



Senator Frank LaRose
27th Ohio Senate District

GUEST COLUMN

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New Year Brings a New Approach to Business in Ohio

By State Senator Frank LaRose

With 2012 underway, lawmakers have returned to Columbus committed to building on the recovery and reform measures of 2011. Last year saw new, innovative approaches to job creation and a renewed effort to put the 'Open for Business' sign back on Ohio's front door. While Ohio has embarked on a road to recovery, many challenges remain. I embrace the hard work that is needed as we all strive together, to rebuild our great state.

Ohio's small business people and entrepreneurs know all too well that bureaucratic red tape and over-regulation have been main culprits in driving jobs away from the Buckeye State in recent years. Far too many of our communities have taken the hit as families have moved away in order to find work and gain greater financial security. Clearly, something needed to be done.

To return prosperity to Ohio we must get control over run-away government regulations, but this does not mean that a laissez-faire regulatory system is what Ohio needs. History has taught us the import role government must play to protect working people, minority groups, our natural environment and the other interests of a civil society. We all recognize that there must be rules of the road to protect against those unscrupulous operators who would allow self interest to trump civic virtue. But what we can't allow is cumbersome, unnecessary and overly complex regulations to continue to make Ohio a place unfriendly to business growth.

What we need is balance. We need a thoughtful approach to government regulation which considers a cost-benefit analysis before acting. Last year we took action passing Senate Bill 2 with broad bi-partisan support.

With the passage of Senate Bill 2, we empowered the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) with new authority to shut down bureaucratic overreach and stand up for common sense. I was recently given the responsibility of leading this critical committee as its new chairman. In this capacity, I will work with my fellow committee members and a very capable team of analysts to review every rule proposed by Ohio's various state agencies.

As an oversight authority created decades ago, JCARR's charge has long been to evaluate the impact of any proposed regulations and to ensure that they do not go beyond an agency's intended authority. However, due to its limited scope and authority, JCARR has sometimes been powerless to prevent the implementation of burdensome regulations that have contributed to jobs and capital exiting the state. All that changed recently.

The recent legislative action provided our committee with a "fifth prong" that will allow us to recommend the invalidation of any rules deemed as negatively affecting business in the State of Ohio. Under the change, agencies now must file a "business impact analysis" for any proposed regulation that will affect Ohio's job creators. The newly-established Common Sense Initiative Office (CSIO) will assist in evaluating the roughly 9,000 rules that come before JCARR on an annual basis.

Though the rule review process often proves too technical and dry to garner much attention, the purpose of this recent change is simple in that it will allow Ohio to grow jobs, expand sustainable industries, and prosper through the elimination of unnecessary and nonsensical government regulations.

As Chairman, I am working with my fellow committee members to put Ohio back to work by restoring commonsense to government rules and regulations.

Quality, well-paying jobs empower working Ohioans and allow families to live the American dream. This is the notion that inspired me to run for office in the first place. The solution to Ohio's problems is better, smarter government, and in some cases, less government. That is what this new approach does. Ohio has always been a great place to live and raise a family. We can once again make it a great place to work and start a business!

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Senator Frank LaRose represents Ohio's 27th Senate District.. He currently serves as Chairman of the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review and as Vice Chairman of the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee.