

Arizona's Preeminent Voice of Small Business

Although the Five C's have historically represented a strong foundation that we Arizonans are proud of, small business and the entrepreneurial spirit are what now fuels Arizona's economy and are the largest sources of job creation in our state. Currently, 97% of Arizona businesses are small and our state ranks among the highest in the nation where entrepreneurs are welcomed and small business is most likely to succeed. Small business is now the backbone of Arizona's economy and has proven to be a reliable source of employment during both difficult and prosperous times.

ASBA is committed to advocating for Arizona small businesses by supporting legislation that promotes a favorable business climate for commerce, and where entrepreneurship is encouraged. ASBA's public policy efforts are focused on legislation that impacts the top five priorities of Arizona's small business community, namely economic development, education, taxation, regulation, and health care. ASBA calls on the Arizona Legislature to adopt the following recommendations that support the expansion and future prosperity of our state's core economy: small business.



About ASBA

The Arizona Small Business Association (ASBA) is a non-partisan, privately funded trade association representing over 10,000 small businesses that employ over half a million people. ASBA is a statewide organization supporting member businesses throughout Arizona in all 15 counties, and 30 legislative districts. Founded by small business owners and in business for over forty years, ASBA is the largest trade association in Arizona and the only one dedicated exclusively to supporting and providing services to small businesses.

In addition to being a trade organization, ASBA is a statewide buying group that leverages the collective purchasing power of its members that allows them to receive group discounts on essential business products and services. ASBA also delivers high value promotional opportunities, training and mentoring support, annual signature events and well attended networking events for its members. Finally, ASBA employs a talented staff of association management professionals in its Phoenix and Tucson offices and is led by a volunteer board of directors.

Economic Development

Working to expand economic opportunities to existing Arizona small businesses

The efforts and deal making that come with recruiting high profile companies with the promise of delivering high wage jobs is what headlines are made of, and what economic development is known for. However, the larger and less publicized facet of economic development is the support and creation of new opportunities for existing businesses that keep Arizonans employed and public services funded. ASBA is committed to supporting economic development by advancing legislation that will benefit, provide resources and create new opportunities for existing Arizona businesses and entrepreneurs.

Such economic development policies include:

- Increased access to capital for start-up, and early-stage firms.
- Streamlined and accessible local procurement policies and practices that provide preference for contracts awarded by competitive bid to Arizona bidders, over nonresident bidders.
- Strong career and technical training to prepare competent and work-ready Arizonans for current and future Arizona jobs through our community colleges, and programs such as JTED.
- Improved transportation and logistics corridors to enhance the movement of commerce safely and more efficiently throughout Arizona.



Education

Acknowledging education as the cornerstone to Arizona's growth and prosperity

ASBA reaffirms its acknowledgement that education and workforce development is the key to Arizona's continued economic growth and prosperity. A top notch K-12 system together with career and technical training are essential to preparing students to meet the needs of tomorrow's Arizona jobs. Proper funding and long-term commitment to a consistent set of education standards will provide stability and perpetual improvement opportunities to ensure the needs of students and employers are being met. ASBA also believes that increasing the performance of Arizona schools and teachers through proper professional development and efficient administration is essential and to be expected. ASBA supports measures that:

- Protect future Arizona budgets by properly funding K-12 education in accordance with state statutes
- Include a market and achievement-based compensation structure to recruit and maintain qualified instructors and administrators
- Support and fund career and technical training in high schools, specialized training programs such as JTED and our community colleges that are developing a work-ready talent pool aligned with the needs of Arizona employers
- Support and expand educational choice through alternatives such as charter schools, online learning, home schooling and career and technical education programs



Taxation

Complying with Arizona's Tax code should not burden businesses

Understanding and complying with Arizona's Tax code should not create an undue burden on small businesses. Tax reform continues to be one of the top policy priorities of Arizona's small business community. ASBA supports tax policies and efforts by state government that reduce the cost of doing business in Arizona by simplifying our state's tax code. ASBA opposes implementing a tax on services and will oppose attempts to repeal legislation that will increase taxes on business. ASBA will advocate for legislation and efforts that:

- Support the continuation of the Brewer Era tax cuts for Arizona businesses
- Support the implementation of a single point of administration where Arizona businesses can file all Transaction Privilege (Sales) Tax returns, and make payments.
- Encourage the Arizona Department of Revenue to update its software so that all income tax returns can be filed electronically
- Minimize discrepancies between Arizona's income tax code, and the U.S. income tax code
- Reduce the complexity and administration of complying with Arizona's tax code



Regulation

Cutting red tape will lead to more ribbon cuttings

Nothing stifles investment, innovation and job creation more than an outdated and unbalanced regulatory system. Excess regulation not only increases the cost of doing business, it decreases the confidence that businesses require to take the necessary risks to develop economically. ASBA supports efforts by state government and legislation to modernize Arizona's regulatory system and increase transparency. ASBA strongly believes that increasing business confidence through regulatory reform can be achieved by:

- Maintaining the temporary moratorium on all new agency rules not required by federal law
- Rejecting legislation that would increase liability and regulation of employers beyond that required by federal law
- Rejecting arbitrary wage and hour mandates, and other forms of state and federal encroachment into free enterprise



Healthcare

Arizona compliance assistance with ACA and access to superior healthcare plans

Arizona small businesses continue to find themselves uncertain and concerned with complying and understanding the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Problems with the rollout of healthcare.gov, healthcare plans being canceled by insurance companies and the increasing divisiveness by the two major political parties on the issue continues to erode people’s confidence in the ACA and our healthcare system. ASBA recognizes that this is a federal issue. However, ASBA will look to the Arizona Legislature to ensure that Arizona small businesses:

- Access to a variety of healthcare choices
- Are not burdened with additional administrative expenses necessary to comply with the Affordable Care Act
- Access to the best and most affordable healthcare plans available
- Access to an efficient and reliable online portal to shop the healthcare marketplace
- Access to ancillary products such as dental, life and long term care insurance available through the same online portal
- Are not burdened with the cost of maintaining Arizona’s 2013 expansion of Medicaid, if the Federal Government eliminates its funding of that expansion.



Summary



ASBA’s public policy efforts will be primarily focused at the state level where ASBA is best positioned to make the greatest impact in support of Arizona small businesses. We recognize the challenges that state lawmakers and Governor Ducey will face during the 2015 legislative session. Yet, we believe that our legislative priorities and recommendations are essential and reasonable, acknowledging the budgetary challenges that Arizona faces.



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