cost and tax reform. SMC Business Councils hosted two very informative panels on those topics in its Cranberry office on Thursday, June 14, 2018. [Read More>>](#)

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## **SMC Lobbying Update**

*By Eileen Anderson, Director, Government Relations*

Senate Bill 234 – (Energy) Establishes a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program. This is a means of financing clean energy projects, water conservation projects or alternative energy systems. SB 234 makes it possible for commercial and industrial property owners to obtain low-cost, long-term financing through voluntary tax assessments. PACE financing does not require any public funds. If a property is sold or transferred that assessment simply continues with the new property owner.

*STATUS: This SMC supported legislation was approved by Governor Wolf on June 12. Once approved it became Act 30 with an effective date of 8/11/18. [Read More>>](#)*

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## **PA’s 2018-2019 Budget Numbers [Read More>>](#)**

# Human Resources News

## Compliance Overview

### Legalized Marijuana and Employment: Off-duty Use and Drug Testing

While all marijuana use remains illegal under federal law, most states have enacted laws that allow certain uses of marijuana or a marijuana derivative. None of these laws place any restrictions on an employer's right to administer drug tests or to prohibit their employees from using or being under the influence of marijuana at work or during work hours. [Read More>>](#)

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## Live Well, Work Well

### WHO calls for a ban on artificially produced trans fat

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that the artificially produced trans fats found in junk and fried foods contribute to more than 500,000 preventable deaths annually. That's why the WHO has released REPLACE, a guide for governments to eliminate industrially produced trans fat in their countries. Their goal is to remove all artificially produced trans fats from the global food supply by 2023. [Read More>>](#)

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## Benefits Insights

### Health Advocacy Services

We all know how confusing health care can be. Between copays, eligible expenses and dense coverage policies, sometimes it feels like you need a master's degree just to understand your hospital bill. And with high deductible health plans gaining popularity each year, it's critical that employees understand what their health decisions are costing them. This is where health advocacy services—sometimes called patient advocacy—can help. [Read More>>](#)

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## HR Brief

### IQ or EQ: What's More Valuable to Your Company?

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that the artificially produced trans fats found in junk and fried foods contribute to more than 500,000 preventable deaths annually. That's why the WHO has released REPLACE, a guide for governments to eliminate industrially produced trans fat in their countries. Their goal is to remove all artificially produced trans fats from the global food supply by 2023. [Read More>>](#)

# Insurance News

## Compliance Bulletin

### **DOL Finalizes Rule to Expand Association Health Plans**

On June 19, 2018, the Department of Labor (DOL) released a final rule that gives small businesses more freedom to join together as a single group to purchase health insurance in the large group market or to self-insure. These benefit arrangements are called association health plans (AHPs).

[Read More>>](#)

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## Cleveland Clinic is now part of the UPMC Health Plan network, effective July 1, 2018

UPMC Health Plan is pleased to announce that Cleveland Clinic is now part of our network, effective July 1, 2018. [Read More>>](#)

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## Benefits Buzz

### **ACA Affordability Percentages Will Increase for 2019**

The IRS recently issued a Revenue procedure to index the contribution percentages used to determine the affordability of an employer's plan under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

These updated affordability percentages are effective for taxable years and plan years beginning Jan. 1, 2019. They represent a significant increase from the affordability contribution percentages for 2018. [Read More>>](#)

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## FactFile

### **100 Top Hospitals ®**

Formerly known as the Truven Health Analytics® 100 Top Hospitals, the Watson Health™ 100 Top Hospitals® annual study spotlights the best-performing hospitals in the U.S. based on publicly available data used to create a balanced scorecard of clinical, operational, and patient satisfaction metrics. The study has been conducted annually since 1993. [Read More>>](#)



# Connections News

## July Coffee Connections: What can SMC do for you?

**All programs are from 8:00-9:30 am, continental breakfast included**

July 17, 2018, SMC Office, Cranberry Twp., PA, [Register here.](#)

July 18, 2018, King's Family Restaurant, Canonsburg, PA, [Register here.](#)

July 19, 2018, Panera Bread, Greensburg, PA, [Register here.](#)

July 24, 2018, Brew Crumberland's Best, Mechanicsburg, PA, [Register here.](#)

July 25, 2018, iron-ic, York, PA, [Register here.](#)

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## SMC Charity Golf Outing - River Forest Golf Club

*Benefits The First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge*

**August 20, 9:00 am Shotgun | Shamble Golf Outing**

Gather your group together for golf and plan for a relaxing day outdoors with SMC members and guests, while contributing to a worthy cause. For information, [click here!](#)

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## Meet and Move Luncheon

*DoubleTree by Hilton, Cranberry*

**September 10, 11:30 am Registration**

Meet and greet business members of SMC Business Councils, the Pittsburgh North Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Beaver County Chamber of Commerce during a progressive lunch. For information, [click here!](#)

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## Save the dates! Watch for details.

### ■ Fall Connections Evening

*The Rivers Club, Downtown, Pittsburgh*

**September 27, 5:00 pm, Small Business Issues Forum**

**6:00 pm, Networking Reception**

### ■ HR Essentials Series Level I - presented by MBA

*SMC Business Councils, Cranberry Twp., PA*

**October 30, 31 and November 1, 8:00 am**

# Other Business News

## **MBA Training Programs -- an Investment in Your Future** **Make employee training part of your business growth strategy**

SMC has partnered with the Manufacturer & Business Association (MBA) training department to offer key leadership programs to SMC members. MBA is the preferred resource for employers looking to invest in professional development training for their workforce.

With over 10,000 Supervisory Skills graduates and counting, see why MBA's training programs are an investment in your future. For information on SMC's fall Certified Supervisory Skills Series, [click here!](#)

To see SMC's first group of graduates of the 2018 Certified Supervisory Skills Series, [click here!](#)

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## **Summer Fun Guide**

### **Enjoy big discounts to your favorite summertime venues!**

Enjoy deep discounts on your favorite summertime venues. Recreation venues include, the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium, Hershey Park, Cedar Point and much more. Savings are also available on musical entertainment. The Summer Fun Guide discounts is available to employers and employees of member companies. To access the Summer Fun Guide, [click here](#).

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## **Get up to 4 hours of FREE Conference Room Use each month with your SMC membership**

Did you know as part of your SMC membership you can use our conference room for up to four hours free each month for your important business meetings? We also have office space available for private business meetings. For information, contact Kim at 412-342-1607 or email [kim@smc.org](mailto:kim@smc.org).

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## **Get a FREE, No-obligation Insurance Review**

When it comes to your business, insurance is one of the highest expenses your company incurs and we do our best to give you the coverage you need at a cost you can afford. When was the last time you reviewed your insurance options? Let us help you find the insurance options that are best for your business. SMC insurance experts are on hand to give you honest answers to all of your insurance questions. Call Dan Vok at SMC and get your FREE quote(s) today! Dan can be reached directly at 412-342-1625 or email [Dan.Vok@smc.org](mailto:Dan.Vok@smc.org).