

Advocacy Connects Arizona Hospitality Concerns to Washington

The hospitality industry plays a vital role in Arizona's economic growth. According to the state, visitors spent \$21.2 billion in Arizona in 2016. While the state has large hospitality employers, the vast majority of those contributing to the resurgent economic climate in Arizona are local small businesses which cater to the 43 million overnight visitors.

Having worked in the hospitality industry for many years, I heard numerous concerns from small business owners about overly burdensome federal regulations. Finding help in the federal bureaucracy is challenging and many small businesses find it, in fact, *inhospitable*.

That's where we come in.

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy plays a significant role in supporting America's business community. While many small business owners exclusively think of the SBA for loan guarantees, SBA's Office of Advocacy has a different mission. Our focus is on regulations impacting your business. If federal rules and regulations negatively impact your business, we're here for you.

Advocacy was created by Congress to be the voice of small business. We are an independent office that represents small business before Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the federal courts. Advocacy works with federal agencies to find alternatives to proposed rules that are disproportionately burdensome to small business. The office maintains several specific roles, but those most pertinent to your business are the research and regulatory functions.

Advocacy's Office of Economic Research is the government's preeminent data house for information pertaining to small business. We release numerous pieces of research annually. Our website at www.sba.gov/advocacy contains state economic profiles, issue briefs, small business owner facts, and small business facts with topics such as startup rates, the role of microbusiness in the economy and employment trends from new businesses.

Our office is most noted for its work in the regulatory arena. Mitigating regulatory actions on behalf of the small business community is a primary focus of our mission. The sheer enormity of federal government rules and regulations is often overwhelming. The general public usually does not know where to turn for support.

Advocacy is your voice in Washington.

Reducing the regulatory burden has been a focus of the Trump Administration and the President has issued two important executive orders on regulation. The first is for each new regulation proposed; two must be removed. The second requires every executive agency to engage a task force to root out unnecessary, irrelevant, and redundant regulations.

As I've traveled through Arizona this year, I've heard many different small business concerns. The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, Waters of the United States, transportation, the fiduciary rule, and many other issues are on the minds of business owners and advocates.

During regulatory forums we've hosted across the country, small business owners have weighed in on various issues pertinent to the hospitality industry such as the overtime rule, tax reform, and changes to immigration law, the Americans with Disabilities Act and National Labor Relations Board decisions.

On our website, there's a regulatory reform page where you can read more about the executive orders and offer your input on how federal regulations negatively affect your business. We are compiling this information to alert federal agencies of small business concerns. We will also use this data to construct regulatory roundtables across the country specific to market issues. Please visit our webpage and provide your input so we can deliver your feedback to the decision makers in Washington.

Along with the regulatory reform page, our website also displays regulatory comment letters written by Advocacy in response to small business concerns and small business alerts which inform business about comment periods and proposed regulatory changes which may impact small business. You can, and should, participate in the comment area to make certain your small business voice is heard.

At the SBA Office of Advocacy, we play an important role in supporting small businesses. Whether it's providing research or taking your concerns back to our nation's leaders, we're actively engaged on behalf of America's small business community. Please reach out if we can help. Sign up for email updates from the Office of Advocacy for the latest news.

[Philip D. Lovas](#), is the Office of Advocacy's small business advocate for federal region 9. Lovas is the direct link between the region's small business owners, state and local government agencies, state legislators, small business associations and the Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Federal region 9 covers Arizona, California, Hawaii and Nevada, as well as Guam, American Samoa, Trust Territories and the Commonwealth of the northern Mariana Islands.