

CORRIDOR Business Journal

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." — FIRST AMENDMENT

EDITORIAL

Region's stellar health care industry

It is no secret that Iowa's Creative Corridor has some of the best medical care in the nation. Our hospitals continually rate as some of the best. These hospitals continue to build newer and more advanced medical centers to better serve patients.

It is also no secret that the competition in the Corridor by these same hospitals for patients is quite competitive. The myriad rankings and new facilities being created illustrate this competitiveness.

Some recent announcements include:

- The Hall-Perrine Cancer Center Grand Opening happened on July 19. The grand opening celebration marks the completion of the construction phase of Mercy Medical Center's Hall-Perrine Cancer Center located at 701 10th St. SE in Cedar Rapids, which has been underway since November 2010.

- St. Luke's Hospital was among the nation's Best Regional Hospitals, according to *U.S. News and World Report*. St. Luke's is ranked second in Iowa and is recognized as one of America's high-performing hospitals in five specialties in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2012-13 edition.

- University of Iowa Health Care leaders announced that UI Hospitals and Clinics is included yet again on a widely recognized list of the leading hospitals in the United States by the *U.S. News & World Report*. UIHC ranked No. 1 in state according to the Best Hospitals in America listing.

Encouraging entrepreneurs?

We know the political season is starting to heat up with rhetoric on both sides of the political aisle, but we were profoundly troubled by comments made earlier this month by President Barack Obama to a rally in Virginia which seemed to rebuke entrepreneurial success and to run counter to the encouragement of a vibrant and growing private sector.

"If you've got a business, you didn't build that," Mr. Obama said. "Somebody else made that happen."

Hmm? That is an exact quote from the president. Taken into the overall context of the speech, it claims government provided, in essence, the resources and infrastructure to make the business happen.

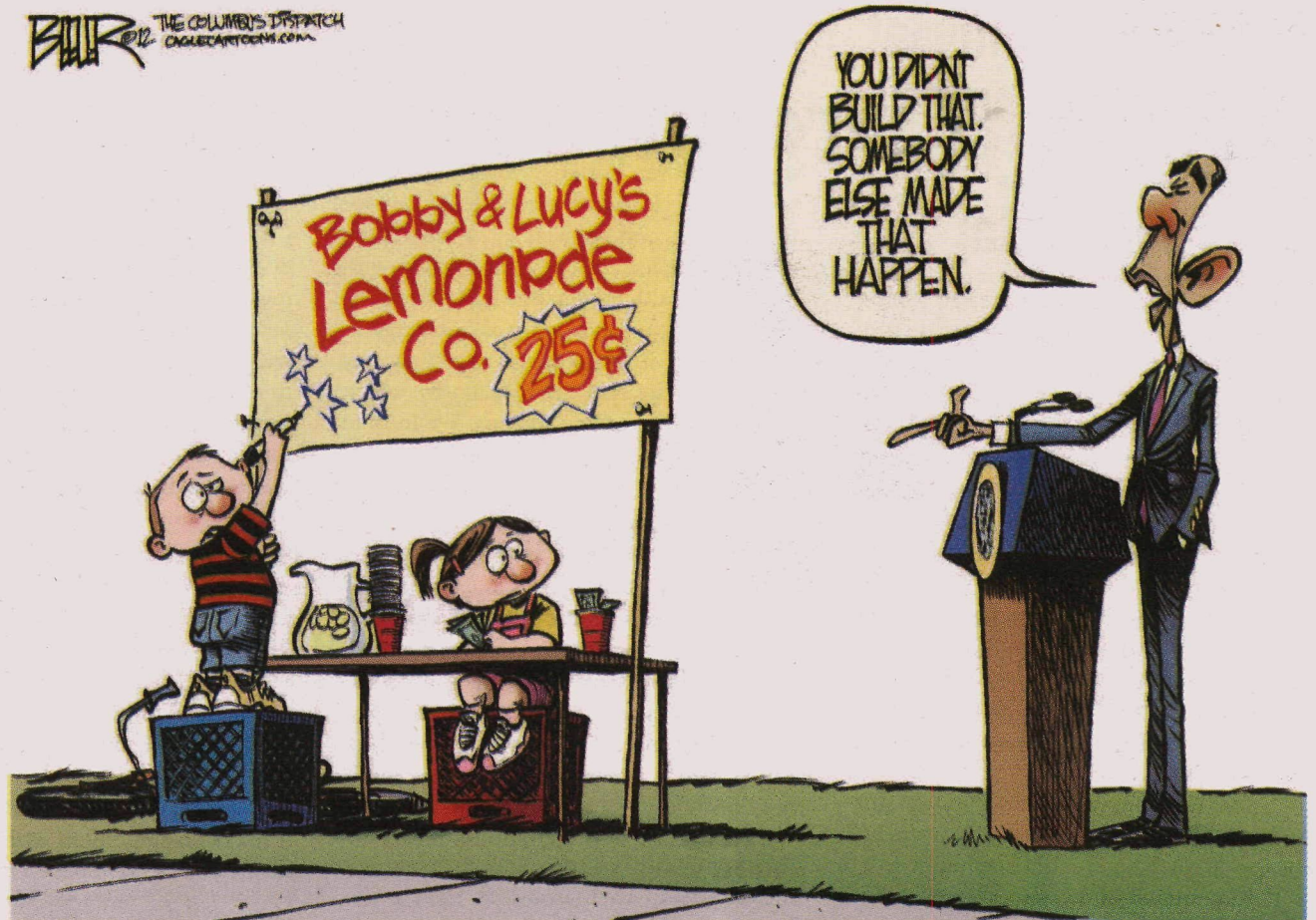
We wonder what the purpose of such a comment is other than to demean small business owners and their contributions to the country. We've had way too much of that sentiment over the past several years.

On this page we spend a considerable amount of space devoted to encouraging entrepreneurial endeavors and the private sector to let the comment pass.

We don't dispute that education and roads, etc., are essential to the creating of a framework where businesses can start, but we would argue that many small businesses in the United States succeed in spite of government not because of government.

We hope that the remainder of this political season politicians on both sides can provide encouragement for more private sector growth instead of continuing to make small business owners look like the villains.

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COMMENTARY

FCC rule changes to have major impact

When you enter your office, flip on your computer and click on your Internet browser of choice, do you ever think about what makes it work?

Often you don't, but you expect it to work. In fact, in today's digital-driven society, you have just about the same expectation for use of the Internet as you do switching on the lights when you entered that same office. What about when you make a call on your mobile phone, use your wireless tablet on the go or telecommute to your place of work from home using Wi-Fi?

All of these technologies are made possible through a wireline network.

While counterintuitive, "wireless needs wires."

This couldn't be more true as our society moves swiftly in a mobile direction. It's the transmission lines our traditional phones were built upon that support the many wireless devices everyone loves to use.

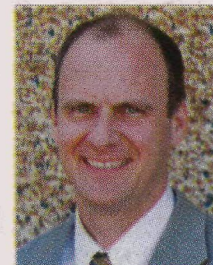
Consumers take for granted the infrastructure telephone companies have developed that enables e-mail, debit/credit card transactions, online banking, home/business security, monitoring markets and entertainment options like video. How does a farmer in rural Johnson County update the GPS on his equipment for use in the field? He downloads it using a reliable broadband connection.

Wireless activities are made possible by a signal that travels from the device to a wireless tower or router. Once that signal reaches that point, it is redirected through a wire-based network that transports it to its destination.

Independent telecommunications companies through-



Justyn Miller



Jerry Melick

out Iowa have made this possible, particularly in rural areas. The ability to have reliable broadband telecommunications service in rural states like Iowa has largely been left to these companies because they are the only companies willing to serve these areas. Businesses and consumers are becoming more and more reliant upon these networks. Over the past five years, independent telecommunications companies in Iowa have invested more than \$235 million in fiber optic capabilities to meet the needs

of businesses and consumers – even their wireless needs.

Even though others may neglect rural communities in our state, independent telecommunications companies are committed to doing their part to ensure Iowa's telecommunication needs are met. Somehow, some way these companies will continue to invest in communities to ensure their economic development needs are met as well. However, new federal rules have made this task more difficult.

In the near future, you may ask yourself, "Why am I paying an additional 50 cents or \$1 in 'access recovery charges' on my bill this month?" You may wonder if area telecommunications providers can sustain broadband service in communities like West Liberty and Fairfax.

In its efforts to expand broadband access, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently approved rules that are forcing rural providers to reassess how they will fund broadband projects in their areas. The rules ul-

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of engagement" for how they were going to confront one another and engage in robust dialogue around critical team issues. Members assessed and shared their conflict styles to see how they could best help everyone openly discuss difficult issues without having the "meeting after the meeting."

Team members used a simple technique of replacing the word "but" with "and" when responding to a colleague's opinion. Also, "thank-you" was used anytime someone participated in the meeting, accepted responsibility for a task or received constructive feedback or praise.

Martin arranged for some training for the team on influencing and feedback skills. Many of the team members were uncomfortable calling out a colleague who was not meeting a team expectation. Some were unsure how to influence others to see their point of view or negotiate a change to a schedule or specification. As

a result, team members were more confident and less irritated when encountering a challenging situation.

Immediately, trust grew within the team as transparency and loyalty became evident to all. The team learned how to become more aware of their own emotions and respond appropriately. Internal and external relationships became stronger and more productive. The team atmosphere was positive and forward-thinking. All agreed it was more fun to come to work.

The two members who had requested transfers decided to withdraw their requests. Martin's boss recognized the team at an all-hands company meeting for the outstanding work they had done in meeting a very difficult project deadline. The customer was thrilled. Martin smiled knowing that his team's EQ was stronger than ever.

Gale Mote is a trainer, organizational development catalyst and coach in Cedar Rapids. Contact her at gale.mote@galemoteassociates.com

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timately eliminate the access fees companies collect from other carriers that transport calls and data over their networks. These fees are known in the industry as InterCarrier Compensation (ICC) fees.

The Universal Service Fund (USF), a source of revenue vital to providing rural areas with investment in telecommunications services, also becomes obsolete. It is replaced with the Connect America Fund, a program that will penalize local telecommunications providers that have been proactive in offering broadband services to their customers.

What do these changes mean to rural communities?

Beginning this month, consumers and businesses will see access recovery charges mandated by the FCC rules appear on their monthly bills (\$.50 for consumers and \$1 per line for businesses). These are fees that typically were shared among providers, not paid by consumers. Other changes and charges loom for 2013 and 2014 as well.

Declining Universal Service Fund (USF) support and InterCarrier Compensation (ICC) will likely mean that rural customers will pay more and that unserved areas will not gain access to reliable and robust broadband service.

For example, in West Liberty, Liberty Communications has delayed build-out of fiber in its service area due to the implementation of these rules. What does that mean for employers there that are dependent on reliable connectivity? A food processing facility and a major consumer products distribution center provide quality jobs to this area, but are heavily dependent on broadband services.

In Fairfax, South Slope Cooperative

Communications decided it would move forward with fiber deployment in that small community, but not until funding was secure. This is a meaningful project for the economic development of this Corridor community.

These scenarios are real and representative of the situation across Iowa. A recent survey of 79 independent telecommunications companies by the Iowa Telecommunications Association found 59 percent reported they were delaying plans to deploy fiber in their service areas as a result of the FCC's new rules.

Readers may learn more about this issue by visiting the website the industry has established at www.IowaLinkedUp.org to help educate consumers.

Iowa's independent telecommunications companies have a well-deserved reputation for being innovative and resilient. Representatives of the industry are working with the FCC to better identify the economic impact of these new rules on these companies and their customers. The industry also is working with the FCC to provide analysis beyond a two-year threshold and to ensure a more reasonable waiver process and/or a Connect America Fund for rural providers.

While these changes present major challenges, Iowans can feel confident that the state's independent telecommunications companies will be up to the task of ensuring that the necessary 21st-century tools are accessible and affordable throughout Iowa. The stakes in keeping rural Iowa communities vibrant and viable are too high for anything less than this full-scale commitment.

Justyn Miller is CEO of South Slope Cooperative Communications in North Liberty. Jerry Melick is General Manager of Liberty Communications located in Iowa City.



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