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Small business event hosted by Blum focuses on challenges

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An onslaught of bad government policy, including an onerous overhaul of overtime pay protections, is stifling local job creation, a panel of Dubuque business leaders said Tuesday.

About 25 small-business leaders gathered Tuesday afternoon at Giese Manufacturing in Dubuque as part of a national tour and campaign by the Job Creators Network. The non-profit organization, billed as being nonpartisan, has launched a nationwide bus tour to hear the challenges small businesses are facing.

“There’s a combination of employment laws and governmental regulations that are putting a burden on the small employer,” said Lori Stewart, of HK Payroll Services, Inc. “For example, when it comes to regulator expectations for employment law, even if you are a 20-employee-or-less employer, there are more than 20 federal laws you have to adhere to, and that’s not mentioning all of the state laws.”

The Bring Small Business Back event was hosted by U.S. Rep. Rod Blum, R-Iowa. The event also featured Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, a Republican, and Job Creators Network President and CEO Alfredo Ortiz.

The event focused on finding solutions to the problems most

commonly cited by eastern Iowa small-business owners, including overregulation, over-taxation and lack of access to credit.

“As a career small-business man, I know firsthand the impact that overbearing federal red tape and burdensome over-taxation can have on our local economy,” said Blum, owner of a Dubuque software firm. “We can bring manufacturing back from China if we lowered the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. If we got rid of some of these onerous regulations that we put on our businesses. If we have an all-of-the-above energy policy that keeps our energy prices low ... and at the same time eliminating corporate welfare and crony capitalism.”

Blum also said the U.S. needs to do more to open up new overseas markets for American goods and farm commodities as well as balance the federal budget

“We are sucking up all of the credit out there, and that raises the borrowing costs for the private sector,” Blum said. “And nothing has created more uncertainty in the private sector than Obamacare.”

A recent poll commissioned by Blum’s campaign shows him with a growing lead over Cedar Rapids Democrat Monica Vernon.

The survey of 400 registered vot-

ers in northeast Iowa’s 1st Congressional District found the first-term Republican leading Vernon 52 percent to 36 percent, with 11 percent of respondents undecided.

Respondents were contacted via landlines and cellphone. The poll, conducted Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 by The Polling Company Inc./Woman Trend, has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.9 percentage points.

Asked to respond, Vernon Campaign Manager Michelle Gajewski wrote in an email to the Telegraph Herald: “Monica built a successful small business from her kitchen table while raising three daughters. She knows that our businesses need certainty — not a Congress where Tea Party Republicans like Rod Blum threaten to shut down the government every year. The fact of the matter is that Congressman Blum has gone to Washington to carry water for the largest corporations, not small businesses.”