

Top Issues List 2024

DRMA conducts an annual survey to better understand the “hot button” issues affecting its manufacturer corporate members. The following are their top issues for 2024:

1. **Skilled workforce.** Many Dayton Region manufacturers consider the deficiency in high quality, technically skilled workers their main concern of all the issues impacting their business. Replacing the retiring talent is a priority in order to meet the demand for their goods and services. Additionally, concerns about the increasing cost of labor impacts their ability to attract and retain new talent. Therefore, DRMA members support initiatives that attract, retain, and develop their workforce.
2. **Increasing cost of doing business.** The rising cost of doing business, including labor and healthcare costs and tax obligations, impacts manufacturers’ ability to remain profitable. While the concern about the cost of raw materials is declining, price resistance from customers continues to be an issue, making it hard for companies to pass on these increased business expenses.
3. **External economic factors.** Many Dayton Region manufacturers are concerned with external economic factors such as inflation and the possibility of a recession, that will negatively impact business. The economic uncertainty along with the increased cost of capital has caused many companies to hold off on expansion and investment.
4. **Business sustainability and growth.** Many factors contribute to DRMA members’ concern for their business’s sustainability and growth. Attracting, retaining, and developing a skilled workforce directly impacts the future of their business. Additionally, burdensome employee-related regulations, such as worker compensation, employee leave, and unemployment benefits present areas of concern. Disruptions from global competition and new technologies also contribute. Amidst these concerns, members are focused on sustaining profitable operational levels. Therefore, DRMA members support workforce development plans, reduction in burdensome regulations, and help with leveling the playing field for international trade.
5. **Burden of regulation on business.** Members support the need for reasonable levels of regulation to protect both citizens and businesses. Burdensome regulations specified by members include expanded employee leave and unemployment benefits, select OSHA requirements, workers' compensation mandates, hiring and safety concerns related to the legalization of marijuana, environmental compliances, and a clear definition of “small business.” Therefore, members support regulations that are simple to administer and to comply with, that minimize onerous and complex reporting requirements, and have a clear and critical need.
6. **Corporate tax rate and complicated tax code.** Members support the concept that lower corporate tax rates encourage growth of industry and growth of employment. Therefore, members support reforms to the tax code to make it simpler and less burdensome.
7. **International trade and global competition.** International trade and global competition concerns contribute to the future viability of member companies. Specific concerns include the effect of trade agreements, tariffs, fair/free trade policy, and international currency manipulations. Members want a level playing field in international trade with as little volatility as possible.

Rising issues: Cyber security threats

Decreasing issues: Supply chain, legalization of marijuana, unionization

About DRMA

The Dayton Region Manufacturers Association (DRMA) is the voice and advocate for the manufacturing industry in the Dayton Region, providing programming, education, and peer-to-peer connectivity opportunities for members serving the aerospace, automotive, food/agriculture, defense, electronics, medical, and other markets. DRMA has 330 member companies, including 200 manufacturers located across the region. The manufacturing industry in the Dayton Region employs over 130,000 workers earning \$10.9 billion in annual payroll. For more information, visit www.DaytonRMA.org.
