Government Regulation

Discussion Guide

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room. And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so be prepared to hear a different point of view. Listen first, and focus on the facts.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

*Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-three minute reaction** to the brief.*

- Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief? What matters?

Let's discuss

Pick 2 or 3 questions that resonate with the group and discuss, or choose your own.

- In your opinion, what is the priority in regards to government regulation?
- Were there some points with which you strongly agreed or disagreed? Was there a perspective that was missing?
- What is the case to be made for more or less regulation? Is there an appropriate level of regulation?
- What role do outside groups play when it comes to regulations?
- How do regulations negatively or positively impact your life, community, or business?

Let's act

Spread the Word: Some Facts to Share

- [The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)](#) has grown from 22,877 pages in 1960 to 185,434 pages in 2018 and would take at least three years to read as a full time job.
- In 2017, The Trump Administration [issued an executive order](#) and Regulatory Reform Agenda that required the costs of any new regulations to be balanced by repealing at least two old regulations. In 2019, 1000 rules and regulations had been issued; the annual count has not been below 3000 since 1970.
- There are [at least 60 federal regulatory agencies](#) in the U.S.
- Estimates of the cumulative total annual cost of regulations fall somewhere between [$1.25 trillion](#) and [$2 trillion](#) per year.
- In 2013, a study in the *[Journal of Economic Growth](#)* determined U.S. economic growth was hampered on average 2% per year between 1949 and 2005 due to the accumulation of federal regulations.
- Some estimates put the [total losses in economic growth](#) equal to income losses of cumulative $13,000 per American.
- Today, about 25% of all jobs [require an occupational license](#). That was just 5% in the 1960s.
- [In some states](#), cosmetologists and massage therapists need three times as much training as emergency medical technicians.
- Small businesses (with 50 employees or fewer) pay about $11,700 per year per employee in [regulatory costs,](#) which amounts to regulatory costs that are 20% higher for small businesses than for medium or large businesses.
- [First-year regulatory costs average over $83,000](#) for small start-up businesses.

Engage Locally

- *Learn more:*
  - **Research your elected representatives' positions** on regulations, and their vision for how to tackle the challenges of rules and regulations facing Americans and your community.
    - Your legislators, state comptroller, attorney general and other local elected officials want to know their constituents. Write to them about your interest in rules and regulations.
    - You can find contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#). Your state or municipality's websites will also have information to contact leaders. Try looking at the drop-down menu for a *Government* tab.
  - **Explore the impact of regulations in your community.**
    - On your state or municipality website, look for an "employment" or "business" tab or dropdown menu, and then for a "licenses and permits" tab. Alternatively, search for "licenses and permits" in the search bar.
    - Look at the [National Council of State Legislature's Occupational Licensing Database](#) or the [Small Business Association's licenses and permits applications](#) to learn about rules and regulations in your state.
      - Reach out to local business owners and entrepreneurs. What kinds of regulations do they need to comply with?

- View and comment on rules by visiting Regulations.gov.
- *Reach out:*
  - Explore what organizations, legislators, and journalists you could invite to your circle or contact to ask questions, learn more and get engaged.
  - If you have trouble finding the information you are looking for on your municipality's website, consider contacting agency or department heads. You can find the contact information for federal, state, and local government officials here.
  - The Policy Circle offers a number of resources for engaging on the local level. Learn how to write a letter to the editor on The Policy Circle website on how regulations impact your business.
  - It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. Invite your legislator to your circle and your organization/enterprise. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on The Policy Circle website.

Post a Recap/Dive Deeper:

- Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present. Designate who will post a meeting recap on your circle page.
- Decide your next meeting topic. Want to discuss a related brief at your next meeting?
- This brief is part of the Five that Impact Business Conversation Series. Other briefs in the series include:
  - Free Enterprise
  - Creating Career Pathways
  - Economic Growth
- Dive Deeper into this area. If this is an area you would like to pursue further, consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources for developing a message about your issue and organizing a petition to amplify your voice and raise awareness.