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# The ADVOCATE

## for Business & Community

A quarterly publication of the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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When a coalition of business & community members convene around an issue, real change and impact occurs. The Chamber's Greater Reading Voice Advocacy Network promotes business, government and community related issues to help sustain and grow our economy and enhance our quality of place.

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### ENGAGE & CONNECT

**Business@Breakfast Eggs & Issues | June 4, 7:45 a.m. | Reading Country Club Roundabouts & Bridges** - PennDOT Jay McGee, Asst. District Executive Design and Mike Mastaglio, Design Project Manager will provide an update on our #1 priority road project Route 222 Roundabouts. 'ReadingBridges.net' will have information available concerning the 2014 closure of the Buttonwood Street Bridge along with the subsequent Penn Street Bridge Rehabilitation Project. Registration not required.

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#### Opening Doors: Doing Business in Berks June 5

**A Reverse Trade Show** - Here is an opportunity for your businesses to meet one-on-one with numerous purchasing representatives. You will also be able to connect with other participants who may be prospective customers. We hope you have some free time between 8:00 -11:30 a.m. to stop by the Crowne Plaza to join us in a unique networking opportunity to build new business relationships and strengthen existing ones. Hear from other Chamber members on why you should attend [click here](#). [Register here](#).

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### COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

**Making a Difference** The Chamber's Workforce Pipeline Career Awareness Task Force brings together committed partners to align community resources, identifying and creating initiatives for businesses and educators to work together to tackle both educational and workforce related challenges. The Career Prep and CHOICES programs are just two initiatives of many in Berks that build on business/education partnerships to build a competitive workforce pipeline. [Read more](#).

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### BUSINESS ADVOCACY

**PA 2014-15 Budget** - The General Assembly has return to Harrisburg to complete work on the 2014-15 Budget by June 30th. It will be on time, the big question is what will be in it. [Read more](#).

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**Property Tax Reform** - Senate Bill 76, commonly known as 'The Property Tax Independence Act' proposes to eliminate all school district property taxes and replace them with an increase and expanded sales and personal income tax. To see the results of our member survey and recent Bill Amendment [click here](#).

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**Minimum Wage Increase:** How would a \$10 or \$15 dollar an hour minimum wage affect your business? While some lawmakers are looking at mandating an increase to the minimum wage in Pennsylvania, others are concerned that this government action could be a significant burden on business. We would like to hear from our membership, your perspective on what impact a mandatory raise in the minimum wage would have. Please provide your feedback to [Gail Landis](#)

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## LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERTS

**Pension Reform** - The pension problems facing cities, boroughs and townships threaten taxpayers who could take a hit in the coming years as the legacy costs of pensions increasingly impact municipal budgets and their ability to provide services. The Chamber is one of the founders of the Coalition for Sustainable Communities that has been advocating for legislation to address this issue. [Read more](#).

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**Project Labor Agreements** - The Chamber Board of Directors approved a position opposing the proposed City of Reading Project Labor Agreement. We believe it would be a unnecessary burden on businesses in Reading and detraction for economic development at a time we can least afford it. [Read more](#).

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## NEWS BITES

Primary Election Day was Tuesday, May 20, and it provided a clear picture of the fall election tickets. The Chamber's Endorsement taskforce will review our Berks County races - for full election results, visit the Department of State [website](#).

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Join the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Berks County Pennsylvania Economy League at the June 10 PEL Issues Breakfast '**Heroin's Toll On The Berks County Region: Assessing the Impact and Seeking Solutions.**' **District Attorney John T. Adams** and **Detective Pasquale Leporace** will discuss the heroin epidemic in the region. For more information, click [here](#) and to register [click here](#).

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Check out Chamber Legislature Scorecard on [GreaterReadingVoice.com](#) .

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## STAY CONNECTED ~ TAKE ACTION AT GREATERREADINGVOICE.COM

**your source for information about member benefit programs, events, volunteer initiatives, priority issues, elected official, legislative tracking, Business & Community Advocacy Council, Transportation Committees along with other Special Task Forces you may be interested**

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