

Megan Green
Counsel and Engineering Manager
Weiler

Good afternoon and thank you for inviting me to testify today.

My name is Megan Weiler Green and I am Counsel and Engineering Manager at Weiler in Knoxville. We are a heavy equipment manufacturer, doing everything from machine design to turning raw steel into finished product for construction equipment primarily for the asphalt paving industry. I am also a second generation business owner. Our business was founded in 2000 with 4 employees and has grown to over 600 employees. What started as a 40,000 square foot spec building has grown to over 625,000 square feet under roof. Our equipment is sold into all 50 states and over 15 countries.

We are the market leader because we listen to our customers. We are proactive. We move quickly. We find innovative solutions. We are hands on. These core values describe many small businesses and many Iowa success stories. But they are often at odds with government regulators and government regulations. Entire industries are born out of interpreting government regulations for small businesses. We know from our experience that every minute one of our employees spends trying to decipher new regulations, creating reports to respond to regulations, purchasing new systems that add no value to our organization other than to comply with regulatory requirements is a minute taken away from what we do best: serve our customers and design industry-leading equipment.

As we react to new regulations, small businesses are left wondering “who does this benefit?” The purpose of regulations is often nonobvious from the perspective of those asked to comply. We have also seen several instances of regulations being announced alongside the deadlines for compliance. While we as a business work diligently to decipher unreadable regulatory jargon, announcements from the government are released days before the deadline moving the compliance date into the future, without recognition of the wasted time and duplicative effort this creates. Similarly, our team works hard to pull together complicated reports and data to respond to various mandatory surveys and government requests for information. While the demand for this information is firm, there is no discernible benefit to our company or explanation as to how the collection of this information moves the greater good forward.

In business, we do many cost/benefit analyses. In order to come out with an accurate assessment, we need information we can rely on. When new regulations are announced, small businesses are often in a position to ask themselves: does this apply to me? What does this mean for my business? Will I be able to find someone within this government agency who can answer my questions? How much time is this going to take away from my business? When the rules are unknown, or the rules change in the middle of the game, we can't trust that we're making decisions in the best interest of our customers and our employees.

Entrepreneurs and small business owners created their companies out of a passion for a product, a passion for serving people or a passion for improving the status quo. No one starts their own business with a passion for the paperwork. Dedicating resources to regulatory compliance makes it more difficult for small businesses to compete with big companies, who can depend on large staff and healthy budgets dedicated to outside experts who can assist with information gathering, compliance and audits.

The bottom line is this: small businesses want to do the right thing. The Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship can assist by helping small businesses in the following ways. Help small businesses understand regulatory requirements and the *why* behind new regulations and reporting requirements. Leverage data that is already required for other purposes rather than creating new reporting requirements. Be flexible on what the output looks like for small businesses. Provide resources and access to people who can help navigate changing rules.

I welcome any questions you have and thank you for your time.