

## You have to get involved

In today's world and particularly in the political environment, you have to pay attention to what's going on. You can't be so focused on your business that you ignore the environment in which you exist.

Whether at the local, state or federal levels your representatives and your government are constantly moving the pieces on the board, for better or worse, and new legislation and regulations can and do have a potentially significant impact on your bottom line. Your bottom line also affects the people that work for you and the pay and benefits you can afford to give them to live and support their families.

Giving politicians the benefit of the doubt, let's say their intentions are benevolent and good. However, in my opinion, when creating rules they tend to look as if through a microscope and ignore the ripple effects of their efforts.

One small example is Hempfield Township mandating, and the MAWC administering and enforcing, the back flow valve program. Back flow valves are a great idea. They protect the water supply. However, over and beyond, forcing all public water customers to install them, commercial businesses have to have them inspected annually by a licensed contractor. This adds about \$150.00 a year to our expenses as a business, but a private residence doesn't have to get inspections and in many cases they use more water than we do and, therefore, pose a greater risk to the public water supply.

Look at Obamacare. I pay 100% of my employee's medical and dental insurance for the employee (single). Do you have any idea how much more this well intended program costs me for something I was already providing?

In both cases, and many more, I didn't sit by silently and take a hit, but took the time to contact my representatives. I didn't complain per se, but let them know the impact of these programs on my business and the lives of my employees.

Did it make a difference? I think enough small businesses were vocal about Obamacare to have created the current dialogue.

