

## **Chamber's Clinton County Government Committee Saves Members Money!**

As Chamber staff and Board of Directors, we often hear, ***“What do I get out of my Chamber annual membership?”***

It is important that Chamber members, and the community at large, know the value proposition for the dollars you invest as a Chamber member.

There are several clear benefits to your Chamber member investment. This month, I would like to present an overview of one of the most important Chamber functions: The Government Committee.

The purpose of the Government Committee is to help Clinton County businesses grow and prosper by identifying and advocating for opportunities to improve laws and regulations and to remedy barriers to growth imposed by government. This includes all levels of federal, state, and local government.

The Clinton Area Chamber works closely with the DeWitt Chamber and Development Company (DCDC) to ensure a County-wide comprehensive approach.

Keeping you informed is a major part of what we do. Each election cycle we hold candidate forums in both Clinton and DeWitt. In January of each year, we hold an Iowa Legislature kick-off breakfast with our local representatives; Mary Wolfe and Norlin Mommsen and Senator Chris Cournoyer. In addition, we hold monthly Legislative Coffees during the session, so you have direct and immediate access to our three local legislators.

In recent years, the Chamber and DCDC have taken the lead to retain Advocacy Strategies, our lobbyist in Des Moines, to ensure close review of proposed new legislation and regulation, and to proactively lobby for changes that will enhance the business climate in Clinton County. One example passed in the 2020 Legislative Session, was how the collection of statewide hotel/motel tax is calculated. Without raising taxes, this change in collection of hotel/motel tax increases statewide revenue \$40 million and Clinton County's share will be \$1.73 million.

A current 2021 issue is retaining what is called the Commercial Real Estate Tax Backfill. Losing this backfill from the State will cause several million dollars of lost revenue to both Clinton County and the City of Clinton for money spent on police and fire protection, etc. We are fighting hard to retain this backfill. At this point, we are not sure where this will end up, but we are monitoring it daily. This is a fairly complicated issue. If you want to know more, call me.

Government, at all levels, has an impact on your business and personal lives every day.

The Clinton County Government Committee works hard to ensure you are informed and that we advocate for you on matters that affect your bottom line.