



Key Accomplishments and Work in 2014

In 2014, the American Sustainable Business Council and the ASBC Action Fund¹ continued to lift up the voice, and build the power of business to create jobs, protect the environment and build a sustainable US economy. Working together at the national and state level with a growing number of business organizations, businesses and allies, the Council and Action Fund respectively continued to advance market-based and policy solutions. The American Sustainable Business Council operates as a 501(c)(3) entity engaged in public education and issue advocacy. The ASBC Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) entity, which engages in legislative advocacy. As U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand noted, “The work that the American Sustainable Business Council is doing to build an economy that works for everyone is so important and vital to our country.” This report summarizes the combined activities of these two entities in 2014.

ENLISTING BUSINESSES, BOOSTING POLITICAL IMPACT

In 2014, the American Sustainable Business Council (“ASBC” or “the Council”) and the ASBC Action Fund (“Action Fund”) expanded access to policymakers and influence on policy at the federal and state levels. Both ASBC and Action Fund strengthened relationships with the White House, members of Congress and cabinet agencies as well as numerous state legislators. The Council enlisted state-based business organizational members and individual business members to rally support for policy positions through personal meetings, Congressional testimony, advocacy campaigns and media initiatives.

ASBC continued to attract new members throughout 2014 and now represents more than 250,000 businesses and 350,000 individual owners, executives, investors and other decision-makers.

REPRESENTING DIVERSE BUSINESSES GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS | In 2014, ASBC recruited an even broader diversity of business organizations and now represents local and state chambers of commerce; microenterprise, social enterprise, green and

sustainable business groups; Main Street business groups; women business organization leaders; economic development organizations; and investors. ASBC also expanded membership geographically and has achieved a presence in almost every state in the U.S. See a full list of organizational members.

RECRUITING BUSINESSES | ASBC continued to recruit numerous individual business members, many of them high-profile, name-brand companies such as Etsy, Patagonia, Seventh Generation, and Clif Bar. See a full list of business members.

BUILDING STRENGTH STATE BY STATE | To boost capacity for state-level campaigns, and to ensure diverse geographic perspectives, ASBC has invested in infrastructure that supports the formation of independent, state-based business organizations, whether c3, c4, or c6. These groups benefit from ASBC’s policy expertise, media outreach and positive relationships with federal legislators and agencies. Significantly, in 2014 ASBC successfully supported the development of state-level business organizations in “red” states including Ohio, North Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia and states bordering the Chesapeake region.

¹ In 2015, the names of ASBC’s two entities were changed slightly. The 501(c)(4) entity was renamed from “American Sustainable Business Council Action Fund” to “American Sustainable Business Council”. The 501(c)(3) entity was renamed from “American Sustainable Business Council” to “American Sustainable Business Institute”. Both continue to operate as independent legal entities with separate finances and distinct boards of directors. Each entity conforms with applicable IRS rules limiting the allowable activities and the tax deductibility of donations.

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PRESENTING AT KEY BRIEFINGS AND HEARINGS

ASBC and the ASBC Action Fund brought business leaders to testify before Congress and state legislatures.

- Barry Cik, CEO of Naturepedic, testified before the House Subcommittee on the Economy and the Environment on the need for comprehensive chemical policy reform.
- Andrew Lemley, Government Affairs, New Belgium Brewing, appeared as a witness before the House Subcommittee on Water and Power in support of the EPA's proposed "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rules.
- Eric Henry, President of TS Designs, spoke before the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment in support of WOTUS rules.
- Claudia Viek, CEO, California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity, testified before the Senate Banking Committee's Economic Policy Subcommittee on the role of fiscal policy in alleviating income inequality.
- Richard Eidlin, ASBC Policy Director, testified before the House Science, Space and Technology Committee, organized by Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-PA) on Rep. Cartwright's "PREPARE" bill regarding extreme weather.

CONDUCTING POLICY TALKS IN D.C.

In Washington, D.C., ASBC hosted roundtables that brought together ASBC members with Cabinet and

Federal agency policymakers. ASBC business leaders engaged in spirited discussion with Labor Secretary Tom Perez on the business case for paid sick leave and family leave insurance. In D.C. and elsewhere, Businesses for a Fair Minimum Wage (BFMW), an ASBC member, organized minimum wage roundtables involving Secretary Perez and business leaders.

At the White House, a roundtable with senior policymakers from the EPA and Council on Environmental Quality laid out the business case for strong policies on climate change and chemical safety. President Obama's top climate advisor, Dan Utech, and EPA's top chemicals regulator, Assistant Secretary Jim Jones, joined 40 ASBC members in this discussion.

ASBC also led a meeting of 25 ASBC business owners and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to discuss small business access to capital, procurement practices, women- and minority-owned businesses, the importance of crowdfunding and more.

20 ASBC members met with Deputy Secretary Krysta Hardin and other Department of Agriculture officials to discuss organic food certification, cooperatives, small scale fishing enterprises, and the challenges faced by beginning and disadvantaged farmers in gaining access to capital and markets. Additional high-level meetings were held between ASBC and the U.S. Department of Energy, the Securities & Exchange Commission, the Department of Health & Human Services and other federal agencies.



Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, CEO of ECOS and David Levine, CEO of ASBC congratulate Gina McCarthy, EPA Administrator on receiving the 2014 ASBC SUSTY Award

Throughout the year, we organized "fly-ins" which brought ASBC members to Washington, D.C. to advocate for tax reform, chemical safety, climate change, GMO labeling, campaign finance reform, clean water, trade, net neutrality and the minimum wage. ASBC organized more than 200 meetings on Capitol Hill.

BUSINESS SUMMIT FOR A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

ASBC and the Action Fund convened the third annual Business Summit for a Sustainable Economy reflected the growing political impact of both organizations. Over 150 ASBC-member business leaders and influential government figures met in Washington, D.C. for three days in November of policy discussion, Hill visits, a half-day program at the White House, and facilitated networking events. Speakers included U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY); EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy; Deputy Secretary of Labor Christopher Lu; U.S. Representatives Chaka Fattah (D-PA), Judy Chu (D-CA); Jerrold Nadler (D-NY); Small Business Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet; White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Mike Boots and officials from the departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Agriculture.

The Summit also included a half-day program at the White House and 35 visits to Republican and Democratic offices on Capitol Hill as part of a continuing program of bipartisan outreach.

Rebecca Magee of the Eileen Fisher company and U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand at the 2014 ASBC Summit



POLLING BUSINESSES OF ALL POLITICAL VIEWS

In 2014, ASBC continued to commission polls of small business owners nationwide. The randomly-selected respondents were 44% Republican, 28% Democratic and 19% Independent. Polling covered a variety of key policy areas, and results were released in English and Spanish. A highlight from each poll is listed below. Check here for full poll results

Clean Water: ASBC's poll found that most business owners support federal protections of American waterways, with 80% favoring rules protecting upstream headwaters as proposed in the EPA's "Waters of the US" rule.

- **Minimum Wage:** ASBC and Business for a Fair Minimum Wage released a widely cited national poll of small business owners with employees showing strong majority support for raising the federal minimum wage to at least \$10.10 and then adjusting it for the cost of living.
- **Climate Change:** ASBC's poll results showed that a significant majority of small business owners view climate change as a fundamental risk to their businesses. A majority also want the federal government to combat climate change by limiting carbon emissions from power plants.

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BUILDING VISIBILITY WITH THE MEDIA

ASBC and the Action Fund issued 40 press releases featuring business leaders from across the country and representing diverse sectors, resulting in more than 1200 media mentions.

Media outlets, including Reuters, the Associated Press, The Washington Post, Bloomberg Businessweek, Politico, and The Hill, now regularly interview and quote business leaders put forward by ASBC and the Action Fund. ASBC's cultivated media interest has resulted in more than 100 original stories and many more impressions resulting from pick-up by syndicated services. In addition to news stories, many timely op-eds were placed in national and local newspapers and re-published around the country. In total, more than 100 op-eds, columns and letters to the editor authored by the staff and members of ASBC and the Action Fund were published in media outlets around the country.

PRESS COVERAGE INCLUDED:

"Was There Enough for Small Business in Obama's State of the Union?" Jan. 28: Bloomberg's Businessweek cited ASBC's CEO David Levine, stating that "ASBC ...applauded the president's call to close corporate tax loopholes."

"Mad Men' Era of U.S. Family Policy Coming to an End?," Feb. 12: The Washington Post named ASBC among business groups in support of the Family and Medical Leave Act at the state and national levels.

"Businesses also Benefit from the EPA's Carbon Emissions Regulations," June 10: The Washington Post published this opinion piece by ASBC's CEO

David Levine addressing how these regulations will substantially boost the economy.

"Regulations can be Good for Business: Look at Clean Water," June 16: The Hill published a blog citing ASBC poll results that show 92 percent of small business owners support regulations to protect our air.

"Advocacy Group Says New Poll Shows Support Among Small Business Owners for Stronger Clean Water Rules," July 23: McClatchy DC published an article based on ASBC's poll.

"Business Google Cites Climate Change as Tech Titans Quit ALEC," Sept. 26: USA Today quoted ASBC in a high-profile story stating that Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Yahoo and Yelp have or will likely cut ties to the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a conservative lobbying group with controversial views on climate change.

"Dirtiest Industries' Influence Cross-Agency Regulation on Pollution and Toxics" Nov. 11: The Guardian published an article discussing polluting industries' dominance in government decision-making, based on a report from the nonpartisan Center for Effective Government. It covered ASBC's role in advocating for a small business voice.

"Keystone XL Pipeline Falls One Vote Short in the Senate" Nov. 18: Washington Business Journal cited the American Sustainable Business Council among opponents to the pipeline contending it would encourage production of tar sands oil and increase greenhouse gas emissions.



ASBC board member Jeffrey Hollender discussing ASBC and sustainability on Bloomberg TV's Market Makers

CAMPAIGN AND LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The ASBC Action Fund engaged in an array of well-received campaigns in 2014 and aided in the passage of key legislation. During this process the Action Fund identified and engaged business leaders; researched and developed backgrounders, issued action alerts and other educational materials; obtained media coverage (see above highlights) and consistently fostered the inclusion of business leaders in policy discussions.

MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SOUND CLIMATE POLICIES

ASBC embarked on a comprehensive program to advance policies that address the dangers of climate change to the economy as well as the environment. ASBC engaged support through educational outreach, regional events, media relations, webinar/teleconferences, and mobilizing public commentary on proposed federal regulations. ASBC partnered with business and organization members to produce events in California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina and Wisconsin.

The successful project—Business Acting on Sea-Level Rise—jointly led by ASBC member organization South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce was expanded to Massachusetts, Virginia and California.

ASBC mobilized more than 400 comments from business leaders for EPA’s proposed rules on power plant carbon pollution limits, the top priority for President Obama’s Clean Power Plan.

ASBC members Euneika Rogers-Sipp, Pat Heffernan and MaryAnne Howland visiting Capitol Hill



With input from members, ASBC developed a white paper that makes the business case for putting a price on carbon pollution and sets forth a policy agenda to implement a carbon fee that promotes clean energy.

Working with the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators and the US Green Building Council, ASBC mobilized business support in North Carolina, South Carolina, Illinois and Michigan to support energy efficiency measures and programs at the federal and state levels.

BANNING FRACKING IN NY

ASBC and the New York State Sustainable Business Council played a major role with other influential groups in the Business against Fracking NY campaign. The campaign resulted in a ban on fracking in New York State issued on December 17, 2014 by Governor Cuomo.

ASBC also mobilized business support in Ohio, California and Pennsylvania for moratoria on hydraulic fracking. ASBC prepared a business case against fracking and distributed it nationally.

Based in part on ASBC’s success in securing business support, the New York State Court of Appeals upheld towns’ rights to ban fracking.

PROTECTING CLEAN WATER

ASBC led an aggressive campaign supported by many members in favor of the EPA's proposed Waters of the U.S. rules. To launch the campaign, ASBC business members sent letters to 13 federal legislators representing eight swing states.

ASBC Action Fund ran an ad in the April 7, 2014 edition of Politico supporting the protection of clean water. The ad featured several business and organizational members. Both the letters and the ad gave a more accurate perception of business owners' views on natural resources than is provided by industry lobbyists. In addition to the ad, ASBC placed op-eds in four states; these events generated press coverage in three more states.

ASBC hosted or co-hosted nine live events in eight states, including one with New Belgium Brewing and Rep. Jared Polis in Colorado, and others in California, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

CHAMPIONING A RESPONSIBLE WORKPLACE

In 2014, ASBC emerged as a leading business advocate for family and medical leave insurance, earned sick days, minimum wage and other workplace issues.

ASBC worked closely with Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Congresswoman Rosa Delauro (D-CT) to develop support for the FAMILY Act, a national family and medical leave insurance bill. ASBC's work gained valuable endorsements from brand-name businesses including Eileen Fisher and Uncommon Goods.

ASBC placed two op-eds in support of the bill including one by Mitch Rofsky in The Hill and one by Amy Hall of Eileen Fisher which appeared in The Houston Chronicle and many other papers across the country. US News and World Report also published an op-ed by ASBC's David Brodwin.

In New York, Colorado, California, Vermont and D.C., ASBC supported legislation providing earned sick days and family and medical leave insurance. In New York, ASBC secured the sign-ons of 20 businesses and helped the legislation progress farther than any similar piece had previously. ASBC staff also testified before the Washington, D.C. City Council to help secure funding for the Council's earned sick days bill.

For the business case on each individual piece of legislation, ASBC developed fact sheets, summaries, and talking points to facilitate support and encourage interviews. In New York City, ASBC developed a 'Good Business' initiative giving small businesses an incentive to provide better workplaces.



ASBC's 'Clean Water is Good for Business' campaign engaged companies across the nation to protect America's waterways from pollution

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In California, the ASBC Action Fund educated business leaders and elected officials on the need to provide California employers and employees practical information about toxic workplace hazards, especially warning information about new or previously unrecognized hazards posed by toxic chemicals. SB 193, which enabled these measures, was passed by the California legislature and signed by the Governor.

ASBC member Businesses for a Fair Minimum Wage (BFMW) led efforts on the national level and in multiple states to advance minimum wage legislation and ballot measures and make a powerful business case for raising the minimum wage. With the support of the ASBC Action Fund, minimum wage increases were enacted in numerous states and cities including, Nebraska (\$9 by 2016), Maryland (\$10.10 by 2018), Vermont (\$10.50 by 2018), and Massachusetts (\$11 by 2017).

FACILITATING “OWNERSHIP FOR ALL”

In 2014, ASBC launched Ownership for All, a campaign to establish alternative business ownership models. ASBC facilitated a dialogue with U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Phyllis Borzi to discuss strategies including Employee Stock Option Programs (ESOPs), worker-owned cooperatives, union cooperatives, and benefit corporations. ASBC also advocated on behalf of Congressman Fattah’s National Cooperative Development Act.

ASBC’s work on Chemical Reform brought a much needed voice of business innovation to Capitol Hill

DEFENDING NET NEUTRALITY

In 30 days, ASBC generated more than 100 comments to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from business owners in support of Internet regulation explicitly preventing adoption of a two-tiered pricing system detrimental to small businesses. ASBC’s effort to ensure that the FCC protects net neutrality is part of our emerging Sustainable Information, Communication and Technology campaign.

DEFENDING CHEMICAL SAFETY LEGISLATION

In collaboration with business member Seventh Generation, ASBC leveraged the successful launch of the Companies for Safer Chemicals coalition to increase the number of brands and business organizations supporting meaningful chemical reform. The coalition now represents thousands of companies.

Misleading legislation can be more dangerous than none at all; ASBC worked aggressively and continuously to reform the Toxic Substance Control Act. The Action Fund’s efforts on Capitol Hill and in the media helped significantly to stop a chemical industry-drafted bill that would have enacted ineffective and anti-competitive regulations on chemicals in the marketplace.

ASBC worked with Senator Coons (D-DE) to draft the Sustainable Chemistry R&D Act, which will promote development of safer alternatives and advanced manufacturing techniques.



At year's end, ASBC thwarted an attempt to undermine the EPA-managed Design for the Environment program which gives technical assistance to firms in transition to safer chemical alternatives. ASBC mobilized the business community to successfully defend this business-friendly program.

With leadership from ASBC's member organization, Vermont Business for Social Responsibility, ASBC helped support passage of the Vermont Child Safe Products legislation. ASBC also supported similar efforts in New York, Oregon, Connecticut and Minnesota.

ASBC also supported local businesses harmed by the Elk River chemical spill in West Virginia by calling for changes in chemical safety rules, and as an outgrowth of this work ASBC created the West Virginia Sustainable Business Council.

PRESERVING GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS

Together with ASBC's Louisiana member, Greater New Orleans Independent Business Association, ASBC mobilized numerous business organizations and businesses and worked with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to prevent the legislative dismantling of Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) standards in the state. This success protects advances made in certifiable energy efficiency

and renewable energy building development. In South Carolina, ASBC worked with USGBC to mobilize business leaders in repelling legislative efforts to erode LEED standards as applied to state-owned buildings.

ENSURING THAT THE SMALL BUSINESS VOICE IS HEARD

ASBC challenged the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of Advocacy on a number of fronts to make the little-known agency more accurately represent the interests of small business. ASBC was involved with watchdog group Center for Effective Government's report outlining the flawed process that the Office of Advocacy often uses to water down regulations. ASBC also questioned the SBA Office of Advocacy's attempt to weaken EPA's proposed rule to modernize the Clean Water Act.

SUPPORTING GMO LABELING

ASBC mobilized business support for state referendums in Colorado and Oregon to require GMO labeling. ASBC also worked with Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility to submit affidavits to the State Attorney General in support of the recently passed state law requiring labeling. ASBC Action Fund sent several letters to Congress calling for mandatory federal labeling and criticizing the call by Kansas House Member Pompeo to pre-empt states from taking action in lieu of federal legislation.



ASBC members meet with U.S. Department of Labor Secretary, Tom Perez, and his senior staff

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ARTICULATING BUSINESS BENEFITS IN TAX REFORM

ASBC continued its campaign for comprehensive tax reform that creates a level playing field for small and medium-sized businesses and provides sufficient revenue for the infrastructure and services all businesses need by closing offshore tax loopholes and ending unfair tax repatriation holidays. Congress failed to enact needed measures in 2014 but ASBC Action Fund member's efforts helped shape the ongoing debate.

ASBC launched the "Proud to Be an American Business" campaign to raise attention on the tax-avoiding practice of corporate inversions. This program will continue into 2015.

With member input, ASBC also developed a proactive small business tax agenda. It encourages good corporate citizenship, worker ownership, tax fairness, local recirculation of funds, and tax code simplification. ASBC Action Fund will actively seek support for this agenda from individual members of Congress in 2015.

LOOKING AHEAD | ASBC enters 2015 poised to expand its influence in Washington and state capitals as a powerful voice for policies that benefit both business and the broader economy. We plan to deepen our engagement on such core issues as responsible workplace, climate change, safer chemicals and tax reform. And, as our membership becomes more diverse, we will assume leadership on other key issues such as retirement security, water quality and worker ownership. It's rewarding to see elected officials, regulators and the media all coming to understand the critical role ASBC plays in educating and advocating on the merits of a sustainable economy.

BUSINESS LEADER: COMPANIES CONTRIBUTING \$10,000 OR MORE

Ben & Jerry's | Clif Bar | Danskø | Earth Friendly Products | Eileen Fisher | Naturepedic | New Belgium Brewing | Ogdén Publications, Inc. | Patagonia | Perlman & Perlman | Rision | Seventh Generation

BUSINESS ALLY: COMPANIES CONTRIBUTING \$2,500 TO \$9,999

ABC Carpet & Home | American Income Life | Better World Club | BetterWorld Telecom | Busboys and Poets | Domini Social Investments | Etsy | Green Depot | Liberty National Life Insurance Company | Marstel-Day, LLC | Melwood | Method Products, Inc. | New Resource Bank | Pax World Mutual Funds | Sealaska Corporation | South Mountain Company | Tech Networks of Boston | Trillium Asset Management

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS OF AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL

1% for the Planet | 1worker1vote.org | Alliance for Affordable Energy | American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA) | American Made Alliance | Association for Enterprise Opportunity | Athens' Own | B Lab | BASE KC | BIG: Blacks in Green | Buffalo First Building Materials Reuse Association | Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) | Business and Labor Coalition of New York (BALCONY) | Business for Montana's Outdoors | Business for Shared Prosperity | California Association for Microenterprise Opportunity (CAMEO) | California Business Alliance for a Clean Economy | Chesapeake Sustainable Business Council | Chlorine Free Products Association (CFPA) | Emerging ChangeMakers Network | Evergreen Cooperatives | Fair Trade Federation | Fayette Chamber of Commerce | Freelancers Union | Go Local Tacoma | Greater New York Chamber of Commerce | Green America | Green Business Networking | Green Chamber of Commerce | Illinois Green Business Association | Integrative Healthcare Policy Consortium | Investors' Circle | Iowa Sustainable Business Alliance | Kentucky Sustainable Business Council | Local First | Local First Arizona | Local First Chicago | Local First Ithaca | Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce | Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce | Louisville Independent Business Alliance (LIBA) | Low Country Local First | Manhattan Chamber of Commerce | Manufacture New York | Metro Independent Business Alliance | Mile High Business Alliance | National Asian American Coalition | National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association | National Small Business Network | New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce | New Voice of Business | New York State Sustainable Business Council | North Carolina Business Council (NCBC) | Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA) | Ohio Sustainable Business Council | P3 Utah | Pioneer Valley Local First (PVLf) | Practice Greenhealth | Re>Think Local | Responsible Wealth | Restaurants Advancing Industry Standards in Employment (RAISE) | Rocky Mountain Employee Ownership Center | Sierra Business Council | Small Business Minnesota | Social Enterprise Alliance | Social Venture Network | South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce | Southwest Michigan Sustainable Business Forum | Specialty Sleep Association | Stay Local! | Steel Valley Authority | Sustainable Business Alliance | Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia | Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts | Sustainable Food Trade Association | Sustainable Furnishings Council | Sustainable Rural Regenerative Enterprises for Families (SURREF) | SyracuseFirst | The Greater Connellsville Chamber of Commerce | Think Local First DC | US Federation of Worker Cooperatives | Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) | Virginia Coastal Coalition | Voice for Oregon Innovation & Sustainability | Wealth for the Common Good | West Virginia Sustainable Business Council | Wisconsin Business Alliance | World Business Academy