

JUDITH WHITE RETIRES TODAY - CONGRATULATIONS!



After 20 years of service, Judith White, WPMA Trade Show Coordinator and Executive Assistant, has announced March 20, 2015 as her retirement date.

Judith first worked many years for WPMA as a part-time assistant at the WPMA state conventions. She officially joined the WPMA full-time staff in August, 1995. Judith has been a friend to all, and a wonderful, energetic member of the WPMA staff. Her trade show exhibitors all love Judith's warmth and friendliness, and many commented on how they missed her at the recent WPMA convention.

A special open house to honor Judith has been scheduled for Friday, March 20th, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the WPMA office, 4393 S Riverboat Rd, Suite 380, Taylorsville, Utah. WPMA members and friends are invited to come and visit with Judith on that day. A buffet lunch will be served. We would appreciate an RSVP with how many will be attending from anyone wishing to come and join us at the open house. Please contact Jamie Wood at 801-263-9762, or e-mail jamiew@wpma.com if you are planning to attend.

FEDERATED EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES NETWORK WEBINAR INVITATION

As you are aware, the Federated Employment Practices NetworkSM (FEPN) provides human resources-related support to our clients. Our newest service will be a quarterly webinar series designed around common concerns that business owners have regarding employment-related practices liability issues. These **FREE** webinars are meant to be another educational tool you can promote to all of your members.

Our **upcoming webinar** [FEPN Webinar Invitation](#) is titled *Anatomy of a Breach: Actions for Employers*. Learning objectives for attendees include:

- Data breach trends
- Internal risks
- Actions to take now

The FREE session will take place Tuesday, March 24th at 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT. The attachments provide more information, including a link to the registration form.

We will ask you to use your experience to decide how and when to best promote this webinar to your members. Members unable to attend the live session can view the recording, which will be posted on Federated's website at a later date. For more information on Federated's FEPN benefits and another link to this webinar, please go to <https://www.federatedinsurance.com/ws/fi/InsuranceResources/index.htm>

Our hope is that you will help us promote these education opportunities as a value-added benefit of Federated's partnership with your association. If you have any questions or suggestions on how we can improve our FEPN webinar support for your organization, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Federated Insurance looks forward to continuing to work with you to provide your members with the very best insurance and risk management services.

SENATE ENERGY COMMITTEE EXAMINES CRUDE OIL EXPORT POLICY

Yesterday, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing over the U.S. crude oil export policy. Testifying before the Committee included Carlos Pascual, Columbia University; Ryan Lance, Chairman and CEO, ConocoPhillips; Elizabeth Rosenberg, Center for a New American Security; Charles Drevna, American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM) and Jeff Warmann, Monroe Energy LLC – a subsidiary of Delta Airlines.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) supports ending the crude oil export ban but has yet to introduce legislation. A spokesperson for Sen. Murkowski indicated that President Obama has the authority to end the ban through Executive Action. Environmental groups are opposed to ending the ban because it would encourage more crude oil use which may ultimately impact the President's decision. Meanwhile, refiners are concerned that this WTI-Brent spread would disappear if Congress repeals the crude oil export ban allowing cheaper WTI priced crude to be sold in the world's oil market. However, ConocoPhillips CEO Ryan Lance said lifting crude oil export restrictions would protect oil industry jobs and actually reduce prices at the pump. Pascual noted that ending the crude oil ban would lower worldwide crude oil prices and diminish OPEC's market share. U.S. oil production reached 9.3 million barrels per day, its highest level since the early 1970s while crude inventories reached 449 million barrels, its highest level ever. Record U.S. inventories have sent the WTI crude oil contract plunging to \$43 per barrel which is now priced at a \$10 discount to the Brent crude oil contract.

While PMAA is neutral on ending the crude oil export ban, Congress could have an immediate policy impact by reforming the Jones Act. Drevna reiterated AFPM's concerns some U.S. trade policies – the Jones Act being a major barrier to commerce. He also said that U.S. refining companies have the capacity to meet the growing U.S. crude oil production boom. Supporters for ending the crude oil export ban have challenged his assertion arguing that most U.S. refineries are tailored towards processing heavier foreign crude oil and are unlikely to meet the growing production of lighter domestic oil.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SOLICITS FEEDBACK ON ENERGY MARKETS

On Monday, PMAA submitted comments to the House Energy and Commerce Committee in response to a hearing held earlier this month entitled "21st Century Energy Markets: How the Changing Dynamics of World Energy Markets Impact our Economy and Energy Security." The Committee sought feedback on the rapidly changing energy market. PMAA focused on the current oil export ban, the outdated Jones Act, ethanol's competitiveness with traditional motor fuels and fuel neutral policies. To view the letter, click [here](http://www.pmaa.org/weeklyreview/attachments/Ltr_House_EC_Energy_Markets_March_2015.pdf) (http://www.pmaa.org/weeklyreview/attachments/Ltr_House_EC_Energy_Markets_March_2015.pdf).

FUNDING SOLUTIONS FOR HIGHWAY BILL STILL UNCLEAR

Although House Republicans do not yet agree on what should be in the highway funding bill, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) plans to introduce a bill immediately following Spring recess and hopes to complete a bill before the current funding expires on May 31. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI) is also working to find a funding solution as soon as possible. Although Rep. Shuster is optimistic, the widespread assumption is that Congress will resort to passing another short-term patch.

In fact, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) is assuming there will be a patch and has given his panel until May 31 to identify a long-term funding mechanism.

HOUSE TAX COMMITTEE TO TAKE UP ESTATE TAX REPEAL

Next week, the House Ways and Means Committee will consider H.R. 1105, a bill that would repeal the U.S. estate tax or also known as the death tax.

Unfortunately, the bill is unlikely to become law since President Obama supports the death tax and also would like to eliminate basis step up. This action would move the U.S. from the fourth highest estate tax in the world to first.

Kevin Brady (R-TX) reintroduced the Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015 which is the same as those introduced in recent years in both the House and Senate that garnered significant co-sponsors.

PMAA continues to actively support repeal of the tax and is a member of the NFIB's Family Business Estate Tax Coalition.

PMAA FILES COMMENTS ON EPA PROPOSED OZONE STANDARD

This week, PMAA filed comments regarding EPA's proposed rule to lower ozone standards from the current 75 ppb to 65 – 70 ppb. The comment period closed Tuesday. PMAA is deeply concerned about the harmful impact lower ozone standards could have on both the price of gasoline at the pump and the ready supply of gasoline to meet consumer demands. Ozone standards at the levels considered in EPA's proposal could push much of the country into "nonattainment" that would likely lead to many states mandating the use of reformulated gasoline (RFG) in counties that fail to meet the new standards. The introduction of RFG into many new areas nationwide will result in higher gasoline prices which will erode consumer purchasing power and drive the price of many consumer goods higher – placing a significant drag on the still recovering economy. PMAA argued that the current 75 ppb ozone standard is working, but has yet to be fully implemented. Therefore, EPA should leave the current standard for ozone in place until at least 85 percent of counties currently in nonattainment status can comply. The economic consequences do not justify a lower standard at this time.

Bipartisan legislation has been introduced to address these concerns. Yesterday, Senator John Thune (R-SD) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) reintroduced bipartisan legislation known as "The Clean Air, Strong Economies Act" (CASE Act) (S. 751)

to block the EPA from revising its ozone standard downward until 85 percent of the current nonattainment counties comply with the current standard. Reps. Pete Olson (R-TX) and Bob Latta (R-OH) also reintroduced companion legislation (H.R. 1388) in the House.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

February 16 – 18, 2016 - WPMA Convention & Expo – Mirage Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada
May 14 – 15, 2015 - Nevada (NPM&CSA) BIG DOGS – JW Marriott Las Vegas Resort & Spa, Nevada
June 2 – 4, 2015 - Montana (MPMCSA) Convention – Northern Hotel, Billings, Montana
June 22 – 25, 2015 - Washington (WOMA) Convention – Suncadia Resort, Cle Elum, Washington
August 5 – 7, 2015 - Idaho (IPM&CSA) Convention - Sun Valley Lodge - Sun Valley, Idaho
August 17-19, 2015 – New Mexico (NMPMA) - Marriott Pyramid North – Albuquerque, New Mexico
September 15-17, 2015 - Utah (UPMRA) Convention - Park City Marriott - Park City, Utah
August 3 – 5, 2016 - Idaho (IPM&CSA) Convention - Coeur d'Alene Resort - Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

NPP WPMA Member Service

WPMA has partnered with NPP to provide members discounts on many products and services. NPP negotiates the rates, and makes them available to WPMA members. Membership with NPP is free, and there is no obligation to purchase. Discounts through Verizon, Expedia, Fastenal, Cradlepoint, and more.

Register Now: <https://associations.mynpp.com/myNPP/memberSavings.xhtml?guid=RB3WUOFG>

WPMA MEMBER SERVICES



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Petro Pete: “When I was a kid my parents moved a lot, but I always found them.”

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