

# The Columbus Dispatch

August 19, 2018

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

## Tax, Regulatory Reform Key Ohio's Job Boom

By Matt A. Mayer

In the past several years, as America's job market continued to rebound from the Great Recession in 2008-2009, Ohio's job market got weaker and weaker. It got so weak that Ohio ended 2017 with the lowest net private-sector job growth (30,000 jobs) since 2009. In fact, in the past three years, Ohio's private-sector net job growth scored the three weakest years since 2009, with each year getting worse — from 58,300 to 41,200 to just 30,000. In the 18 years of positive job growth since 1991, 2017 was the second-weakest.

Keep in mind, this ever-decreasing job tally occurred despite seven years of Gov. John Kasich's policy ideas and the work of his privatized and opaque economic-development entity, JobsOhio. Instead of Ohio getting stronger, the longer Kasich guided the state, Ohio's private sector got weaker and weaker. The primary reason for this reality is that Kasich spent the past seven years shifting rather than cutting taxes, expanding government and increasing individual dependency on government with his Medicaid expansion, opposing a right-to-work law as our neighbors adopted that pro-business policy and hiking state spending to record levels until a projected \$1 billion deficit forced him to cut spending for the last two years of his tenure.

Thankfully (and ironically), Kasich's continued presidential ambitions have kept him so busy that he hasn't spent much time pushing for new policies in Ohio since losing the Republican nomination in 2016. His presidential obsession even kept him from submitting a final midyear biennial budget as he had the three previous off-year budget cycles. Ohioans frankly needed a break from his ideas.

Ohioans and their businesses, however, were in dire need of a break from Washington.

Thankfully, President Donald Trump and the Republican Congress gave them that break. In the past 18 months, the Trump administration has eliminated burdensome rules and regulations and forced the federal administrative state to more properly balance the heavy hand of regulation with economic prosperity. By killing, curtailing or modifying burdensome rules and regulations, Ohioans and their businesses can now spend less money on lawyers, lobbyists, accountants and consultants and more money on expanding their businesses and rewarding workers.

Even more important was the historic tax-reform package passed last December by Republicans in Congress and signed into law by President Trump. Within weeks of passage, businesses from across Ohio announced expansions, higher wages and benefits for workers and new jobs.

As a result of Trump's tax reforms, America's gross domestic product hit 4.1 percent in the second quarter and wages are headed higher for millions of Americans. The unemployment rate for African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Americans without a high-school diploma are reaching new record lows. There are now more jobs available than there are Americans to take them, which will continue to drive wages on Main Street America higher.

In Ohio, the three-year declining private-sector job market has sprung to life. For the first half of 2018, Ohio added 69,200 net jobs, which is more than the yearly total over the last three years. If this pace continues for the rest of 2018, Ohio's private-sector job growth will be the second strongest year since 1991 — surpassing the annual totals hit during the tech bubble in the late 1990s. To be clear, the only big changes that occurred over the past year-and-a-half for Ohioans and their businesses were the Trump administration's zealous deregulatory efforts and the major Republican tax-reform law.

Politicians can make lots of promises about what they will do or why their ideas are the right ones. Promises without action, however, can't feed your family or cover expenses. For Ohioans who just want prosperity for their families and to get their share of the American Dream, nothing matters more than a good job with wages headed higher. Trump and the Republican Congress worked hard to pass tax reform and shrink the anti-business regulatory state that arose under the Obama administration.

Ohio's strong job numbers in 2018 are hard proof that President Trump is delivering on his promise to make America and Ohio great again.

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