

As the Immediate Past President of the North Shreveport Business Association, I have had numerous opportunities to visit with business owners regarding the impact and negative consequences of Obamacare to their businesses. There are over six hundred and fifty (650) businesses in North Shreveport.

In an effort to assist our members to better understand Obamacare, our association has provided guest speakers familiar with this law and the impact it will have on the business community. What I have observed after each speaker concluded their presentation is that our members were so confused they were unable to ask questions.

Many businesses have told me they have had to eliminate expansion plans, reduce the hours of full-time employees and eliminate annual bonuses in order to remain competitive and profitable. The most painful scenario occurs when employers are making decisions that affect employees that have been with them for many years.

I spoke with a businessman recently that informed me his Blue Cross Blue Shield premium one year ago was \$280.00 per month and his deductible was \$1,000.00. His new coverage to comply with Obamacare would cost him more than \$600.00 per month and his deductible was over \$5,000.00. This gentleman is a 60 year old male that now has to carry maternity benefits and pediatric dentistry. He is self-employed and simply could not afford the premium. He opted to pay the fine.

Another large employer shared that they have spent endless hours cutting employee hours in order to stay below the thirty (30) hour threshold. Most of these employees took a second job to make ends meet and now have had their hours reduced. These employees did not ask for benefits, but a few hours to pay their bills.

One business stated in order to survive; they have eliminated all full time employees through attrition and will not hire any additional full-time employees. Another business stated In order to keep up with the information required to meet the guidelines for Obamacare, it would require forty (40) hours per week to complete.

I have experienced recently after speaking with several small business owners, that they are afraid to speak publically in fear their business will be targeted.

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