

Harrisburg Insiders' **POINTS** & **VIEW**



Budget/Revenue Package on Governor's Desk

*By John Nikoloff, President
ERG Partners, Harrisburg, PA*

After 117 days of trying to find the right combination of revenues to pay for the state's \$32.3 billion general fund budget, and get a majority vote in both the House and Senate, the General Assembly cobbled together a revenue plan to pay for the \$2.3 billion gap in funding of that budget, finishing up with passage of a bill to expand online and other forms of gaming in the Commonwealth.

The House, Senate and Governor had tried to close the gap with various proposals for a severance tax, transfers from off-budget state accounts,

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The Problem with Prescription Drug Formularies

By Rep. Brandon P. Neuman (D-Washington)

Recently, the adoption of evidence based prescription drug formularies have become an attractive option to purportedly reduce inappropriate prescription drug use while simultaneously reducing costs. However, the luxury of cheaper medical care should not come at the price of quality medical care. Therefore, having reviewed H.B. 18, I have serious concerns about the impact this legislation will have on injured workers.

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Reducing Overprescribing of Opioids and Other Prescription Drugs

By Rep. Ryan Mackenzie (R-Lehigh/Berks)



According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, 13 Pennsylvanians are dying everyday due to an opioid or heroin overdose. In 2016, 4,642 Pennsylvanians died from an overdose of opioid drugs.

Communities, families, educators, service providers, and the government can all play a role in tackling this issue. We in the state Legislature have been diligently working to enact measures to help curb opioid abuse. As vice chair of the House Labor and Industry Committee I have been an ardent supporter of helping our workers at all stages in their professional lives – including when they are out of work due to a workplace-related injury.

A June 2016 study by the Workers' Compensation Research Institute brought to light the significant overprescribing of drugs in Pennsylvania's Workers' Compensation system. The results were stunning. The study found that, of the 25 states reviewed, Pennsylvania had the third highest amount of opioids prescribed per injured worker, and the second highest number of opioid pills prescribed per claim in non-surgical cases.

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Update on Federal Tax Reform

[NSBA Weighs-in on Tax Framework 10/18/17](#)

[Unified Framework for Fixing our Broken Tax Code](#)

[Highlights of the Unified Tax Reform Framework](#)



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NOVEMBER 2017

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ACA COMPLIANCE BULLETIN

Provided by
SMC Insurance Agency, Inc.

2018 Compliance Checklist

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has made a number of significant changes to group health plans since the law was enacted in 2010. Many of these key reforms became effective in 2014 and 2015, including health plan design changes, increased wellness program incentives and the employer shared responsibility penalties.

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Health FSA Limit will Increase for 2018

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) imposes a dollar limit on employees' salary reduction contributions to health flexible spending accounts (FSAs) offered under cafeteria plans. This dollar limit is indexed for cost-of-living adjustments and may be increased each year.

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MEDICARE EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

November 14, 2017
8:30 am & 10:30 am
Wojanis Hydraulic Supply Co.

Understanding Medicare is the first Step in making the right choice for your insurance coverage. In this informative workshop, a local Medicare Sales Advisor will explain what you need to consider when looking for the right Medicare coverage.

[More Information Here](#)

Email Carrie Bednarski at Carrie@smc.org with questions or to attend.

Benefits BUZZ

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Latest ACA Repeal Bill Withdrawn

The Graham-Cassidy bill, the most recent Republican effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), was withdrawn from a vote on Sept. 26 due to lack of support in the Senate, effectively dooming the legislation.

Earlier that week, key Republican senators voiced opposition to the bill, which forced Senate leadership to shelve the vote until further notice. [Read More>>](#)

PRESIDENT SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER DESIGNED TO CHANGE ACA RULES

On Oct. 12, 2017, President Donald Trump signed an executive order intended to change certain rules under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The order would relax regulations on association health plans. This change could allow individuals and small businesses to purchase health insurance policies across state lines and avoid certain ACA requirements.

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HUMAN RESOURCES

ADVANCING THE MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

NOVEMBER 2017

Minimizing Threats to Business Value

By Jim Carlisle - Chair - National Growth & Exit Planning Group
- Dinsmore & Shohl LLP, jim.carlisle@dinsmore.com

Many owners and advisors talk about the importance of growing business value, and there are nearly unlimited options to help business owners do just that. But wouldn't you agree that growing business value is pointless if you don't know how to reduce the threats to that growth? As you prepare for an eventual exit from your business, there are several threats to business value that you need to be aware of:

- Key employees leaving the company and competing by taking customers, employees, and/or trade secrets.
- Key employees dying or otherwise leaving without a replacement.
- Data security breaches.
- Uninsured casualty loss.
- Fraud and embezzlement.
- Losses from high-risk operations.
- Any number of other economic, industry, or internal threats.

Let's look at three of the most common problems that minimizing business risk can position you to solve.

1. Harm to Transferable Value Business risk increases as you grow your business' transferable value because a vital part of increasing transferable value is making yourself inconsequential. As key employees take the reins to grow the company, they begin to manage and develop their own relationships with key customers, employees, and vendors.

[Read More>>](#)

IRS Raises Several Annual Retirement Plan Limits for 2018



The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) raised several annual threshold and benefit levels for 2018 when it announced them on October 19. Employers and retirement plan administrators can apply the new rates as they prepare their plans for

next year and conduct nondiscrimination testing. Notice 2017-64 outlined the latest changes to cost-of-living adjustments for employee benefit plans. [Read More>>](#)

HR



WITH SMC HR DIRECTOR, DENISE MCKEOWN

Q When must an employer give breaks and meal periods?

A *The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not require that breaks or meal periods be given to workers. However, under Pennsylvania law, employers are required to provide break periods of at least 30 minutes to minors ages 14 through 17 who work five or more consecutive hours. Pennsylvania employers are not required to give breaks for employees 18 and over. If an employer allows breaks, and they last less than 20 minutes, the employee must be paid for the break. [Read More>>](#)*



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

ADVANCING THE MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

NOVEMBER 2017



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

**Wednesday, December 6, 2017
5:30-8:00 PM**

**The Rivers Casino
777 Casino Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15212**

Every year, SMC members look forward to kicking off the holiday season at our annual Holiday Mixer. This event offers the opportunity to spread a little holiday cheer in a relaxed atmosphere where you can catch up with old friends, former colleagues and peers as well as develop new acquaintances.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)

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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

Export Documentation and Compliance

Take your understanding of export procedures and documentation to the next level!



**November 16, 2017
8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Register online:
www.duq.edu/sbdc**



This one day course offers an in-depth understanding of export procedures combined with a thorough 'hands on' review of the appropriate documentation required to ensure a smooth and compliant international transaction.

**One More Customer with Fran Tarkenton
Live Webcast & Networking Event
November 9 @ 11:45 am - 1:00 pm**

Our upcoming OneMoreCustomer event features Fran Tarkenton and special guest, NBA Champion Kevin Willis, discussing the keys to creating and sustaining peak performance in your life and your business.

Join two legendary professional athletes and successful entrepreneurs for a powerful live coaching session, as Fran Tarkenton and Kevin Willis share their keys to: [Read More>>](#)

Click here for
SMC's 2017 Calendar
of

