



**IOWA  
ASSOCIATION  
OF BUSINESS  
AND INDUSTRY**

# BUSINESS

DEC. 2023

MONTHLY

# Workforce Boosts, Tort, Regulatory, Tax Reforms Top 2023 Accomplishments



STORY ON PAGE 20

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### 2024

**JANUARY 10-12**  
Leadership Iowa Session:  
Government  
DES MOINES

**JANUARY 10**  
Legislative Briefing and  
Reception  
DES MOINES

**MARCH 6**  
Business Day in Des Moines  
DES MOINES

**MARCH 7-8**  
Leadership Iowa Session:  
Healthcare  
DUBUQUE

**MARCH 7**  
Connecting Statewide Leaders  
DUBUQUE

**APRIL 4-5**  
Leadership Iowa Session:  
Education  
GRINNELL

VISIT [WWW.IOWAABI.ORG](http://WWW.IOWAABI.ORG) AND CLICK THE "EVENTS"  
TAB FOR DETAILS ON ALL UPCOMING EVENTS.

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## MEET ABI'S NEWEST MEMBERS

Meet ABI's Newest Members: Visit our newest members' websites,  
and see how their products and services can benefit you:

Whitfield & Eddy Law | Des Moines | [www.whitfieldlaw.com](http://www.whitfieldlaw.com)

Turnkey Associates LC | Waterloo | [www.tkadesignbuild.com](http://www.tkadesignbuild.com)

Percipio Workforce Solutions | Des Moines | [www.percipioworkforcesolutions.com](http://www.percipioworkforcesolutions.com)

Wolf Carbon Solutions | Denver, CO | [www.wolfcarbonsolutions.com](http://www.wolfcarbonsolutions.com)

Hanigan Law Group, PLC | Des Moines | [www.haniganlawgroup.com](http://www.haniganlawgroup.com)

10Fold Architecture and Engineering | Ames | [www.10foldarchitecture.com](http://www.10foldarchitecture.com)

Learn more about how ABI membership could benefit your company by visiting  
[www.iowaabi.org/membership/why-abi](http://www.iowaabi.org/membership/why-abi).

## FROM THE CHAIR:

# Reflecting on 2023 and Anticipating Iowa's Business Landscape in 2024

As the calendar year comes to a close, it is both traditional and a beneficial practice to take an opportunity to review the plusses and minuses of the past with an eye on planning for future opportunities and success. This month's edition of ABI's Business Monthly focuses on a review of 2023 and looks ahead at the top business issues facing Iowa in 2024. Though it's tough to be completely spot-on in foreseeing all the challenges, opportunities, and impacts ahead, a more profound understanding of the potential landscape sets us up for success. Plus, having the backing and advocacy of valued partners is a definite advantage.

ABI's mission statement read: **To foster a favorable business, economic, governmental, and social climate within the State of Iowa so that our citizens have the opportunity to enjoy the highest possible quality of life.**

To this end, ABI works diligently to advance a positive business environment and economic opportunity for all parts of our state. If you are reading these words and your company is not yet an ABI member you could be missing out on opportunities and information that can provide positive benefits to your organization. Please feel free to reach out to myself, Mike Ralston, or Nicole Crain to learn more about how membership can tangibly benefit you and how we can continue to help build a better Iowa. You can reach us via email here:

- Chad Reece: [creece@winnebagoind.com](mailto:creece@winnebagoind.com)
- Mike Ralston: [mralston@iowaabi.org](mailto:mralston@iowaabi.org)
- Nicole Crain: [ncrain@iowaabi.org](mailto:ncrain@iowaabi.org)

Engagement is key in having your voice heard. With the start of the new year, the Iowa General Assembly will come in session, and now is a good time of the year to get your elected officials in to your plant or office. Show them what you do and explain the impact of their decisions on your business.

Be sure to add the 2024 Legislative Briefing and Reception, happening on January 10 in Des Moines, to your calendar. This annual meeting is one of ABI's most popular events. Because of your participation, it draws more Iowa legislators (of both parties) than any similar event hosted by other organizations. Your local legislators will enjoy this opportunity to visit with you and fellow Iowa business leaders in a relaxed and informal setting.

As always, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds and Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg, all 150 legislators, and state officials and agency directors have been invited to join you at the reception. Find more information here: [www.iowaabi.org/events](http://www.iowaabi.org/events).

Speaking of events, remember to mark your calendars for the 2024 Taking Care of Business Conference. You do not want to miss it. I look forward to seeing you in Davenport June 4-6 of next year. **ABI**



**Chad Reece**  
ABI Vice Chair  
Winnebago Industries

## Powerful Advocates

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## FROM THE FOUNDATION:

# Leading Leaders: Iowa's Leadership Collective

It's no secret that Iowa is forward-thinking. As we come off harvest season, we're reminded of our pivotal role in agriculture, technology, renewable resources, and sustainable farming. We're at the forefront in areas and industries from education to human rights and manufacturing to artificial intelligence. Lesser known, our pioneering spirit is also reflected in leadership development.

Leadership Iowa, the ABI Foundation's statewide issues-awareness program, was just the fourth statewide program of its kind in the country at the time of its inception in 1982. That same year, community leadership programs in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids also began. Today, there are countless programs taking place in Iowa, many with 20+ years of success, serving communities, counties, regions, and industries.

Leadership Iowa had the honor this year to co-host the fourth annual Leadership Exchange in partnership with the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa

Initiative and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), and provide one of two Leadership grants to a deserving community implementing a new program. The goal of this annual event is to bolster existing leadership programs and elevate local community leadership. The two days in Nevada, Iowa, convened more than 100 program and community leaders from more than 50 Iowa communities. Attendees shared and explored how we can best serve Iowans through leadership opportunities.

This inspirational event was a reminder of the essential need for a continuous leadership movement in Iowa. Our statewide, industry, and community programs provide an avenue for individuals to develop essential skills, broaden their understanding of local issues, and create a network of empowered individuals passionate about effecting positive change in the places we call home. By equipping professionals with the tools to lead, collaborate, and innovate, these initiatives

motivate them to address pressing concerns, such as economic development, healthcare, and infrastructure, crucial for the growth and sustainability our towns.

The significance of these programs lies in their ability to cultivate a cohort of individuals capable of driving progress. They offer a platform for professionals to delve into the intricacies of local governance and community engagement. Particularly in rural Iowa, where the sense of community is deeply ingrained, these initiatives help in amplifying the voices of individuals and building a shared vision for community betterment. Given Iowa's diverse landscape, leadership programs truly serve as a linchpin for our state's success.

If your community or organization is considering a leadership program, please reach out to our team at ABI and we'll be glad to assist or connect you with some of our great partners who are championing the leadership movement across Iowa. Lead on! **ABI**



**Jessi McQuerrey**

Director of Programs  
ABI Foundation  
jmcquerrey@iowaabi.org

## CAPITOL BUSINESS:

# What to Expect from ABI During the 2024 Legislative Session

## Three Things to Expect from ABI:

**1. Round-the-clock coverage at the Capitol** – The ABI public policy team has followed this mantra for the last decade and will continue to do so: "As long as they are there, we are there." If the Legislature is in session, you can count on the ABI team to provide you information about what's happening at the Capitol. ABI will be there for Iowa employers day and night. We will work to educate lawmakers about the impact various proposals will have on employees and employers statewide.

**2. Weekly updates** – Each Friday morning, ABI members will receive the Voice of Iowa Business Newsletter. The newsletter will feature a summary of key issues ABI has engaged in on behalf of members during the week, emerging issues that warrant the attention of members and progress to the policy priorities of ABI. The newsletter will be timely and in your email inbox before the end of the week.

**3. Twice-monthly conference calls** – ABI members also get up-to-date information on twice-monthly conference calls, which are made possible by ABI member company support of the organization. These calls give specific information on bill

status and provide members with an insiders' perspective of the legislative process. The calls begin Friday, Jan. 19, 2024. Go to the following page on the ABI website to register: <https://www.iowaabi.org/events/>.

## Three Ways You Can Get Engaged:

**1. Meet your local elected officials** – Iowa legislators are accessible and hold occasional weekend forums during session. Most legislators are willing to come to businesses and meet with employees and other businesspeople from their districts. All legislators maintain state email accounts and are very interested in feedback from their districts. You can find your legislators here: [www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find). The best way to educate legislators is to help them understand what you do and why your business is important to the Iowa economy. Invite them to your office, plant or construction site. Get to know them.

If you would like help with introductions or setting up a meeting, please reach out to JD Davis at [jddavis@iowaabi.org](mailto:jddavis@iowaabi.org) or Brad Hartkopf at [bhartkopf@iowaabi.org](mailto:bhartkopf@iowaabi.org).

**2. Attend Business Day in Des Moines** – In addition to the recent ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception

that kicks off the legislative session, ABI also plans the Iowa Business Day in Des Moines. This year, the event is scheduled for March 6, 2024, with a briefing from the ABI team on ABI priorities and importantly, an update from legislative leaders on the policy prospects for the remainder of the 2024 Session. Check out [www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org) for details.

**3. Make sure you receive ABI emails** – I know you receive a lot of emails from organizations you're a part of. However, if you want to stay up to date on the legislative happenings at ABI, make sure you read the Voice of Iowa Business Newsletter on Fridays. Also, when an email comes from Mike Ralston, Brad Hartkopf or JD Davis, know it's related to a pending public policy issue and that we need your insight and support. Please help us and reach out to your legislators when requests come from ABI.

We are honored to represent you and the hundreds of thousands of employees you employ throughout the state each day. You can expect us to work hard every day for you and for a better climate to be an Iowa employer. If you have a question about public policy, please email or call us. Our job is to represent you and be responsive to your questions and concerns. Thank you for your commitment to ABI and Iowa's business community! **ABI**



**JD Davis**

Vice President, Public Policy  
ABI  
jddavis@iowaabi.org

You can expect us to work hard every day for you and for a better climate to be an Iowa employer.

# Q&A: The 2024 Social Media Outlook

An active supporter of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, Performance Marketing works with clients across Iowa. The Corridor Business Journal, which serves the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City and Quad Cities business communities, recently asked Performance Marketing Director of Delivery, Andrew Gillman, for his view on the state of social media and the challenges involved in helping businesses succeed on social platforms. Their conversation follows.

## Generally speaking, what does the world of social media look like right now?

Social media is in a state of upheaval. Platforms are changing constantly, which means businesses have to pivot often — and quickly. These changes also mean we're on the edge of some very exciting things related to technology and social media marketing.

## Are there any challenges you're seeing?

Absolutely. Data privacy is a big challenge. The increase in regulations in recent years has made targeting across social channels more difficult. For instance, Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, eliminated several valuable audience profile qualifiers from their paid media platform (Ads Manager). This makes it difficult to target users based on home ownership status, household income and home value, just to name a few.

User protection and privacy have an impact on all areas of social media to varying degrees, but especially on paid social. Because paid social media is a mechanism for getting in front of broader audiences, it's hit with data privacy regulations harder than the organic and user-generated content side of social platforms.

## So, what's the impact of data privacy on brands?

Since data privacy challenges apply mainly to third-party data, brands should prioritize capturing first-party data. The difference is that first-party data is volunteered by existing and prospective customers, meaning it's less problematic to use. Brands may also need to pivot to broader targeting options, and then continue to optimize those campaigns to zero in on the most responsive and worthwhile audience segments.

## What about consumers?

Consumers can control the marketing messages they see easier than ever before. Each of the main social media platforms has some degree of privacy settings that allow users to control their exposure to brand messages.

The stricter a users' privacy settings, though, the less likely it is they'll be served relevant content. Social media works because it's where people spend a lot of time connecting and learning about new ideas, products and brands. The more time we spend on a social media platform, the more it learns, which gives it the ability to serve up content specifically tailored to an individual's interests.

For example, if you've been on the search for a new pair of Adidas shoes, platform algorithms will know that you're interested in Adidas and probably deliver more relevant content like current promotions to help you get the best deal on some new kicks.

## There's debate about how businesses should use social platforms. What's the best approach?

Marketers keep trying to fit social media into the traditional PESO — paid, earned, shared, owned — model. But because of the dynamic nature of social media, it's too large and complex to fit into a singular box. Social media fluctuates between three distinct areas:

1. Shared, when focusing on amplifying social content.
2. Owned, when focusing on organic content development and community management.
3. Paid, when focusing on reaching new audiences or amplifying a specific message across channels.

There's not a one-size-fits-all formula but using all three tactics will yield the best results. For some businesses, they focus more on sharing original content and connecting directly with their current followers, while others' priority is to reach the masses and grow their audience using paid campaigns. Make sure to test all three strategies before ruling any out — you might be surprised at which one performs the best.

## Where does AI fit into the social media conversation?

AI isn't taking over social media ... yet. At the moment, AI is best used for brainstorming organic content topics and scaling up posting quantities. It's less helpful for delivering personalized, brand-specific social content. We still believe that social media should be exactly that — social. When AI enters the conversation, you lose a little of that authenticity. Social content should be nothing if not authentic, so although it's tempting to ask ChatGPT to come up with 20 social posts in the blink of an eye, what's going to make your audience want to engage with your brand is a human touch.

Where do we think AI really shines in the social space? Ad buying, offering smarter targeting, more efficient bidding and real-time, automated optimization. It is also the technology behind personalized ad creative, delivering messages to consumers based on their past behavior.

## Can you touch on how companies might use each of the major social platforms?

Meta has billions of global users, which makes it a great choice for targeted advertising. Other benefits are its seamless cross-platform branding and advancements in virtual reality and augmented reality experiences. The downside is only large companies with deep pockets are currently able to fully leverage these opportunities. Until Meta's marketing solutions become more scalable, it's OK to focus on your current platforms and see how they evolve over the next year.

As far as Threads and X, which is formerly known as Twitter, they're in an ongoing battle for audiences and only time will tell if X or Threads will prevail. Any social media community manager worth their salt will be monitoring Threads closely to see where it goes. But until it's a viable platform for your brand, it's fine to observe from the sidelines.

LinkedIn is another big one, but users don't spend nearly as much time on LinkedIn as they do on other social media platforms. The ability to scale on LinkedIn is not as reliable as on other platforms. However, for B2B brands, LinkedIn paid advertising really hits the spot.



**Andrew Gillman**

Director of Delivery  
Performance Marketing  
andrewg@performancemarketing.com

Marketers can target content by job title, industry categories and experience levels, which offers some big opportunities to B2B brands. Plus, LinkedIn has rolled out some valuable tools to support B2B advertisers' lead-generating efforts. I encourage you to check them out.

TikTok is super trendy, making it tricky. It pushes its creators to fit within the platform's preferred content style — favoring short, low-production, vlog-style content. This style can be counter-intuitive to the polished style many brands prefer. As a result, the platform favors personalities over brands. But some savvy brands are adapting and learning how to create TikTok-worthy content. TikTok has a style all its own and it may or may not be yours.

My best advice for TikTok: Do your research. Determine if you can sustain the high-frequency posting schedule. Commit to the content style only if TikTok has been dubbed "right" for your brand.

## How can businesses determine if a platform is right for them?

New social platforms are popping up all the time, but none of them currently holds a candle to the behemoths of the space — Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), Snapchat and YouTube. With that said, we always encourage brands to do their research to determine if there's a true opportunity before diving into a platform, regardless of its size or popularity. And if you're going to join, be ready to dedicate time and resources to doing it right.

Remember, in social media, there are no guarantees. All the changes we're seeing just underscore the importance of vetting platforms before jumping in head first. Brands should be intentional when choosing platforms and proceed with some level of caution, opting for the path of greatest authenticity and opportunity.

If you have questions about a specific platform or need advice heading into 2024 planning — our team can help!

## About Anthologic

Anthologic is a collective of marketing and technology companies that can seamlessly partner together to build brands, craft stories, accelerate business and more. Brands in the collective include Performance Marketing, Blue Traffic, Vector Haus and Flatout. For more information, visit [Anthologic.com](https://anthologic.com).

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**EXPERT ADVICE:**

# Improving Employee Retention to Meet Demands of Today's Workforce

Manufacturers are facing high employee turnover rates amidst a tight labor market that has made it challenging to fill open positions. By focusing on employee retention efforts, however, manufacturers can ensure they are appealing to the concerns of today's employees.

**Here are four strategies to bolster retention efforts:**

**Rethink Flexibility**

Today's workers are searching for better work-life balance, and many want to achieve it through remote work or flexible schedules. While remote or hybrid arrangements may not be feasible for manufacturing companies, adding creative scheduling options for your current employees can provide flexibility. Consider these options:

- Four-day, 10-hour work schedule

with three days off

- Split schedule, allowing workers to begin their shift early, take an extended break midday, then return to work later into the evening

**Evaluate Benefits & Compensation**

Competitive benefits and pay continue to rank high as key factors employees consider when looking for new opportunities. Therefore, manufacturers should ensure that current workers are earning wages that are competitive within your market and the manufacturing industry to improve retention. A comprehensive benefits package that goes beyond traditional medical plans is essential, as well. Offering additional coverage such as dental, vision, short- and long-term disability, and retirement plans will elevate your benefits package, better meet the needs of a multigenerational workforce, and entice workers to stay.

**Improved Onboarding**

When new hires join your team, it's important to set them up for long-term success with an in-depth onboarding program that extends beyond the first week and spans 30 to 60 days. Ideally, the program will make new hires feel welcome, connect them to your company culture, mission, and vision, and provide them the tools and training they need to excel in their new role.

**Ongoing Development**

For manufacturers, investing in your current workforce is critical for the future, as the industry is projected to face a skills gap within the next decade. Online training, certification journeys, and upskilling – training on advanced skills that also advances employees in their career path – will help engage workers and give them the opportunity to grow and learn within your company. **ABI**



**Eleesha Martin**  
Director of Recruitment  
Process Outsourcing  
G&A Partners

*Eleesha Martin is the director of Recruitment Process Outsourcing for G&A Partners.*

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COVER STORY FROM PAGE 17

# Workforce Boosts, Tort, Regulatory, Tax Reforms Top 2023 Accomplishments

BY EMERY STYRON

Coming off a legislative session they describe as “historic” in its accomplishments for business, Iowa legislative leaders are looking to continue the momentum in 2024. “We won’t rest on our laurels,” said House Ways and Means Chair Bobby Kaufmann (R-Wilton). “We have the trifecta and plan to continue with the agenda.”

That’s an agenda that includes further tax cuts, said Sen. Dan Dawson, (R-Council Bluffs). Going into 2024 with a “\$1 billion structural surplus” and \$3.5 billion in the taxpayer’s relief fund, legislators will be working to put Iowa on the path to elimination of the state’s personal income tax, he said.

## Recapping the 2023 Session

“Last session was successful in all our priority areas,” said ABI Executive Vice President Nicole Crain, lauding gains in tort, tax and regulatory reform and workforce development. “Workforce is an ongoing priority for ABI and all of our members, to make sure we have qualified workers for years to come,” she said.

## A Mix of Workforce Solutions

Workforce measures approved involved “dozens of funding streams,” said Rep. Kaufmann. “We had a lot of money invested, incentives for business, retraining, working with community colleges, to get individuals ready for 2- or 4-year degrees to give business and folks the best chance possible.” The legislature approved a wide mix of grants, business incentives, and direct investments in what Rep. Kaufmann termed “a historic session.”

In the Senate, the Workforce Committee “did a lot of good work updating the labor code, giving more people opportunity to seek employment, clean up regulatory environment,” said Sen. Dawson.

Among the workforce-related measures signed into law by Gov. Kim Reynolds were those allowing Iowa employers to apply for a waiver for 16- and 17-year-olds to participate in approved work-based learning or work-related programs, establishing a state office of apprenticeship and apprenticeship council, and revising workforce housing tax credits and childcare reimbursement rates.

## Medical, Trucking Tort Reform

It was also a historic session for tort reform, said Rep. Kaufmann, with major legislation enacted limiting damages for medical malpractice and jury awards in accident lawsuits against commercial vehicles.

House File 161 caps noneconomic damages to \$1 million for clinics and

individual doctors, and \$2 million for hospitals, in lawsuits over medical incidents that result in the loss or impairment of bodily function, disfigurement or death. In signing the bill into law, Gov. Reynolds said, “Protecting our health care system from out-of-control verdicts promotes access to care in communities across our state and better positions us to recruit the best and brightest physicians to Iowa.”

Senate File 228 caps noneconomic damages at \$5 million in suits against trucking companies whose employees were responsible for injury, death or other damages.

Sen. Dawson says the two laws represent “some large strides in trying to find that balance between those persons providing those services and the persons adversely impacted.”

“When I came into office in 2017, our tort picture was lopsided. Job producers in state were having to shoulder an unfair burden in comparison to those in other states. The costs people must pay in those areas is part of your overall business climate picture. You can’t focus on other areas and ignore that piece of the pie,” he said. “It’s a positive move for the state to attract businesses and make sure those impacted have a voice.”

Rep. Kaufmann predicts Iowa’s tort law changes “will be a model that other states will look at.”

## Property Tax Reform

House File 718, a compromise between House and Senate Republicans, that drew bipartisan support and was inked by Gov. Reynolds in May, is expected to save taxpayers \$100 million, according to legislative estimates. The bill caps city levies at \$8.10 per \$1,000 in taxable value and counties at \$3.50 per \$1,000 for general services and \$3.95 per \$1,000 for rural services, while enacting a new \$6,500 homestead exemption for senior citizens and an \$8,000 exemption for veterans.

Sen. Dawson, who led discussion on property tax reform in the Senate, said the house-senate agreement was “historic, not just in terms of price tag, but the manner in which we’re trying to make policy.”

“In the past four decades, all we’ve really done is make a complicated system even worse,” he said. In this case, however, the legislature voted to fund its priorities and “take a little bit of excess property tax revenue and return it back to payers in the form of lower rates.”

Rep. Kaufmann agreed. “We didn’t pick winners and losers. It’s just straight up property tax relief” that gives “predictability to businesses and individuals employed by those businesses.”

## Regulatory Reform

While many bills passed both cham-

bers tweaking the myriad laws and regulations covering how Iowa businesses operate, the biggest pieces of regulatory reform in 2023 were Executive Order Number 10, signed by Gov. Reynolds on Jan. 10, putting a moratorium on administrative rulemaking and instituting a comprehensive review of all existing administrative rules, and

Senate File 514, signed into law in April, requiring a restructuring and consolidation of state government. The law will also winnow the state’s 37 executive-level cabinet agencies down to 16 and change some powers of the governor and attorney general, according to *The Des Moines Register*.

Among the initial impacts: A committee established under SF 514 has reviewed Iowa’s 256 boards and commissions and recommended eliminating or merging 111 of them.

“The governor’s realignment of state government was something we felt was needed. It’s rare in the private sector to go 30 years without looking at those things,” said Ms. Crain. “A lot of work has been done in the interim to implement some of those changes.”

“Iowa’s Administrative Code contains over 20,000 pages and 190,000 restrictive terms, putting undue burden on Iowans and the state’s economy, increasing costs for employers, slowing job growth, and

impacting private sector investments,” Gov. Reynolds commented on issuing her executive order. “In Iowa, we’re taking a commonsense approach that gets government out of the way and leads to a more robust economy in every community.”

Gov. Reynolds’ order directs a comprehensive evaluation and cost benefit analysis of existing rules to evaluate their public benefits, whether the benefits justify the cost, and whether there are less restrictive alternatives to achieve their intended goal, according to the Iowa Department of Management website.

Rep. Kaufmann estimates a dozen bills passed the House “that relieved the load on business. It was substantial in that it provided relief on overburdensome regulation,” he said.

## Outlook for 2024

As year-end nears and the start of the 2024 legislative session approaches, Rep. Kaufmann says Republicans will be “stepping on the accelerator” to boost Iowa’s business climate. “We have an open-door policy with all business. Let us know what needs done and we’ll most likely do it,” he said.

Sen. Dawson noted that since he came into office in 2017, Iowa has passed two of the largest tax cuts in its

ACCOMPLISHMENTS ON PAGE 21

## ABI 2024 Priorities

### WORKFORCE

ABI supports innovative solutions and incentives to help businesses and employees overcome barriers to employment, such as childcare and adequate and available workforce housing. ABI supports legislative efforts

to recruit, retrain and retain talent in the state. ABI encourages the Legislature to continue funding Future Ready Iowa, work-based learning opportunities, apprenticeship programs, and other initiatives that will help upskill our existing workforce and prepare students for the careers of tomorrow. Further, as part of ensuring a qualified workforce, ABI encourages the Legislature to support policies conducive to safe workplaces that allow employers to address drug and alcohol use.

### TAXES

Policy makers have made significant strides in enhancing Iowa’s tax climate over the last several years. Given the amount of tax dollars currently in the Taxpayer Relief Fund and the ongoing prudent budgeting by lawmakers, ABI encourages the Legislature to continue reducing individual and business tax burdens, including property taxes.

### REGULATORY REFORM

ABI members strive to comply with a wide scope of regulations at the local, state and federal levels. These regulations can often overlap, be outdated or are overly burdensome. Therefore, ABI supports:

- Streamlining permitting requirements and processes, in particular environmental, reducing cost and time for businesses and the state.
- Modernizing notification requirements for employment drug testing.
- Reviewing and eliminating policies and regulations that hinder small business expansion.



## ACCOMPLISHMENT FROM PAGE 20

history and moved from 46th to 33rd in the nation for overall tax climate. "The tax code isn't the only thing but it sure as hell does matter," he said.

A \$1 billion surplus and healthy reserves position Iowa to move toward elimination of personal income taxes. "We can't do it overnight, but we have a strategic opportunity. With thoughtful policy and responsible budgeting, we can put Iowa on the pathway," said Sen. Dawson.

Another issue for Sen. Dawson is locking in changes. "How do we make sure the gains we have made in our tax code are for future generations as opposed to being rolled back by any general assembly?" he asked.

Workforce, taxes, and regulatory reform will continue to be ABI priorities for the 2024 session, said Ms. Crain. Those priorities reflect the views of more than 300 members participating in the policy development process.

ABI works behind the scenes on parts of regulatory reform that don't get a lot of visibility, she noted. "One of the things we do for ABI members is to be that connector between companies and

state government. We look at all these regulations coming down from the federal government couple with what the state has on the books; and we work with regulatory partners to see if there's a way to refine them, establish new ones or remove some if they no longer meet today's economic, environmental, or technological realities."

The "big chunks" of tort reform have been accomplished "but there are always things around the edges" so the issue is still in ABI's broader policy book, said Ms. Crain.

Taxes and workforce will remain front burner issues, she said, advising legislators to "keep doing what you've been doing. Keep supporting those programs that keep talent in the state and bring new talent to state."

Iowa's corporate and personal income tax structure are becoming more competitive with those of other states, she added. "Continue to work on those to help bring Iowa in line with other states." Ms. Crain noted, "We are excited about 2024 and grateful for legislative leaders who understand a healthy business climate results in increased quality of life for all Iowans" ABI

## EVENT REWIND:

## Leadership Iowa

2023-24 Class | November 2-3 | Carroll County



The Leadership Iowa 2023-24 class completed its second session in Carroll County.

Some of the session highlights included:

- A look at the landscape of agriculture in Carroll County and time in Carroll, Coon Rapids, and Templeton.
- Visits and tours at the Templeton Distillery, Klocke Family Farm (PigEasy), Santa Maria Winery, Raccoon River Social Club, POET Bioprocessing, and Whiterock Conservancy.
- Conversations with subject-matter experts including Secretary Mike Naig (Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship), Nathan Katzer and Adam Koppes (Iowa Farm Bureau Federation), Tyler Bruck and Carissa Shoemaker (Whiterock Conservancy), Will Dougherty (MidAmerican Energy), and Aaron Putze (Iowa Soybean Association).


[www.IADG.com](http://www.IADG.com)

## Low-Cost Financing for Business Energy Efficiency Projects



Modernization



Process Improvement

### Low Interest Revolving Loan Fund:

Finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects through the **IADG Energy Bank**. With qualified energy improvement projects, facilities need no upfront or additional capital. Loan payments can be flexible and arranged to meet your energy savings.

### Energy Bank Parameters:

- Loans: \$50,000-\$300,000
- Rate: 1%
- Term: Up to 10 Years
- Origination Fee: 1%

### Services Provided:

- Easy Application and Approval Process
- Independent and Unbiased Project Review
- Customized Financing Solutions
- Project Implementation Assistance
- Ongoing Project Monitoring and Support

### Eligible Borrowers:

The IADG Energy Bank is focused on making loans to businesses and industries for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy projects. Preference will be given to manufacturers.



Lighting



Equipment Upgrades

### MORE DETAILS:

For a program overview, related requirements, and ensure availability of funds visit:

[IADG.com/EnergyBank](http://IADG.com/EnergyBank)

**Contact:**  
**Bruce Nuzum**  
**800-888-4743**



## WHAT'S TRENDING:

# 7 Benefits of Using Lockbox for Your Business

Although electronic payments have been gaining popularity, paper payments are not going away anytime soon. Checks are still one of the most widely used payment methods.

A lockbox payment processing service can deliver a surprisingly high return on investment (ROI) for businesses of all sizes. It can be offered standalone or as part of complete Treasury Management services offered by a bank.

## What Is a Lockbox?

A lockbox is not just a mailbox or P.O. Box. A modern lockbox is a complete check processing service. Check payments received and processed by your accounts receivable specialist today are instead sent by the payor directly to a P.O. Box a bank sets up and maintains for you. Every day by a deadline of your choice, the bank will retrieve, digitize, process and deposit payments received. You will be provided images, daily reporting and customized files that can be integrated into your accounting platform.

## What Are the Benefits?

1. Reduced payment processing expenses.
2. Expenses scale up or down in step with receivables volume. If receivables are down, so are expenses.
3. Reduced float and days of sales outstanding (DSO) – Checks are generally deposited quicker with lockbox services. Mail float is typically decreased when using a P.O. Box versus items shipped directly to your physical address. The scale of lockbox operations allows specialized functions, bulk processing, and deposits to be made quicker than businesses can achieve independently.
4. Eliminates staff time spent processing checks and frees up your accounts receivable resources to complete other tasks. Allows accounts receivable



## Kevin Tiernan, CTP

SVP, Treasury Management Senior Manager  
Bankers Trust  
ktiernan@bankerstrust.com

staff more working flexibility due to not being dependent on where and when paper payments are delivered.

5. Cloud-based access to remittance data, customized reporting options and integration with ERP software.
6. AI-based technology combined with a staff of experienced specialists means low error rates and excellent customer service.
7. Lockbox service can be customizable to fit your needs. Whether your receivables are wholesale low-volume and large amounts, or retail high-volume and small amounts, your business can be accommodated.

## Is Lockbox Service Right For Your Business?

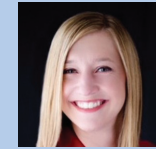
There is no magic threshold of payment quantities. Contact me for more information, cost and ROI estimates. ABI



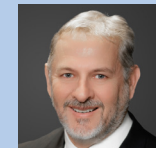
**SARAH MILLER**  
Anthologic



**JACK CARRA**  
AssuredPartners



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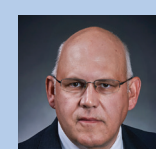
**DAVID WEBER**  
CLA



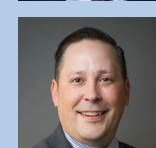
**AMY FERGUSON**  
EMC Insurance



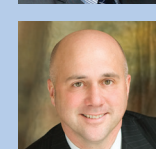
**KENDRA SIMMONS**  
Fredrikson & Byron



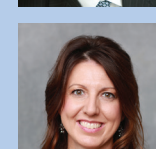
**MICHAEL TEACHOUT**  
G&A Partners



**BRIAN CROTTY**  
HDH Advisors



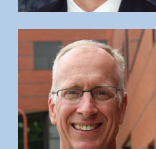
**LANCE GARDNER**  
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**DEAN GILKES**  
Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield



**CASEY CASON**  
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The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) has been the voice of Iowa business since 1903. Its mission is to provide a strong, unified voice to business and industry on issues affecting Iowa employers. ABI is comprised of member companies representing all industries and sizes in Iowa's 99 counties. ABI members employ more than 330,000 Iowans.

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