

“How Did This Happen in This Country? Small Businesses are Overregulated and Treated So Poorly!” – Small Businesses in New Hampshire and Massachusetts Speak Up

By Claudia Rodgers, Senior Counsel

The Office of Advocacy heard detailed concerns from local small businesses in Manchester, N.H., Gloucester, Mass. and Boston, Mass., during the most recent visit of its Regional Regulatory Reform Roundtables on Nov. 28th and 29th. Frustrated small business owners told Advocacy about specific federal regulations that have been burdening their businesses in recent years in hopes that some relief will soon be seen. As a result of President Trump’s executive orders mandating that federal agencies take a good, hard look at existing regulations to see which ones can be revised, reformed or eliminated prior to promulgating any new rules, Advocacy has been actively seeking small business input to determine which regulations are most troublesome.

Small businesses in this region were not shy when it came to highlighting their problems with a number of federal regulations and provided Advocacy with specific suggestions on changes that can be made which will make a difference in the everyday costs of running their business.

“These rules are preventing us from being successful...” a small apple farmer in New Hampshire declared. “The reasons for the regulations may be common sense, but the regulations themselves are not,” stated a small smoke shop owner. Similar sentiments were shared and small businesses present at the roundtables agreed that one of the major problems with federal regulations, and the unending paperwork burden, is that federal agencies need to work together and eliminate the unnecessary duplication that is weighing down America’s small business owner.

In Gloucester, Mass., frustrated fishermen told Advocacy of the numerous NOAA regulations that they feel has severely damaged their industry. “No one can afford to operate a business in our industry because of all of the regulations,” one exclaimed. “The amount of oversight of my business by the federal government is outrageous,” stated another. They spoke to Advocacy about the problems with the National Marine Fisheries Program (NMFS)’s observer program and the high fees associated with these rules, and they provided dramatic data on the impact of NOAA’s quota reductions on the various types of fishing in the New England waters.

In Boston, small business owners were equally fed up with the amount of federal oversight of their operations and the unnecessary costs they incur as result of federal regulations. “There has been an enormous increase in the cost of compliance in recent

years,” stated a small automobile dealer. “...Staying on top of these regulations is extremely costly,” said a small chocolate manufacturer.

Specific regulatory complaints ranged from FDA’s Tobacco Deeming rule, the State Department’s visa programs, rules surrounding service disabled veteran-owned businesses, DOL’s Overtime rule, EPA’s Non Hazardous Materials rule, OSHA’s Combustible Dust rule, CFPB’s enforcement of Dodd-Frank legislation, to the Department of Transportation’s Electronic Logging Device rule, and many more. One thing is clear to Advocacy: Small businesses are desperate for regulatory relief in this country and they are extremely appreciative that someone is finally listening.

For more information on Advocacy’s Regional Regulatory Reform Roundtables, or to provide information on small business regulatory burdens, please visit our [webpage](#).