



# GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

ADVANCING THE MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

OCTOBER 2017



The reception is SMC’s way of recognizing the efforts of our region’s elected officials for their service to our communities. It also provides a networking opportunity complete with good food and drink against a background of lively conversation. [Read More>>](#)

## “What Keeps You Up at Night?” Small Business Issues Forum, 9/28/17

By Eileen Anderson, Director, Government Relations



“Standing room only” was the message after 44 forum seats were filled with many new faces. The meeting format charged from the previous years’ government

committee meetings with reports on legislation to an open discussion. There were five tables of eight, each with a leader who facilitated and took notes. All were encouraged to share their thoughts on “What keeps you up at night?” The buzz at the forum was electric and conversation was animated. At the close of the meeting notes were collected and analyzed. The findings are the start of SMC’s 2018 legislative agenda.

Two impromptu visitors, Sen. Randy Vulakovich and Rep. Bill Kortz, sat in on the discussions. They were invited to speak to the group for a few minutes. Senator Vulakovich spoke about the budget impasse and the difficulty finding adequate revenue for the spending plan to close the \$2.2 billion shortfall. [Read More>>](#)

## Do You take Advantage of All New Hire & Existing Employees’ Tax Credits? Do You Qualify?

By: George Villegas, Affinity Resource Group  
[george@affinityresourcegroup.com](mailto:george@affinityresourcegroup.com)

Today employers have the opportunity to take advantage of more tax credits than ever before. While tax credits were initially introduced in the 40’s and were specifically designed for Veterans, they were expanded in the 80’s and 90’s to a broader segment of the working population, including Residents living in Empowerment Zones or Rural Renewal Counties, SNAP (Food Stamp) Recipients, Ex-Felons, Supplemental Security Income Recipients, Employees receiving certain types of vocation training, Summer Youth Employees, and Seasonal Workers. [Read More>>](#)

### Coming Up in November Government Advocacy Newsletter

Introducing “Harrisburg Insiders’ Points of View”

- **State Budget Update**
- **House Bill 18** - Workers’ Compensation Drug Formulary

Watch for the **Brief SMC Government News** monthly report next week from Eileen Anderson

- **House Bill 18**
- **Senate Bill 561** - Economically Significant Regulations
- **Protz Supreme Court Decision** - Workers’ Compensation evaluations
- **House Bill 1613** - PA Health Care Cost Containment Council
- **2017-18 PA Budget** - mini update
- **Federal tax reform proposal**

Not subscribed? email [eileenanderson@smc.org](mailto:eileenanderson@smc.org)



# INSURANCE AGENCY



## Court Orders EEOC to Reconsider Wellness Rules

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has directed the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to reconsider its final wellness rules under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA).

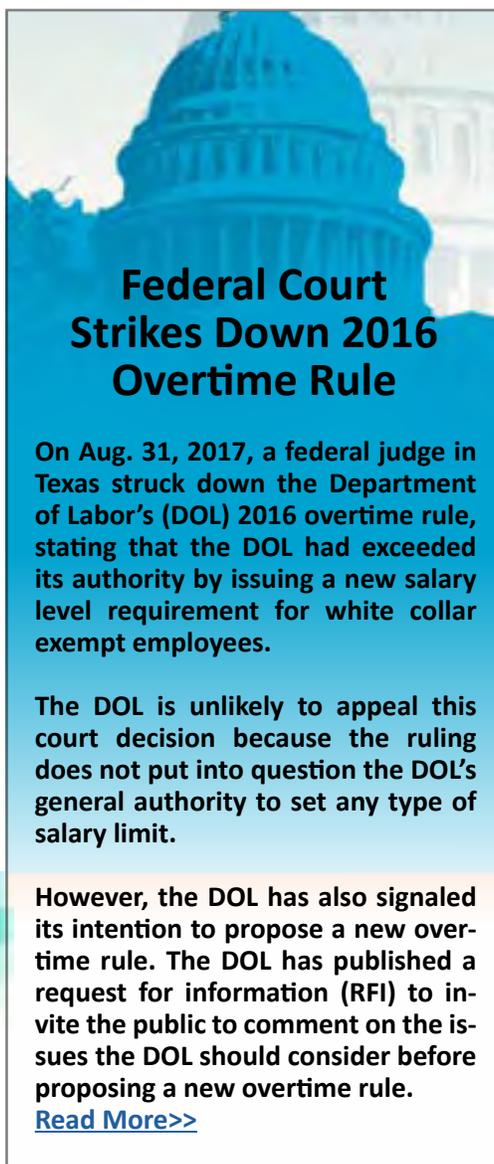
The final rules allow employers to offer wellness incentives of up to 30 percent of the cost of health plan coverage.

[Read More>>](#)



## Open Enrollment Education Opportunities

Open enrollment is a period of time each year when employers permit new employees to enroll in a health plan and allow current employees to make changes to their existing medical coverage. During open enrollment, employees may decide to change plans, add or drop a dependent or add an optional benefit, such as a dental plan.



## Federal Court Strikes Down 2016 Overtime Rule

On Aug. 31, 2017, a federal judge in Texas struck down the Department of Labor’s (DOL) 2016 overtime rule, stating that the DOL had exceeded its authority by issuing a new salary level requirement for white collar exempt employees.

The DOL is unlikely to appeal this court decision because the ruling does not put into question the DOL’s general authority to set any type of salary limit.

However, the DOL has also signaled its intention to propose a new overtime rule. The DOL has published a request for information (RFI) to invite the public to comment on the issues the DOL should consider before proposing a new overtime rule.

[Read More>>](#)

Employers can assist employees during open enrollment by distributing materials that explain new health options and changes to existing benefits.

*Employers can assist employees during open enrollment by distributing materials that explain new health options and changes to existing benefits. [Read More>>](#)*

# ACA COMPLIANCE BULLETIN

## NEW SBC TEMPLATE REQUIRED FOR 2018 OPEN ENROLLMENT

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The SBC is a concise document providing information about health plan coverage and costs.
- The SBC requirement applies to group health plans and health insurance issuers.
- For calendar year plans, the updated template and related materials must be used for the 2018 open enrollment period.

### OVERVIEW

The updated template and related materials for the summary of benefits and coverage (SBC) are required to be used for annual open enrollment periods beginning on or after April 1, 2017. For calendar year plans, this means that the updated template must be used for the 2018 open enrollment period.

The SBC is a concise document providing simple and consistent information about health plan benefits and coverage. It is intended to help consumers better understand their coverage and to make it easy to compare different options when shopping for new coverage.

[Read More>>](#)



# HUMAN RESOURCES

## Pot on the Job? Managing a Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace

October 19 | 8:00-11:00 am, SMC Office Panel of Experts

Please join us for a panel discussion from three experts who will present and discuss the critical points of concern surrounding medical marijuana and substance abuse in the workplace. Our experts will articulate:

- Legal pathway for medical marijuana and substance abuse issues
- Concerns of workplace policies and procedures
- Testing, screening and substance performance behaviors

To learn more and to register, [click here!](#)



## The Impact of Opioids on Workers' Comp

By David R. Leng

A 16th-century philosopher once observed that on many occasions “the remedy is worse than the disease.” And this would seem to be the case, when narcotics are prescribed to treat workplace injuries and that “cure” becomes the addictive problem.

In all, about 2.8 million private-industry workers and 752,000 public-sector employees suffered nonfatal workplace injuries in 2015, more than half resulting in time away from work. [Read More>>](#)



## Community Job/Training Fair and Financial Aid Night

This November The Freeport Area School District will be combining our annual Financial Aid Night with a Community Job/Training Fair! The date is scheduled for November 15, 2017 from 5:30-8:00pm. We are looking for employers as well as education and training partners in the local area to participate. All organizations are welcome to bring applications, post job openings and even conduct on the spot interviews. From 6:30-7:30 pm we will be providing our Financial Aid Workshop and a Resume Writing Workshop to the public.

If your business is interested in participating please contact Sara Lang at [lang@freeport.k12.pa.us](mailto:lang@freeport.k12.pa.us).

Please RSVP by October 31, 2017. Spaces will be first come first serve.

## A Simple Way to Lower Your Cholesterol

**Studies show that regular exercise can lower cholesterol. And a little goes a long way.**

You may have heard about the many benefits of exercise, but you may not know that improved cholesterol is one of them.

If you do it vigorously enough, with exercises like cycling or jogging, you could lower your bad LDL cholesterol at the same time that you boost your good HDL cholesterol.

Here are a few tips to get started: [Read More>>](#)



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

ADVANCING THE MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

OCTOBER 2017

## Ready, Start, Go Global! Export Basics Seminar



Date: 10/24/2017 | Time: 09:00 AM-12 NOON  
Location: Duquesne University Rockwell Hall, Pgh., PA

95% of the world's population lives outside the U.S. Foreign customers want the quality of "U.S. made" products! Companies who export, are more competitive and pay higher benefits! - The world is waiting for you!

Registration Fee-\$49 [www.duq.edu/sbdc](http://www.duq.edu/sbdc)

## Cybersecurity: How to Prevent Potential Threats



Date: 10/26/2017 | Time: 09:00 AM-11AM  
Location: SMC Business Councils, Cranberry, PA

The global cost of cybercrime is predicted to reach 2 trillion by 2019.

Cybersecurity is a critical piece to every business, but many business owners are not sure of the steps they need to take. This workshop can get you started!

[Read More>>](#)

## Join us for some Holiday Cheer! PLAN TO ATTEND OUR HOLIDAY PARTY.



**December 6, 2017**  
Holiday Party & Food Drive  
The Rivers Casino, Pittsburgh

**Details Coming Soon!**

# Fall BACK!

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Sunday, November 5, 2017

Don't forget to set your clocks  
back one hour at 2:00 am Sunday.



## Member Networking Event

Wednesday, November 8, 2017 | 5:30-7:30 PM  
Ember & Vine-DoubleTree, Cranberry

SMC Business Councils, Pittsburgh North Regional Chamber and the Butler County Chamber of Commerce



- Partners -



Join us for an evening of networking and business development as we bring together three premier north regional business associations!

In the atrium at the newly remodeled Ember & Vine, great cocktails and wood-fire American cooking are also on the menu for the evening!

Enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

To register, [click here!](#)