

EXECUTIVE

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A
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President Bush's Tax Cut Is Law

President Bush signed the second largest tax cut in U.S. history into law. Once the compromises were hammered out, all of Nebraska's congressional delegation voted "aye" to begin easing tax rates and actually start sending money back to the taxpayers. Once agreement was reached by leaders of both houses to set the cuts at \$1.35 trillion over 11 years, a rebate component was added to the measure, a major boost to Americans' pocketbooks! Starting after mid-July, almost everyone who filed a tax return for 2000 will be mailed a government check — a maximum of \$600 for married filers, \$300 for single filers — billed as an "advance refund." The check will amount to 5% of last year's taxable income, up to \$12,000 for married filers and \$6,000 for single filers. By July 15, everyone who filed a return for 2000 will get a mailing from the Internal Revenue Service telling how much the refund will be and when it should arrive.

The centerpiece of the President's plan is lower marginal tax rates for every American who pays personal income taxes. What the law will do: Income now is taxed at five rates ranging from

15% to 39.6%. The new law will reduce and compress existing brackets so that income will be taxed at six rates ranging from 10% to 35%. For 2001, a half point will be shaved off the existing rates of 28%, 31%, 36% and 39.6%. In 2002, a new 10% rate will be carved out of the existing 15% tax bracket. Additional rate cuts will be phased in through 2005. The rate changes fully take effect for 2006. In addition, elimination of the "marriage penalty" and a raise in the child deduction are major components of the plan. Small companies, in particular, are pleased with the President's proposal. The across-the-board cut in individual tax rates not only would place more money in the wallets of American consumers, but also give thousands of small businesses a well-deserved break from the top individual tax rate of 39.6% that they now pay!

Again, if you haven't done so already, take time to send a thank you to Senators Hagel, Nelson, Congressmen Bereuter, Terry, and Osborne for voting for the tax cut plan! ■

*This is
your
opportunity to
tell us
what's on
your
mind
regarding
legislation...*

Fall Legislative Forums In Your Area

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry needs to hear from you this fall as we visit 24 Nebraska communities for our annual Legislative Forums during the weeks of October 1-4 and October 8-10. We have listed dates and locations of the 2001 State Chamber Fall Legislative Forums. Individual locations and times will appear in the next *Executive*.

This is your opportunity to tell us what's on your mind regarding legislation and to visit with your State Senators who are invited to all Forums in their districts. The 2001 Opinionnaire will be utilized at each Forum to gauge your responses to key issues and positions.

Times and locations are being finalized by your local chambers of commerce who host the Forums in their community and handle reserva-

tions. State Chamber elected leaders and executive staff members will be present to discuss issues and answer your questions.

MONDAY, OCT. 1

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| Lunch | Ogallala Aurora |
| Dinner | Sidney Columbus |

TUESDAY, OCT. 2

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Breakfast | Alliance Kearney |
| Lunch | Scottsbluff Grand Island |
| Dinner | Hastings |

(Continued on page 4)



“Invest In The Future”

The 2001 legislative session is being reported as a highly successful session for Nebraska business. Several legislative proposals of high priority for the Nebraska business community were enacted into law. These new laws include the “Invest Nebraska Act,” the “Venture Capital Forum,” a Child Care Tax Credit for businesses, and Ethanol incentives – just to name a few. Business also dodged several tax increase bullets and averted many labor relations issues that would have been onerous.

You have just received a publication from your State Chamber entitled *How They Voted*. Please take the time to review this document and then to personally thank your State Senator for any positive votes cast of benefit to your personal or business interests.

It is now the time to make an essential investment. The investment that I am referring to is not financial in nature, but rather is the valuable investment in time. While it is natural to criticize our elected officials when we believe the course of events are not proceeding as well as we would like, we often forget to invest only a few minutes of our time to convey a “thank you” for your Senator’s legislative service and for making the right decisions.

It would be time well invested if you would invite your legislator to stop by your business for a visit now that the Legislature is adjourned until next January. This is a great time for allowing your Senator to understand your operation and the impact that your business has on your employee’s

lives as well as the life of your community. Since next year will be an election year, your Senator will be looking for an opportunity to meet constituents.

You, too, deserve a hearty “thank you” if you are one of the countless State Chamber members who took the time to make contact with State Senators during this last legislative session. We can never overestimate the value of constituent contacts with elected officials. The more our members participate in the process, the better the record will be for Nebraska businesses.

Another investment in time that you should prioritize this year is to be certain of the legislative district in which your business is located and the legislative district in which you live. Included with the voting record were the new legislative district maps drawn from the 2000 census. Many district boundaries have changed. One entire district was transplanted from northeast Nebraska to parts of Washington and Douglas counties. Be sure to study the map and know which State Senator represents you. If you are uncertain of a boundary line, call your State Chamber office for assistance or log on to the legislative website and zoom in on your area.

The 2001 legislative session was the first session of the two-year cycle and there are approximately 500 bills being carried over to the second session convening in January. Senators will then have the first 10 days of the 2002 session to introduce new bills. Even though we do not have the pressure of daily legislative activity until January, it is important now to invest some of your time in either maintaining or initiating contact with your elected officials. ■

State Chamber Views...

Editorial by
Barry Kennedy,
State Chamber President

Please check the maps to see if your State Senator remains the same...

Check Your Maps

By now, you should have received the *Legislative Report Wrap-Up*. In addition to enacting a two-year state budget, lawmakers also completed the politically touchy redistricting tasks before finishing for the year. New Unicameral District maps show a new Omaha-Blair District 18. The mostly rural northeast Nebraska District 18 was eliminated due to the growth in the Omaha metro-area.

That growth also caused congressional lines to contract, with all of Douglas County and a portion of Sarpy County now making up District Two. To balance population, District One gained the western portion of Sarpy County and gave up portions

of Cedar County and York and Saline Counties to the huge Third District. There were some partisan wrangles regarding redrawing of the congressional lines, but compromise ruled in the end. You recently received the updated Unicameral district maps; please check the maps to see if your State Senator remains the same, or if you are in a new District. Another way to view updated proposed maps would be to go to the Unicameral website at www.unicam.state.ne.us to find the links to Redistricting Maps, or click on the State Chamber’s website, www.nechamber.com, to find the link to the Unicameral site. ■



Your State Chamber Board

The Executive Council is made up of the Chairman, Chairman-elect, Immediate Past Chairman, Treasurer, Six District Vice Chairmen and the Chamber President. Each Vice Chairman represents one of the six geographic districts on the Executive Council. Such officers are elected for a one-year term by the full Board. This month, we feature the Chairman-elect and District VI Vice Chairman.

Eric Brown, General Manager of KRVN 880 Farm Radio in Lexington, is in his first term as District VI Vice Chairman representing western Nebraska. A native Nebraskan, Eric has been involved in radio and communications since he graduated from the University of Nebraska. He began his duties at KRVN in 1979.



Eric Brown

Eric is active in Lexington, having served on the Economic Development Board, the Tri-County Hospital Board, and the Lexington Chamber of Commerce Board. A strong supporter of the

University of Nebraska, Eric serves as a Trustee of the UNL Foundation and the UNL President's Advisory Council. He is a past president of the Nebraska Broadcasters Association. He and his wife Ruth have three children.

Gayle-ann Douglas and her husband Roger are now the fourth generation to run the family business, Douglas Manufacturing Corporation, that was founded in 1910. After



Gayle-ann Douglas

leaving a teaching career at UNL and Southeast Community College, she joined the firm which is headquartered in Crete, and provides election-related equipment throughout the U.S. and some foreign countries.

In addition to serving as Chairman-elect for the State Chamber, Gayle-ann also finds time to serve numerous civic and professional associations, such as the Nebraska Diplomats. She devoted a great deal of time recently as a business representative on the Prison Site Selection Committee and the Teacher Salary Task Force. She and Roger have three grown children and two grandchildren. ■

Membership Directory Sales Begin This Month

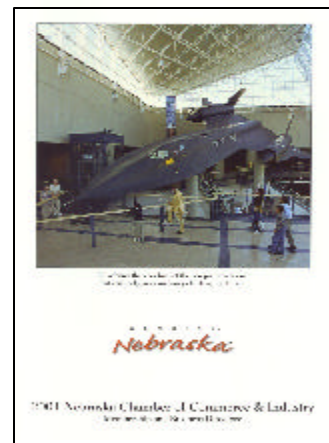
The advertising sales campaign for the 2002 State Chamber Membership and Business Directory will begin in July. A representative of Lawton Publications will be contacting members across the state to present exciting advertising opportunities to you. Take a quick minute and compute how many times you utilize the Directory, then factor in that over 1,800 fellow members see it as well. Your message and listing will also be seen by many others, as the Directory is utilized by economic development recruiting efforts by the state, and at employee recruiting opportunities, particularly at state colleges and universities.

We would ask you to please review your directory for proper listings, addresses, phone numbers, etc. Then make a point of noting businesses you are familiar with who are NOT listed. Those folks ought to be in the Directory, too, as well as members of the State Chamber. Take a copy of your 2001 Directory and let them know they ought to be a member of the State Chamber,

just like smart businesses such as yours! We will be happy to provide additional copies if you need them.

If you need more information on the 2002 Directory, please contact Don Mihovk, Vice President-Public Affairs, at the State Chamber. Your support is appreciated!! ■

2001 Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry Membership and Business Directory



Labor Law Workshops To Be Offered In September

There will be Labor Law Workshops in early September this year. Enclosed is a brochure and registration for the State Chamber's Labor Law Workshops on state and federal issues on September 6, 2001, at Mahoney State Park in Ashland.

The day-long seminar will provide Nebraska employers with current practical information concerning federal and Nebraska laws and regulations governing the employer-employee relationship relating to Discrimination Law and a Regulation Update. Topics to be covered will include new state legislation; Family & Medical Leave Act; Disability Discrimination; Discrimination & Harassment Standards; Fair Labor Standards Act; and union organizing.

Speakers will be William A. Harding, Margaret E. Stine, Robert Bals, Carol Pagel, and Jack L. Shultz from the law firm of Harding, Shultz & Downs, which is well known for its work in labor relations and employment matters. All have lectured on labor relations and employment topics for public and private sector associations and employers in Nebraska and nationwide. In addition, the Workshop will include some breakout sessions for members to discuss some of the topics affecting them.

Cost for the workshops are \$65 for each session, or \$100 for both sessions for State Chamber members (\$85; \$150 for non-members) and pre-registration is recommended, as the workshops

are usually the most popular offered by the State Chamber. For more information, please contact Charlie Volnek, Vice President-Operations, at the State Chamber at (402) 474-4422. ■

Legislative Forums

(Continued from page 1)

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 3

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Breakfast | North Platte McCook |
| Lunch | Cozad Holdrege |

THURSDAY, OCT. 4

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Breakfast | Lincoln |
|-----------|---------|

MONDAY, OCT. 8

| | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| Lunch | O'Neill Falls City |
| Dinner | Norfolk |

TUESDAY, OCT. 9

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| Breakfast | York |
| Lunch | South Sioux City Beatrice |

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 10

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Breakfast | Seward Omaha |
| Lunch | Fremont Nebraska City |



State Chamber Welcomes New "Investors"

Membership in the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is an investment in Nebraska's economic well-being. This month, the State Chamber welcomes the following new members and encourages members to consider doing business with fellow Chamber members.

HASTINGS

Hastings Pork
Owen D. Nelson

LINCOLN

Blue's Bike & Fitness
Center
Jim Carveth

Crooked Creek Golf
Club
Marc Cruse

Hampton Development

Services
Bob Hampton
Sponsor: Dick Campbell,
Campbell's Nurseries &
Garden Centers

Pickering Boe Graphic Arts
Gary Pickering

Sponsor: Gayle-ann Douglas,
Douglas Manufacturing
Corporation

OMAHA

Broadsword Services,
Ltd.
Joe Vacca/Tom Tilden

Diversified Resources,
Inc.
Michele Severson

Independent Roofing
Co.
A.B. Padon

The Lerner Co.

Sal Carta
Sponsor: Mike Baldino,
Kelly Industries, Inc.

Office Furniture
Installers, Inc.
Randy Durr