



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

Skimming the daily updates for your business so you don't have to.

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES LETTER TO GOVERNOR

Abilene's City Council approved a letter to Governor Greg Abbott requesting local control to reopen businesses affected by COVID-19 prevention closures, including bars and distilleries. The council first began discussing such a letter in early August. Council member Shane Price says he requested the item be added to last night's agenda. "When we got the first draft I was not real happy with it and didn't think it was near strong enough. I asked you to make this an action item instead of us sending the letter early." Price said.

City Manager Robert Hanna read the final version of the letter to the chamber. "Many businesses in the City of Abilene and Big Country are struggling to survive and numerous bar owners have contacted the City Council with concerns over the prospective loss of their entire livelihoods."

Council members approved the letter which will now be sent to Governor Abbott. Source: KACU

AGRICULTURAL SURVEY

Bankers responding to the third-quarter survey reported overall weaker conditions across most regions of the Eleventh District. They noted that drought conditions along with low commodity prices continue to have producers concerned about 2020. "We have seen an impact from COVID-19 on our ag customers in the form of lower commodity prices," a survey participant said. Some regions have seen an influx of people interested in moving to rural areas from larger cities, which has benefited land prices.

Demand for agricultural loans continued to decline, with the loan demand index registering its 20th quarter in negative territory. Loan renewals or extensions increased this quarter while the rate of loan repayment continued to decline. Loan volume decreased across all major categories compared with a year ago.

[Read more.](#)

TEXAS MANUFACTURING RECOVERY PICKS UP STEAM

Texas factory activity expanded in September for the fourth month in a row following a record contraction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to business executives responding to the Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey. The production index, a key measure of state manufacturing conditions, rose nine points to 22.3, its highest reading in two years.

Other measures of manufacturing activity point to above-average growth this month. The

new orders index advanced five points to 14.7, and the growth rate of orders index held fairly steady at 13.2. The capacity utilization index rose from 10.9 to 17.5, while the shipments index was largely unchanged at 21.5.

Perceptions of broader business conditions continued to improve in September. The general business activity index pushed up six points to 13.6, its highest reading since November 2018. The company outlook index held mostly steady at 14.9, a reading well above average. Uncertainty regarding companies' outlooks continued to rise, with the index positive but largely unchanged at 6.7.

[Read more.](#)

STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM: 10 YEARS OF SUCCESS

On Sunday, September 27, 2020, the U.S Small Business Administration marked the 10th anniversary of the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) – a program dedicated to helping small businesses just like yours find global success. For the last decade, STEP has awarded 302 state grants, which averaged over \$518,000 in funding to all 50 states and U.S. Territories for a total of more than \$156,000,000, generating nearly \$1.8 billion in exports. The Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 created STEP in partnership with U.S. states and territories to assist small businesses with entering and expanding into international markets.

[Read more.](#)

WORLD OF WORK YOUTH EXPO IS GOING VIRTUAL

The World of Work (WOW) Youth Expo is going virtual from October 19th-23rd with a week of amazing, interactive content for students in grades 6-12. Presented by Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, World of Work (WOW) Week will offer a live look at industries and employers around the region, employability skill challenges, sessions on college and career planning, mock interviews, and more.

Volunteering opportunities are available for professionals.

[Read more.](#)



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WHAT WE'RE READING

U.S. Chamber Sends Joint Letter to Congress Re: Small Business Priorities in a Phase 4 Coronavirus Relief Bill

Earlier this week, the U.S. Chamber and the Save Small Business Coalition

sent a joint letter to Members of Congress encouraging them to enact a "Phase 4" bill.

[Read more.](#)

Getting Serious About Cybersecurity

Experts from Dell and McAfee tell us how businesses can keep their data secure when working remotely.

[Read more.](#)

You don't want to miss these upcoming event for your business.

SEPT 29: FAST FORWARD SUMMIT 2020

On September 29 and 30, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation will host a two-day, future-looking summit to highlight the people, ideas, and innovations that are shaping our lives and businesses. [Register here.](#)

SEPT 30: CYBERSECURITY BASICS FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTORS

Join Northwest Texas PTAC, Senior Field Advisor Mark Snyder as he provides you with a general understanding of the basic cybersecurity requirements that the Department of Defense has for all contractors and sub-contractors. You'll learn about the benefits of being prepared and the process for putting a cybersecurity plan in place. [Register here.](#)

OCT 1: BIG COUNTRY MANUFACTURING ALLIANCE AN ESSENTIAL PATHWAY TO A STRONGER ECONOMY

Students, educators and employers are invited to attend the Big Country Manufacturing Allians "An Essential Pathway to a Stronger economy" virtual event showcasing manufacturing career opportunities and the importance of the manufacturing sector to the Big Country, the state of Texas and the nation. [Register here.](#)

OCT 1: TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION: LUNCHTIME LIVE!

COVID-19 Paid Leave Related Laws, Privacy in the Workplace, Unemployment Claims and Employer Chargeback Liability, Payroll Tax 101 discussion. [Register here.](#)

OCT 7: VOSB & SDVOSB—Application Mechanics

This is the second part of The Northwest Texas PTAC's Veteran Owned Small Business Certification webinar. This first part covered the VOSB/SDVOSB certification program, the advantages, and qualifications. This second part will cover the hands on mechanics of applying for the certification. We'll go through the process screen by screen to show you how to navigate the certification system to the point of final submission of application. [Register here.](#)

OCT 8: GOVERNMENT, NON-PROFIT & SOCIAL SERVICES VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

This Government, NonProfit & Social Services VIRTUAL Career Fair is brought to you by the West Central Texas Career Consortium. Participating in this event is an excellent way for your organization to gain visibility and maximize recruiting potential! Employers interested in participating in this event are encouraged to register online as early as possible. [Register here.](#)

OCT 14: DBE—DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM THROUGH TXDOT

Want to learn how to qualify your small business as a DBE with the Texas Department of Transportation?? Join the Northwest Texas PTAC as we present this informative webinar that begins with an overview of the program, talks about the advantages of being certified, discusses the qualifications for certification, and talks about the documentation needed to complete the application. [Register here.](#)

OCT 14: TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION: LUNCHTIME LIVE!

Unemployment Claims: General Overview for Employers, Unemployment Taxes: Chargeback and Reimbursing Employers, Best Practices for Maintaining a Safe Workplace, Payroll Tax 101 discussion. [Register here.](#)

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