



The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care

PO Box 1412

Albany, NY 12201-1412

(518) 462-2296 / www.employeralliance.com

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For more information contact:

Greg Mills, Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce (315) 343-7681

Pamela Reese Finch, Employer Alliance (518) 462-2296

Oswego Chamber Partners with Employer Alliance to Strengthen Health Care Advocacy

ALBANY – The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care has partnered with the Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce in an ongoing commitment to strengthen the chamber’s statewide advocacy program.

The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care is the largest, single-issue grassroots coalition in New York State with more than 3,100 members engaged in activities to help control high health insurance costs. Founded in 1997, Employer Alliance members challenge state legislation that incrementally drives up costs. For the Oswego-Fulton Chamber, this partnership will provide important educational resources and empower local businesses to direct legislation that has an impact on their business and community, said Greg Mills, executive director of The Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce.

“We recognize our responsibility, as the community chamber, to advocate on behalf of our members and challenge the obstacles that impede their business success, both locally and in Albany,” Mills said. “Our members continue to identify high health insurance costs as a major business concern. Partnering with The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care will strengthen our presence in the New York State Capitol and provide our members with valuable, timely information regarding health insurance costs.”

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Last session, Employer Alliance members helped to deter passage of at least a half dozen health insurance bills that would have increased small business costs, said Employer Alliance Executive Director Pamela Reese Finch. Member initiatives also helped to stop a costly premium tax proposed that would have increased health insurance costs by at least another two percent.

“Small businesses are not an endless source of income and another two percent increase, on top of the 18 percent hike that hit many members in 2014, has pushed small businesses beyond the tipping point,” said Reese Finch. “There is simply no place for them to turn to make up for these added costs.”

Reese Finch explained, “Every year New York State lawmakers introduce nearly 100 coverage mandates, health insurance fees and taxes that increase health insurance premiums for small businesses, while larger, self-insured companies are exempt from these higher costs. It’s imperative that New York’s state legislators recognize the cumulative impact of these higher costs, especially when coupled with the other critical issues that make it hard for small businesses to survive in New York State. When small business owners find it difficult to travel to our state’s capitol, we are happy to represent their presence. It’s only by speaking up that we can effectively influence policy to ensure that small businesses will not only survive, but ultimately thrive in the future.”

The Greater Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce is leading a regional collaboration that builds a vibrant retail/commercial/residential environment to advance the business and community interests through advocacy, member services and community enhancements.

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