



Obamacare regulations and rising premiums are trimming the wages of small business employees to the tune of \$22.6 billion annually. A September 2014 study by the American Action Forum reports that employees working for a business with 50 to 99 employees lose an average of \$935 each year.

An American Economic Development Institute study ranked Illinois the 49th worst state for business, just above California. "When you have a government that's constantly telling you you're not doing enough, and on top of that they're going to ... make it more expensive to do business, it makes many of my members think, 'What is the point of being here?'" NFIB Illinois State Director Kim Maisch told MyStateline.com.

Despite an uncertain economic climate, Americans believe that small businesses are key, according to a survey conducted by market research firm Penn Schoen Berland. Twenty six percent of U.S. survey respondents said small businesses have the most responsibility for economic growth, while Germany, China, Japan and Singapore ranked the economic impact of small companies in single digits.

BAD

GOOD

The Department of Labor issued \$500,000 in grants to Massachusetts, Montana, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C., to study the impact of paid leave programs. This issue could have a negative effect on small businesses that cannot afford to guarantee paid leave.



Between 2000 and 2010, one standard deviation rise in student loan debt reduced the creation of new small businesses with one to four employees by 25 percent, according to research by the Federal Reserve and Penn State University. Because small businesses account for 99 percent of all businesses, these findings could have a long-term impact.

FICO overhauled its credit scoring methodology to weigh medical debt much less heavily than in the past. This has already proven beneficial for small business owners, whose personal credit scores can be intertwined with their businesses.

The U.S. House voted twice this year to permanently increase small business expensing to \$500,000 annually, indexed to inflation. Both measures passed overwhelmingly, first as a stand-alone vote in June and then as part of a broader bill in September. The Senate has yet to vote on the House bill or pass a similar measure.

Credit Score

-  Excellent
-  Average
-  Poor