



Made in America Panel Sees a New Day for America's Small Businesses when Tax Reform is Passed

Neal Asbury, together with co-host Dr. Rich Roffman, opened the nationally syndicated "Neal Asbury's Made in America" show on Radio America (aired by almost 100 affiliates) by welcoming KLIK in Waynesville, Missouri as an affiliate.

Neal noted that we're in the era of personal destruction, attacking each other instead of mandating policies that spur America's economy.

"The \$1.5 trillion tax bill is a great start and a long-time coming. It will bring relief for entrepreneurs throughout the country," suggested Neal.

The first guest on Made in America was Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO of the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, who characterized the new tax plan as a solid piece of legislation that will help the economy grow and provide a boon for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

"There are 3.4 million missing businesses that aren't ready to take the risk of a start-up. They see a lack of economic growth while foreign competitors are getting the best of American businesses," according to Kerrigan, who believes that the new tax plan will offer relief for businesses and for the middle class.

"You have to keep in mind that c-corporations account for 86 percent of all American business and they employ 20 workers or fewer. But you have to take into account the suppliers that depend on c-corporations for their revenue," noted Kerrigan.

Neal and Dr. Roffman wondered whether the individual mandate will be repealed.

"The individual mandate could muddy things in the senate but can be resolved. The individual mandate is really a tax that hurts people. I still think Trump will have a tax package to sign by the end of the year," predicted Kerrigan.

"The individual mandate really negatively impacts the middle class. The senate needs to get this done. They need to find a middle ground," proposed Dr. Roffman.

Kerrigan agreed, and reminded listeners that November is National Entrepreneurship Month – a time to promote small business and entrepreneurship and encourage them to take the risk to pursue the American Dream.

The next guest on Made in America was James Quintero from the Texas Public Policy Foundation, who would like to see Amazon build its second headquarters in Texas.

"The second Amazon headquarters (the first is in Seattle) is going to be a global

phenomenon. That's why there are 240 cities submitting bids. The new headquarters will bring 50,000 jobs. But those pursuing the prize should expect a big hike in property values and traffic, while adding more taxes and an increase in debt. The trouble is that the negotiations are being held without public input, that could obligate tax payers to pay for the new headquarters for years," maintained Quintero.

Quintero noted that Texas has a good track record in wooing businesses to relocate there due to its lower taxes and reduced regulatory pressures. He is wary of offering too many incentives to attract Amazon. In many cases, big cities add so many incentives that the municipality ultimately takes a financial hit. The key, according to Quintero is to create a pro-business climate instead of big incentives. A short-term gain could result in long-term headaches.

Neal found it ironic that a trillion dollar company is asking cities to pony up some of the money they need to help build its second headquarters.

The final guest on Made in America was Leia Klingel from FOX Business, who questioned whether Baker Hughes can rescue General Electric, whose shares are down about 42 percent year-to-date, whereas Baker Hughes' are down 32 percent.

"General Electric (GE) is considering its options when it comes to a relationship with Baker Hughes (BHGE). There have been some headaches in the link-up of the two companies, but GE's CEO John Flannery noted that it remains committed to supporting Baker Hughes and believes the company is experiencing a nice trajectory in synergy realization. However, Flannery noted that GE will explore its options when it comes to a stake in Baker Hughes. GE holds a 62.5 percent stake in Baker Hughes," according to Klingel.

Dr. Roffman finds it sad that an iconic company like GE, which revolutionized appliances and other technologies, has fallen on such hard times. He wondered how GE has reached this point.

Klingel attributed it to some poor decisions made by GE and bad timing when it moved more heavily into energy at a time when the industry was tanking.

To get out from under its debt, Klingel believes that while there are various assets GE could put on the chopping block as part of its plan to shed of \$20 billion in businesses, GE's executives were clear on their planned streamline while also

aiming to reduce their exposure to commodity-related volatility. Selling Baker Hughes would be in line with these goals and generate some cash to fund dividends, which GE just dramatically cut.

Neal reiterated the effect that GE's financial problems have on American prestige and on the communities that rely on big plants for employment and the vitality of the local community.

Dr. Roffman agreed, noting that big corporate gets a bad name when companies like GE suffer financially. Neal added that while big corporations are prone to closing plants and relocating, the small businesses in a community are there for the long haul.

"What's troubling about GE is that they received big handouts from the Obama administration, but all the help they got from Obama backfired," noted Neal.

Dr. Roffman agreed, adding that \$6 billion in GE profits were untaxed as part of the crony arrangement with Obama.

The final discussion centered on General Dynamics' Connecticut plant, which is in the forefront of new submarine technologies. The company can't meet demand because it lacks the trained personnel it needs, and the vocational schools that once provided these employees are disappearing.

"Not only is the lack of vocational schools a big problem, there is a stigma attached to attending trade schools instead of college. Yet in foreign countries it is prestigious to attend vocational schools, and graduates find good paying jobs. America needs to take a fresh look at the role of vocational schools in meeting our manufacturing challenges," concluded Neal.

Each week Neal Asbury's Made in America provides Neal's insights into the week's top news stories and their impact on the worlds of entrepreneurship, small business ownership and the overall economy. Neal's analysis, together with co-host Dr. Richard Roffman, a veteran 30-year publisher with extensive domestic and international experience, takes a non-biased approach based on real life experience in business as an American manufacturer and exporter. Made in America airs nationally each Saturday from 7-8:00 PM on Radio America. Link to Made in America at <http://www.nealasalburysmadeinamerica.com>.



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