



EASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE UPDATE

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Dear Eastern Chamber Friends –

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After our historic success in passing the first major tax reform package in 31 years in the closing weeks of last year, 2018 has gotten off to a wild start. We've already seen one brief shutdown as Congress continues to fight over government funding, and we are on the verge of another showdown this week.

Despite the seemingly endless chaos in Washington, the U.S. Chamber remains focused on what needs to be done to keep the economy growing. Our agenda was laid out in early January as Tom Donohue gave his annual [State of American Business](#) speech in which he recapped last year's victories and looked forward to the work to be done in 2018. Among our top priorities will be working with Congress to make the investments we need to bring our [infrastructure](#) into the 21st Century.

Furthermore, we will remain vigilant in our efforts to promote American goods and services abroad, and protect the [trade](#) agreements that level the playing field for our exporters as the NAFTA negotiations continue.

To be certain, we cannot do this alone. We will be looking to our state and local chamber partners to help deliver our message to Congress. As such, please continue to use us as a resource as you develop your own policy agendas and communicate with your members of Congress. We are always available to help



you in any way we can.

Thank you again for all that you do.

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Combating the Opioid Crisis: From Communities to the Capital

U.S. Chamber of Commerce
[1615 H Street, NW](#)

[Washington, DC](#)
March 1, 2018

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (ET)

On Thursday, March 1st, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce will host a critical forum – “Combating the Opioid Crisis: From Communities to the Capital”— to highlight the important work that the business community, the public-sector and local communities are undertaking to combat the opioid epidemic.

The forum will feature leaders from the business community as well as state and federal government officials, including members of Congress and agency leaders, who have championed a myriad of efforts to help our nation rebound and rebuild from the crisis.

For additional information and to RSVP, please [register here](#).

International Women's Day Forum



Scholarships are available for chambers and small businesses interested in joining the [2018 International Women's Day Forum](#) in Washington, D.C. on March 6-7. Join the Chamber Foundation, the U.S. Department of State, and more than 300 private and public stakeholders to discuss how to achieve gender equality in the workplace, marketplace, and community. Learn more [here](#).

Association Health Plans Proposed Rule

In case you missed our Federation call this week, we had counselor to the secretary at the U.S. Department of Labor Paul Ray provided an overview to chambers on the [proposed rule](#) expanding association health plans. The U.S. Chamber will submit comments to the Department, and if you have feedback to inform our comments, please contact [Katie Mahoney](#), or if you plan to submit comments on behalf of your organization, you can do so through [the electronic portal](#) by the March 6th deadline. For your review, here's [our summary](#) of the proposed rule.

America Working Forward

The Chamber has long been focused on the dual challenge of jobs without people and people

without jobs. This month, Tom Donohue announced that we're doubling down on those efforts with a new initiative called America Working Forward.

Pioneered by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, America Working Forward will rally the nation's employers, large, medium, and small, to help give every citizen the opportunity to pursue the American Dream. We're asking companies to make a commitment—pick a place, put jobs there, and hire people who are ready to work. Our goal is to restore the dignity of work, support families, and contribute positively to American communities.

We're excited that Michael Morell, former acting director and deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, will chair the project. Mike will work closely with Carolyn Cawley, who leads the Foundation's innovative work in this space.

We believe that this multifaceted initiative will help bring new jobs to hard-pressed communities, narrow the skills gap, and unearth new strategies to keep Americans employed in our changing economy. To learn more about the initiative and how you can get involved, contact U.S. Chamber Foundation President Carolyn Cawley at CCawley@uschamber.com.

2017: America Grows More #EnergyStrong

Last year was another banner year for energy. Significant private investment and steady technology advances continued to drive increases in energy production, keeping prices down for consumers like you and allowing the American economy to emerge from historically disruptive events such as major hurricanes unscathed.

The Trump Administration also notched important victories and built momentum in the long and arduous process of delivering regulatory relief, which will help the U.S. strengthen its role as a global energy super power-- making us more secure at home and increasing our leverage abroad.

Here are some of the [2017 highlights](#):

2017: America Grows More **#EnergyStrong**

The first year of the Trump Administration marked both a continuation of many industry trends that have led America to become the world's energy superpower, and a strengthening of the foundation that will foster even greater growth. Private investment and technology advances continue to drive increases in energy production, while the Administration has begun to make good on its promises to provide regulatory relief and invest in infrastructure. Here are some highlights:

Energy Production Continues to Soar



Thanks to new technologies and private investment, U.S. crude oil and natural gas production volumes are reaching all-time highs.

Greenlighting Critical Infrastructure



After long delays by the previous administration, both the Keystone XL Pipeline and the Dakota Access Pipeline were approved.

A More Sensible Approach to Power Plant Regulations



EPA is rescinding the expensive and legally dubious Clean Power Plan, and has started a new process to formulate better regulations.

A Reliable Energy System



Despite devastating hurricanes, arctic weather and global turmoil, U.S. energy prices remain low thanks to our diverse, abundant mix of resources.

More Opportunities for Energy Development



After decades of discussion, Congress permitted new development in a small area of Alaska. The Trump Administration has also announced a new draft offshore energy plan that is more expansive.

Delivering on Regulatory Relief



The new Administration is taking a critical look at onerous regulations, repealing some and reworking others. Combined with comprehensive tax reform, this will unleash capital investment and spur economic growth and higher wages.

Chamber Gras 2018!

This year we are partnering again with Council of State Chambers and Association of State Chamber Professionals for our newly-rebranded Chamber Federation Advocacy & Growth Conference, **September 12-14 in New Orleans**. Stay tuned for hotel booking information, and conference registration soon. We look forward to seeing you there!



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