

ABI Contacts:

Michael Ralston, President
(800) 383-4224 x-562 / (515) 235-0562
John Gilliland, Senior VP, Government Relations
(800) 383-4224 x-566 / (515) 235-0566
Nicole Molt, Director, Government Relations
(800) 383-4224 x-567 / (515) 235-0567



**IOWA ASSOCIATION OF
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

The Voice of Iowa Business Since 1903.

ABI Releases 2009 Legislative Agenda

Economic Growth, Job Creation and Stability are Focus of 2009

Des Moines, IA – Jan. 5, 2009 - The state's largest business organization today announced its 2009 legislative agenda to improve and protect Iowa's economic climate. The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) legislative agenda is based on maintaining a climate for economic growth to fuel job creation and stability for Iowa's economy.

"Iowa has a competitive economic climate even in these tough economic times. We need to move forward to grow Iowa and not move backward to make Iowa less competitive for job growth," says Charles Sukup, CEO of Sukup Manufacturing in Sheffield, ABI's Board Chair. "We believe vigorous economic development can best be realized through a superior business, regulatory and tax climate."

ABI is also cautiously warning legislators of the potential damage to the jobs climate if Iowa's Right-to-Work and public employment laws are damaged. "No one in the public sector or in private industry should be forced to join a union or pay dues or fees to a union in order to get or keep a job," says Mike Ralston, ABI President. "We greatly respect our public servants who work for state and local government, but the government unions should not be given more power to at the expense of taxpayers."

Ralston also warned that radical changes to the state's benefit rich workers' compensation system would also hurt job growth. The complete agenda is available at www.iowaabi.org.

ABI's legislative priorities and policies are established on an annual basis through an in-depth grassroots committee process. More than 600 individuals working through five specialized ABI committees, along with five regional meetings, developed the legislative policies. The policies are then refined, reviewed and approved by the Legislative Committee and the ABI Board of Directors.

The list of ABI's legislative accomplishments includes the passage of: Workers' Compensation legislation in 1911; the landmark Right-to-Work-Law in 1947; the Sales and Use Tax Exemption on Machinery, Equipment and Computers in 1997; Drug-Free Workplace Testing in 1998; Venture Capital Investment Incentives and the Insurance Premium Tax Reduction in 2002; and most recently the Association Health Plans and Wellness Initiatives in 2007.

###

As The Voice of Iowa Business Since 1903, ABI is comprised of approximately 1,300 Iowa businesses employing more than 300,000 Iowans. Member organizations represent all types and sizes of business. ABI's mission is to collectively provide a strong, unified voice to business and industry on issues impacting Iowa employers. Specific emphasis is given to legislative and regulatory matters and to education and leadership development, including ongoing training to member businesses annually. Additionally, to date, ABI's Foundation has engaged 800 Iowans through Leadership Iowa and provided business fundamentals to 4,500 Iowa high school students through Business Horizons.