Obama Works To Squash Job-Limiting Laws

Julie Pace, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Taking another step toward mending his relationship with the business community, President Barack Obama will order a review of federal regulations with an eye toward getting rid of those that stifle job creation and hurt economic growth

The president planned to sign an executive order Tuesday telling federal agencies to look for rules that place an unreasonable burden on businesses.

In an opinion column Tuesday in The Wall Street Journal, the president also said he wants his administration to strike a balance between protecting the public and promoting economic growth.

The move comes as the Obama administration works to repair its relationship with corporate America, which has been reluctant to make investments and hire more people, in part because of uncertainty over government regulations and tax policies. Following his party's sweeping defeats in November's midterm elections, Obama acknowledged that he needed to better manage his relationship with the private sector.

Since then, the White House has steadily courted support from the business community: Obama held a five-hour meeting with CEOs in December; he named William Daley, a business executive, as his new chief of staff; and next month, he'll speak at the Chamber of Commerce, a trade group that has battled his top policy initiatives on health care and financial regulation.

Officials at the Chamber said Tuesday they were studying Obama's new regulatory review.

The review, Obama wrote, tells agencies to look for outdated regulations that make the U.S. economy less competitive.

"It's a review that will help bring order to regulations that have become a patchwork of overlapping rules, the result of tinkering by administrations and legislators of both parties and the influence of special interests in Washington over decades," Obama wrote.

Federal agencies also won't shy away from addressing gaps in regulations, such as new safety rules for infant formula and procedures that stop preventable infections from spreading in hospitals, Obama wrote.

"We are also making it our mission to root out regulations that conflict, that are not worth the cost, or that are just plain dumb," the president wrote.

Other regulations, such as the Clean Air Act or child labor laws, are necessary to prevent abuse, he wrote, and "strengthen our country without unduly interfering with the pursuit of progress and the growth of our economy," he wrote.

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