

MONEY

& MORE

'You give credit where credit is due.'

BOB JENSENIUS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE YORK COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON THE STIMULUS PLAN'S POTENTIAL FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES.



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President Barack Obama shakes hands with audience members as JetBlue Chief Executive Officer David Barger, right, looks on after the president spoke about the economy in the East Room of the White House.

It's a start

■ A cure-all? No, but some see potential in Obama's stimulus.

By BRENT BURKEY
Daily Record/Sunday News

The local business community is looking at the tax cuts embedded into President Barack Obama's multi-billion-dollar stimulus as a step in the right direction but far from a cure-all for the economy.

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Bob Jensenius, executive vice president

of the York County Chamber of Commerce, said he was pleased that Obama has recognized the need to help small- and medium-sized businesses in his first few days in office.

"You give credit where credit is due," Jensenius said.

But he also said he would like to see some "sunset" provisions in whatever bill passes so that some of the costly initiatives that begin in this stimulus don't just go on forever.

"The problem is, they never get pulled back," Jensenius said.

As for infrastructure, Jensenius said investing in roads, bridges and other infrastructure is always good. But it might not be as hard-hitting as some might expect.

"That's not a light switch," he said.

"Shovel ready" projects out there

Rich Wagman, chairman and chief executive officer of G.A. & F.C. Wagman, a local highway and heavy construction firm based in Manchester Township, said there are also enough "shovel ready" jobs out there to have the stimulus have some immediate effect.

Many projects are losing funding or could lose funding that are already supposed to happen, let alone the billions in other infrastructure upgrades that are needed across the country.

Wagman said there were thousands of out-of-work construction workers in the United States who could jump on those shovel-ready projects.

Of course, just as infrastructure won't automatically fix joblessness immediately, putting people to work won't fix all of our infrastructure problems.

That battle for those funds will come later this year, Wagman said. The money this time around won't be enough, he said.

Job-creation credits sound good

As the head of small business that has had to lay people off in this economy, the job-creation tax credit sounded good to Glenn Eyster Jr., president of Eyster's Machine and Wire Products.

But he also said if the credits come with too much red tape and oversight, it wouldn't help him.

He worries his Shrewsbury company will have to spend more money on bookkeeping to satisfy the attached strings than it would be worth to get the tax savings.

Also, considering how bad things have gotten, he worries the tax credits wouldn't cover enough costs to be worthwhile.

A tax credit, for exam-

PLANS

Some highlights of Obama's wish list from his Web site, change.gov:

■ During 2009 and 2010, existing businesses will receive a \$3,000 refundable tax credit for each additional full-time employee hired.

■ The Obama-Biden emergency plan would make \$25 billion immediately available in a Jobs and Growth Fund to help ensure that in-progress and fast-tracked infrastructure projects are not sidelined.

■ Obama and Biden will give small businesses an additional incentive to make investments and start creating jobs again by providing temporary business tax incentives through 2009.

ple, could cover some of the costs associated with a new hire or other investment. But with the economy as low as it is, he worries about generating the rest of the money for an employee or investment.



DAILY RECORD/SUNDAY NEWS — BIL BOWDEN

Traffic on Mount Zion Road is controlled by flaggers as workers install pipes. Local business leaders hope the proposed stimulus package puts workers back on the job. Some say there are enough 'shovel-ready' jobs out there for the stimulus to have immediate effect on the York County economy.



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People wait to talk to unemployment benefits staff at an Employment Development Department office in San Jose, Calif. The proposed stimulus package includes tax breaks for businesses that create jobs, but local firms fear the strings that come with the offerings may be too weighty.