



# VOICE OF BUSINESS

## Lobbying is a key to region’s business success



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The May primary elections are now behind us and everyone is gearing up for the state legislative primaries later this summer, then the Nov. 8 general elections. Coming out of the May primary elections two things are very clear: Ohio will have an expensive and highly contested U.S. Senate race, and the Dayton region will be the focus of the Ohio governor’s race.

No matter who wins the political contests this fall, one thing will remain constant: Our region’s voice in Columbus and Washington D.C. is more important now than it has ever been. As a matter of fact, lobbying isn’t only important for the Dayton region, it is a fundamental freedom pro-

tected in the United States Constitution. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states that anyone has the right to “petition” the government; the right to address grievances of the government and request action of the government without fear of punishment or reprisal - translated into today’s layman’s terms: “lobbying the government.”

Legislators and government officials can’t be the experts on everything, nor should they try to be. They were elected to represent their constituents. Therefore, they rely on lobbyists, business associations and individuals to educate them on policies and help them craft good legislation. Everyone has the right to make their case, but it’s my job to make sure the pro-business voice is louder and makes more sense for the future of Ohio than the anti-business voice. As the saying goes, “if you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.”

Over the past few years, the business lobby in Dayton has tallied up economic successes that were

### Residential Home Sales

	February 2022	February 2021	%Change	YTD '22	YTD '21	%Change
Number of Homes Sold	979	1020	-4.02	2019	2050	-1.51
Total Home Sales	\$212,145,097	\$197,928,332	7.18%	\$432,541,127	\$396,689,451	9.04%
Average Sale Price (\$)	\$216,696	\$194,047	11.67%	\$214,235	\$193,507	10.71%

Source: Dayton Area Board of Realtors, Dayton Area Home Sales

### Sales Tax Collections

County	Current Rate	February 2022	February 2021	12 Mos Change	YTD 2022	YTD 2021	YTD Change
Butler	0.75	\$3,822,657	\$3,666,011	4.27%	\$8,977,491	\$8,427,484	6.53%
Clark	1.50	\$2,163,755	\$2,158,397	0.25%	\$5,076,272	\$5,039,725	0.73%
Darke	1.50	\$822,708	\$757,640	8.59%	\$1,853,528	\$1,724,549	7.48%
Greene	1.00	\$2,346,800	\$2,319,336	1.18%	\$5,825,724	\$5,416,929	7.55%
Miami	1.25	\$1,697,002	\$1,601,696	5.95%	\$3,948,284	\$3,693,079	6.91%
Montgomery	1.25	\$8,522,535	\$8,100,932	5.20%	\$20,087,488	\$18,118,211	10.87%
Preble	1.50	\$573,119	\$541,834	5.77%	\$1,226,395	\$1,180,280	3.91%
Warren	1.25	\$4,529,493	\$4,327,575	4.67%	\$10,903,068	\$10,307,535	5.78%
Region Total		\$24,478,068	\$23,473,420	4.28%	\$57,898,251	\$53,907,792	7.40%

Source: [https://tax.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/tax/researcher/tax-analysis/tax-data-series/publications\\_tds\\_sales](https://tax.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/tax/researcher/tax-analysis/tax-data-series/publications_tds_sales)

good for OUR business community. We fought back initiatives like recreational marijuana, mandated paid sick leave, business vaccine mandates, and reduced sentencing for drug offenders. We championed legislation that supports military families, directs funding to economic development projects (like the Arcade,

defense projects, Austin Landing and the Schuster Center), and initiatives that invest in our region’s infrastructure (I-75, Rt. 35 and Rt. 40).

The key to success is relationships, trust and being present. This past Tuesday, more than 100 business leaders were “present” from the Dayton region and came together

at the Ohio Statehouse to make sure our region’s business voice was loud enough for all to hear.

Our government officials only have the power and influence we give them. In order to affect change, we need to understand their motivations and present a collaborative solution that helps meet their goals and supports the job cre-

ators that are driving the Dayton area economy. As we press forward this year and prepare for the 2023-2024 General Assembly, you can be confident your region’s business lobbyists are present, and we have a seat at the table.

Chris Kershner is the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce CEO and President.

## Ohio BWC reinstates workers’ compensation rebate program

Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce

Hundreds of Dayton area employers take part in the region’s largest safety council, the Dayton/Miami Valley Safety Council, for education and resource sharing. But now, you can also save on your workers’ compensation premiums too.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation (BWC) has reinstated the safety council workers’ comp rebate program, which allows employ-

ers to earn up to 2% cash back on their premiums just by joining and participating in the Dayton/Miami Valley Safety Council.

The safety council’s educational events help you and your employees learn techniques for increasing safety, health, and wellness in your workplace. It’s also an opportunity to meet others in the safety field and share best practices. In order to earn a 2% rebate on your workers’ compensation premium, you just

need to meet rebate eligibility requirements.

To join, visit [DaytonChamber.org](http://DaytonChamber.org) and join the Dayton/Miami Valley Safety Council by July 31, 2022. Then, attend 10 in-person safety council meetings between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

You’re also invited to attend the Dayton/Miami Valley Safety Council Informational Meeting on June 29 to learn more about joining - and saving! Additional information can be found at [DaytonChamber.org](http://DaytonChamber.org).

### DAYTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Executive Women's Council Spring Luncheon, June 2, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Topic — Biases Women Face in the Workplace. Speaker — Hannah Walker and Erin Kunkle, JJR Solutions. Location — The Presidential, 4548 Presidential Way, Dayton

■ Breakfast Briefing, June 3, 8-9:15 a.m. Speaker — Becky Benna. Location — NCR Country Club, 4435 Dogwood Trail, Kettering

■ Chamber Member Orientation, June 7, 7:45-9 a.m. Topic —
- Member Benefits 101. Location — Montgomery County Business Solutions Center, 1435 Cincinnati St., Third Floor, Dayton

■ Leadership Dayton Alumni Night at the Levitt, June 9, 6:30-9 p.m. Location — Levitt Pavilion, 134 S. Main St., Dayton

■ 7th Annual Southwest Ohio Logistics Conference, June 14, 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Topic — Best Practices in the Logistics Industry. Location — Sinclair
- Community College, 444 West Third St., Dayton

■ Safety Breakfast with the Experts, June 16, 8-9 a.m. Topic — Emergency Action Plans and Pandemic Protection Plans. Speaker — Gary Auman; Auman, Mahan & Furry

■ Generation Dayton Day, June 24, 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Topic — Young Professionals Give Back! Location — Kickoff at Dayton Metro Library Main Branch and volunteer opportunities at various nonprofits.

## Inflation

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slow inflation. Earlier this month, in its quest to quell inflation, the Fed raised its benchmark rate by a half-percentage point and signaled additional large rate hikes to come. Some fear the economy could slide into recession next year.

Still, several trends are driving Americans’ spending, including rising pay, savings amassed during the pandemic and a rebound in credit card use. Those savings and continued wage gains, economists say, could fuel healthy spending throughout this year.

Consumers have been shifting much of their spending away from appliances, electronics and exercise equipment – the kinds of goods many splurged on early in the pandemic while hunkered down at home – to travel, entertainment and other services. The intensity of that shift has caught many retailers off guard and contributed to some negative earnings reports.

Brian Cornell, Target’s CEO, said that chain “did not expect to see the dramatic shift” in spending away from TVs, appliances and patio furniture and toward luggage, restaurant gift cards and other items that reflect

Americans’ increased desire to leave home and spend.

Southwest Airlines has said that surging demand for air travel will keep it profitable through this year. Though average fares jumped 32% in the first quarter from a year earlier, the carrier said it’s seen no sign of curtailed demand.

For many people, the opportunity to travel after two years of restrictions is outweighing the financial pressures of higher prices.

Mike and Marsha Dyslin, who live in San Jose, flew to Washington, D.C., this month to visit their daughter, Sarah, a graduate student at Georgetown University.

“She’s been out here at school for two years, and we haven’t visited the whole time because of COVID,” Marsha Dyslin said. “Your priorities change.”

To save on gas, Mike Dyslin said they’ve been driving their Toyota Prius more than their SUV but otherwise haven’t made major changes in their spending habits.

Soaring gas and food prices have led other consumers, though, to start pulling back. The national average cost of a gallon of gas has jumped to \$4.59, up a painful 50%-plus from a year earlier, according to AAA.

Walmart has said its shoppers are visiting its gas stations more frequently but fill-



ing up less each time. And Kohl’s this month reported a drop in the payment rate for its store cards after a year in which customers made sizable payments. Higher levels of card debt raise the risk of increased delinquencies.

Dan Gabel, a musician in Millbury, Massachusetts, has pared his entertainment spending as costs have soared far beyond what he earns. Gabel, a big-band leader and trombonist, is facing soaring prices not just for gas but also for many items he needs for work – from dry cleaning band uniforms to lubricant for maintaining instruments to the cost of paper and ink to print music scores.

To save money, Gabel, 33,

and his partner, an opera singer, have dropped HBO and Netflix. Though the music gigs have been steady, Gabel now takes the train, if he can, rather than drive when he performs out of town.

“We’re feeling the crunch,” Gabel said. “It’s all these little things that do add up.”

Nationally, though, the overall resilience of consumer spending illustrates a trend that can perpetuate inflation: Though people hate higher prices, they often keep paying them if their wages are also rising.

“Inflation doesn’t cure itself,” said Laura Veldkamp, a finance professor at Columbia University. “If the prices of goods and

wages rise together, then that doesn’t necessarily bring down demand.”

Across the economy, median wages jumped 6% in April from a year earlier, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. That was the largest increase since 1990, though it was below the inflation rate of 8.3%.

A surprisingly large portion of workers, though, are receiving pay gains that exceed inflation: About 45% did so in March compared with a year earlier, according to research by the Indeed Hiring Lab.

Nick Bunker and AnnElizabeth Konkel, economists at Indeed, called it “remarkable” that that figure was so

high given the level of inflation. It shows, they said, how desperate many employers are to find and keep workers with unemployment just 3.6% and posted job openings near record highs.

Many other consumers have had to draw on their savings to keep spending. The national saving rate has fallen to about 6%, below pre-pandemic levels, after having reached 16.6% in 2020, the highest on records dating to 1948, and 12.7% in 2021.

And with more Americans turning to credit cards for spending, household debt rose 8.2% in the first three months of this year compared with a year earlier. It was the biggest such increase since early 2008, when the economy was entering a recession.

Economists say, though, that overall debt hasn’t yet reached problematic levels. They estimate that households still have about \$2 trillion in savings beyond what they would have had based on pre-pandemic trends.

And Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics, notes that household debt is equal to 86% of disposable income, sharply lower than its peak of 116% in 2008.

“Never bet against the U.S. consumer,” Ashworth said.

## Hotel

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and memorable.”

The hotel at 22 N. Center St. will offer 30 rooms and suites, meeting areas, event spaces and will include the “seasonally driven restaur-

ant” Silas Creative Kitchen + Cocktails.

The hotel also includes the 1819 Room, a large venue that can accommodate up to 200 guests. Nearby attractions, restaurants and entertainment also are offered for hotel guests.

The nostalgic yet modern

design extends to the hotel’s boutique guestrooms and suites, including the 350-square-foot Spa Suite, which features a pristine, expansive bathroom with an oversized soaking tub, spacious double vanity and designer bathrobes.

“After 2½ years of conceptualizing, designing and building this new property, we are all very excited about the outcome and the commitment from our entire team,” Olshan said. “Working with Ohio-based Kimberly O Design, we have maintained the historical attributes of the property and its rich hospi-

ality lineage, while crafting a new modern-day atmosphere to bring a dynamic, one-of-a-kind upscale boutique hotel to Versailles for locals and visitors alike to enjoy.”

Hotel Versailles, located 45 minutes from Dayton, is at the intersection of Cen-

ter and Main in the heart of downtown Versailles and features on-site courtyards and gardens, which offer a respite to gather near the growing village core.

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