

CLEVELAND, February 14, 2008 - The Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) released the following statement regarding the Executive Order signed by Governor Strickland on Tuesday, February 12 aimed at easing businesses' regulatory hurdles. During the election cycle of 2006, members of the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) identified five areas the next Governor of Ohio should address to support small business. COSE recognizes that small businesses are faced with increasing volatility in the economy and that regulatory decisions greatly affect their ability to stay in business. Therefore, COSE met with Governor Strickland's Administration early on to advocate for an end to duplicative, unnecessary and overly complicated regulations by calling for transparent, simplified and cost-effective measures to ensure the State is supporting a pro-growth small business environment.

We are proud to say that in an executive order signed on Tuesday, the Governor called for an alignment of cabinet agencies, boards and commissions to support a more effective and conscious relationship between small business and the State. COSE applauds Governor Strickland on his regulatory reform initiative and on taking this step to address small business concerns.

"Small business owners, who are least able to absorb unnecessary regulatory requirements, have been calling out for a reform of the system. This is a step forward in the right direction," says Steve Millard, president and executive director, COSE. "After all, companies with one to 20 employees make up over 80% of Ohio's economy. It's time we make it easy to do business in Ohio."

COSE will continue to work with the Governor to identify existing burdensome rules and expedite the Governor's reform process. Additionally, COSE will provide the Governor's cabinet directors the small business community's perspective and support during this process.

COSE looks forward to working with Ohio legislators to continue the momentum toward a business-friendly State by legislating regulatory reform principles into law.

COSE, Northeast Ohio's largest small business support organization, strives to help small businesses grow and maintain their independence. Comprised of more than 17,000 member companies, COSE has a long history of fighting for the rights of all small business owners, whether it's through group purchasing programs in healthcare, workers' compensation, payroll services, or shipping, or advocating for specific changes in legislation or regulation. COSE also produces more than 100 networking and business education events each year - all focused on connecting our members to each other to increase their productivity and sales.