



Made in America Panel Optimistic About a Resurgence in the Economy in 2019

The economy should stay strong in 2019 despite the strange times in congress; the folly of the minimum wage; the benefits that accrue when the energy sector gains strength; new jobs being created for veterans; Michigan's initiative to scale back overbearing certifications; and the Netflix film bio that details Walt Disney's life as a creative genius and successful entrepreneur, were among the topics tackled by host Neal Asbury, co-host Dr. Rich Roffman, and a panel of experts on the nationally syndicated "Neal Asbury's Made in America" show on Radio America (aired by almost 100 affiliates and by the Armed Forces Network).

Neal and Dr. Roffman began the show by anticipating that 2019 will be a successful year for the nation's entrepreneurs and small businesses, and we need to look past the news in congress and take note of all the good things that are happening.

"I think China and the U.S. will come to favorable trade terms, and the U.S. must stay firm during negotiations. The markets should respond in 2019, and we can look to California and New York roiling the nation," proposed Dr. Roffman.

Neal noted that growth in 2019 could be impacted by 43 cities that have passed minimum wage laws that take effect in 2019.

The first guest on Made in America was Michael Saltzman, Managing Director of Employment Policy Institute, who noted that a comprehensive study by economists Scott Adams and David Neumark proves that minimum wage increases – regardless of where they are tried – lead to employment losses for our least-skilled workers. Researchers arrived at this conclusion after summarizing research and analysis looking into the impact of living wage laws across nearly 100 cities and local governments.

"When Seattle considered raising the minimum wage, they hired economists from the University of Washington to study the economic impact. When the economist came back with a negative outlook for the minimum wage hike, the city fired the economists rather than admit they made a mistake. Seattle found out the hard way they made a mistake when companies forced to increase the minimum wage to \$16 an hour cut hours to preserve profits. Workers found that they had no new increase in their income," related Saltzman.

Neal concurred with Saltzman's evaluation, adding that, "Ohio's minimum wage is \$8.00 an hour, while Seattle's minimum wage is \$16.00. So

should we conclude that Seattle's workers are twice as productive as Ohio's? The blame is really with city governments that over regulate their cities."

Dr. Roffman noted fast food restaurants are particularly hard pressed to pay an increased minimum wage, and we have already seen them cut hours, or replace workers with interactive kiosks. Even cooks are being replaced by machines.

Neal noted that wages are rising in the energy sector, which benefits not only workers but the overall economy. "It creates wealth and supports emerging technologies."

Dr. Roffman is concerned that with the Democrats taking back the House, they will be introducing the kind of Obama-era legislation that killed the energy industry. "We need free markets. You can't legislate out of a bad economy."

Neal and Dr. Roffman were heartened by the fact that holiday retail sales were up, and that more people were traveling – a sign that they are more positive about their situation. They also applauded Amazon for announcing that they were hiring 25,000 veterans for their Washington D.C. location.

The next guest on Made in America was Jarret Skroup, Marketing Director for the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, who noted that local governments in Michigan can no longer require an individual to get an extra, local occupational license before they can work legally. From now on, a state license will suffice no matter where a licensed worker chooses to do business. Also, local governments are also banned from creating new licenses and registration requirements for occupations the state does not license. "That's good news for plumbers, electricians, contractors and many other skilled tradespeople."

Skroup noted that former Michigan governor, Rick Snyder, conducted a study that identified the many jobs that required unnecessary and arbitrary certification. For example hair washers at salons were required to take 1,500 hours of education – more than that required for lawyers and electricians.

The final guest on Made in America was Dr. Jean-Pierre Isbouts, a humanities scholar, bestselling author and award-winning filmmaker, specializing in European history, the culture of the Near East and Renaissance art. He is the director and writer known for "The Wonderful World of Disney" (1995); "Beyond 'The Golden Compass'"; "The Magic of Philip Pullman" (2007); "The Quest

for Peace" (2005); and his newest documentary: "Walt: The man and the myth," which is available on Netflix.

"People don't really know how Walt motivated his employees, prompting them to stay with the company for years. Although he was tough, his employees stayed loyal to him. He had the tendency never to compliment people to their face. Instead he told others about the great job that employees were doing. He even used his own money – mortgaging his home—to fund the making of "Snow White" and Disneyland," according to Isbouts.

The discussion turned to Isbouts's quest to reveal that Leonardo Da Vinci created a second "Last Supper," commissioned by France's Louis XII. It had been stored in a monastery in Belgium for 450 years, and was thought to be a mere copy. But instead, it was produced by Da Vinci's studio where Da Vinci himself is said to have painted two figures.

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.madeinamerica.com>.



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