



CHESTER COUNTY CHAMBER
of Business & Industry
- Chamber of Influence -

b2brief

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From my desk to yours...



As I write this month's b2brief, there are a number of things on my mind but I have to narrow it down to just a couple of topics. As I have mentioned before, countless items cross my desk, jam up my e-mail, and are brought to my attention through conversations with business leaders throughout our region and peers in the Chamber industry. Through this intro letter and the subsequent articles in these monthly b2brief issues, it is my desire to give you useful tools and information to update you on issues, topics and important information that may be helpful to your business or even to you personally as you live and work in the Chester County area.

We have just celebrated National Small Business Week. I'd like to join in honoring the 27 million small businesses who support economic growth, job creation and the communities in which they live. Small businesses actually provide over 2/3rds of the nation's jobs and create 60-80% of new jobs in this country.

*In the Chester County area we are fortunate to be blessed with a diverse business economy both in size and type of business. We congratulate our members, 90% who have less than 50 employees (70% of those have less than 10 employees) on being the engine that drives our economy as well. Coupled with our larger businesses you employ nearly 250,000 in Chester County. For our smaller business members there are some great tips and tools at the **SBA's website** about starting and managing your business. For all members, also check out some of the articles included in this b2brief on business outlook surveys. This can be useful information as you prepare your business for the future.*

On another note, as you may be aware, we have recently completed our re-accreditation with the US Chamber. One of the documents that we updated was our crisis plan. It seems with all the strange weather happening throughout our country that it is a good time to remind you to review your individual crisis plans. At the very least make sure you have an updated list of emergency contacts for your employees, access to your important business documents like insurance coverage and banking information and a well-reviewed on-site safety plan should a crisis occur.

Your President and CEO

Nancy Keefer CCE

Free Service for Emergency Traffic Alerts

There is nothing more annoying than heading out on the road only to find out that a major accident has shut down your route. You can subscribe to a free service that provides emergency text alerts to cell phones and PDA's. While signing up for the service is free, make sure you know your texting plan with your provider as some may charge normal texting fees for this service. You can easily select the types of alerts you want to receive and you can stop them at anytime.

**Check it out at
ReadyNotifyPA**

You can also call 511 to check traffic conditions on major highways before you head out.

News from the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia has released its 2010 Annual Report "Navigating Change," featuring President Charles Plosser's essay "**The Scope and Responsibilities of Monetary Policy.**" It also highlights the Bank's role in implementing regulatory reform, its outreach efforts, and its efforts to build a consumer credit database. **Read the report.**

You might also find some of the regional business survey information released by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia interesting. Book mark this website for updates and current information. **Click here.**

Quote to live by:

Watch your thoughts;
your thoughts
become your words.

Watch your words;
your words
become your actions.

Watch your actions;
your actions
become your character.

Watch your character;
your character becomes
your destiny.

~ Author Unknown ~

Small Business Outlook Survey Released

The US Chamber recently released its Small Business Outlook Survey. According to the survey, 55% of respondents cited economic uncertainty as their greatest hiring obstacle, and 35% said Washington uncertainty impacted growth. Thirty-five percent cited too little revenue as their greatest obstacle. Seventy percent of respondents said they do not plan to hire new employees next year, and 9% will continue layoffs.

Here are a few other notable results:

- Two of the top issues of concern are America's debt and the health care law. Eighty percent of respondents said America's debt and deficit have a negative impact on their business, and 72% said the health care law has made hiring more difficult.
- Small businesses want Washington to get out of the way. In a commanding majority, 79% of respondents said they want more certainty, and only 14% said they want more government assistance.
- By a 73% to 17% margin, respondents said that the climate of the last two years has hindered their growth. Respondents were split in how they view the next two years, with 38% believing the climate will improve, 37% believing that it will worsen, and the remainder uncertain

For more information

**Read the
Full Report
here.**

Chester County Announces a New Website Devoted to Sustainability

The Board of County Commissioners invites you to visit the Chester County Sustainability website, **ChescoPAGreen**. This website serves as a portal for promoting sustainable practices within the County by:

- Collaborating with partnering agencies and organizations committed to improving Chester County through sustainable practices;
- Sharing information and techniques that promote a more efficient use of our resources;
- Celebrating success in county and local government, as well as institutions, businesses and homes where sustainable practices have made a difference.

Content will be added frequently to the site, including recognitions of sustainable practices occurring in the county as well as a series of videos that will display sustainable tools in practice in each landscape as defined by Landscapes2.



Tracking Bills and Votes

There are a number of useful tools on the State Website for tracking bills and votes in the house and the senate. Check out meeting schedules, committee work and the status of bills by **clicking here**.

Chamber's Position on the State Budget

The Chamber has communicated the following message to our elected officials in Harrisburg regarding the State Budget.

We are pleased to work with you to lead Pennsylvania out of this global economic crisis and into a new era of growth and recovery. Our members are highly productive, innovative, and competitive employers with a track record of creating good jobs here in Chester County, in the Commonwealth, and around the world.

During these tough economic times, our members are struggling to make payroll, obtain credit, and make capital investments. Just as we need to make tough choices that impact the lives of our customers and employees, you too will need to make important decisions about services and programs. Governor Corbett's proposed 2011-12 fiscal year budget reflects a welcome attempt to reverse the trend of increased government spending and growth. As we continue to follow the budget process, the Chester County Chamber is committed to regularly communicating to our delegation the Chamber's views on certain budget related issues that are a priority for our members.

First, the Chamber agrees that there is no reason to increase taxes on businesses or individuals in the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania does not have a budget deficit because taxes are not high enough. We have a budget deficit because we spend too much. It is our understanding that the Governor's budget proposal does not propose any new taxes or tax increases, and we support this approach.

Secondly, we applaud efforts to reign in state spending by evaluating and prioritizing funding for those programs, services, and initiatives that are necessary for the health, safety and prosperity of Pennsylvanians. We support efforts to cut programs, services, and initiatives that are ineffective, no longer make sense for government to provide, or that we simply can no longer afford. The Governor's proposed budget calls for reducing funding for higher education by 50 percent. The Chamber believes that we all need to share the pain and accept funding cuts. However, we also acknowledge that public higher education serves a critical role in supporting and developing Pennsylvania's economy and that this fact should be taken into consideration as resources are distributed. We need to be cognizant of the vast differences in funding allocations and opportunities as it relates to our educational institutions as we make these funding decisions. In addition, state-owned schools have greater restrictions on their ability to generate revenue, and the legislature should consider removing some of these barriers to innovation if real long-term savings are to be realized.

The Chamber stands ready to serve as a resource to you throughout this budget process, and would be glad to meet with you to specifically address our budget priorities. On behalf of the Chester County Chamber, we commend your hard work to ensure the Commonwealth can ride out these hard financial times and to better position Pennsylvania to take advantage of a rebounding economy when that day comes.

For information on chamber events [click here](#).

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