



by Frank Robinson
First Vice President

At Issue

Step Up and Speak Out

High taxes. Paid family leave. Expensive health insurance coverage mandates. Excessive environmental regulations. Government policies like these make New Jersey an expensive place to do business. Every day, our Government Affairs staff works hard fighting against these kinds of anti-business mandates. We are in continual contact with legislators and their staff members to keep bad bills from becoming law or at least to change them substantially to soften the blow on businesses like yours. But the special interests in Trenton are also hard at work, and they have thousands of member volunteers to help them.

That's why we need your help. Grassroots lobbying is effective because it puts legislators in touch with YOU, their constituents. No matter how persuasive our arguments are, nothing impacts a legislator more than a contact from an employer in their legislative district. You are our greatest single resource in fighting these bills, and we want to make sure you have the opportunity to participate.

That's why we are asking you to become part of our **KEY PERSON RAPID RESPONSE TEAM**. It is comprised of business leaders like you who have a personal relationship with a state legislator or other key government officials. Perhaps you are a retailer who has an elected official as a customer, or you are involved with a local community or political organization that has regular contact with a state legislator. Whether you are a friend, campaign contributor, business colleague or neighbor of an elected representative, we need your assistance.

When the Assembly or the Senate announces that one of its committees will hold a hearing to consider legislation that is detrimental to your company, we will notify you and ask that you contact the legislators whom you know. We know your time is valuable, so we will ask you to contact only those legislators you know personally, and do so only when it is absolutely essential.

On the tough issues, a personal phone call expressing your concerns could make all the difference. The Rapid Response Team is just one of the tools we use to deliver the business community's views to legislators. There is our electronic Membership Alert system, which enables you to send an e-mail to a legislator or a group of legislators with just a few clicks of your computer mouse. Over the course of the last year, thousands of you have sent e-mails to the Governor, state Senators and Assembly members opposing legislation that would disrupt the workplace and increase your cost of doing business in New Jersey.

By getting actively involved, you become a vital participant in the governmental process that can affect your company's economic viability. Many of you already participate in the monthly county Employer Legislative Committee (ELC) meetings. Perhaps you have joined one of our policy committees, participated in our "Meet the Decision Makers" breakfast series, or taken a local legislator on a tour of your business facilities as part of NJBIA's Site Visit program.

The Rapid Response team is another tool for building a better business climate in New Jersey. We hope that you will join us in working to ensure that the voices of New Jersey's business community are heard not only in the halls of the State Capitol, but also in the cities and towns where you and your elected representatives live and work.

We need you to **STEP UP** and **SPEAK OUT!** Please contact me at frobinson@njbja.org or (609) 393-7707, ext. 225, if you are willing to become a part of our **RAPID RESPONSE TEAM**.

Together, we have been successful in promoting the interests of the business community and in stopping a number of onerous state government mandates. Together, we can continue to have a big impact in Trenton. Thank you for your continued participation and assistance. **;**