



### PHCCWA Members Lobby in Olympia

**A**t the NFIB and IBA Small Business Rally in Olympia, a few PHCCWA members showed up to lobby to protect small businesses here in Washington State. Gary Smith with IBA and Carolyn Logue with NFIB updated small business owners on proposed legislation. We then had lunch with some of our local legislatures and Governor Christine Gregoire addressed small business. We also had the opportunity to meet with legislatures at their office to discuss many issues. Some of important issues were:

#### Health Care

ESSB 5930 – Providing high quality, affordable health care to Washingtonians based on the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Costs and Access. Initially, the bill proposed to study major ideas recommended by the Commission. The Senate amended SB 5930 to include some extremely important health insurance reforms for small business that the IBA and NFIB have been promoting for several years. This legislation, with the important small business health insurance reforms, passed the Senate without opposition. We lobbied to support 5930 as amended by the Senate.

#### Paid Family Leave

E2SSB 5659 – Sets up a state paid family leave insurance program for employees to receive up to \$250 per week for five week of leave to care for children or sick family members. Enacts a new tax of 2 cents per hour on all per hour on all employees in the state. Sets up a new administration at the Department of Labor and Industries with 103 new FTEs and over \$100 million in costs. Uses state workers' compensation funds to fund the program if not enough money is available. Requires all employers to allow employees five weeks of family leave, regardless of size (over 50 will still have to offer 12 weeks). Employers less than 25 will not have to keep the job open. We opposed 5659.

#### Workers' Compensation

SB 5675 – Proposes to increase minimum state industrial insurance disability for injured workers. In some cases, the injured worker will make more on industrial insurance time-loss than they were earning while they were working. Paying excessive benefits is totally inconsistent with the fundamental philosophy of workers' compensation. We opposed 5675.

#### Construction Liability

SB 5550 – Proposes to require contractors to provide a new home warranty on any new home they build that provides 2 year warranty for any defect in materials or workmanship, a 3 year warranty for any electrical, plumbing or heating defect, a 5 year warranty for any water penetration defect, and a 10 year warranty for any structural defect. A defect is defined as nonconformity with applicable building codes, regulations, or permits that has an adverse effect or will have an adverse effect on the new home. We opposed 5550.

**A special thank to those that attended to help fight for small businesses.**



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## Upcoming Dates of Interest



- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| April 10    | PHCCWA Board Meeting in Tukwilla. All members are welcome   |
| April 18-21 | PHCC Legislative & Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. |
| May 2-6     | PHCC West Annual Convention in Gleneden, Oregon             |

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## PHCC of Washington

### Selecting an Engine—Thinking About Horsepower & Torque

**H**ow many times have you heard phrases like this when you were looking for a new truck?

"More horsepower than the competition." "Most power in its class." "Highest available torque."

Have you ever wondered what they mean? When you are deciding on an engine for your vehicle, particularly a truck, it is important to understand horsepower and torque and how they are measured, as well as how and where your engine will be used. But first, there are some important terms that need to be understood.

Torque is a unit of force. It is the tendency to produce rotation about an axis commonly expressed as "foot-pounds" for engines. The key word here is force. Torque is a measure of the engine's ability to apply twisting force or pressure to the crankshaft. It has no element of time or movement. Torque can be multiplied or divided almost infinitely through gearing.

Horsepower is a unit of power, a rate at which work is performed. The key word here is power. Horsepower has an element of time and movement and cannot be multiplied or divided with gearing. Horsepower can be calculated with a formula using torque and revolutions per minute (RPM – or the speed of an engine). For example, Horsepower = Torque (ft/lbs) x RPM/5252.

Horsepower and torque are important measurements to consider when selecting an engine for a vehicle, but they must also be understood in terms of the work that you will expect your engine to undertake. The problem is that most manufacturers only advertise the engine's maximum horsepower, which usually occurs at a high RPM, or when a vehicle is moving at a high speed. But it is important to take all of your driving factors into consideration. For example, it is important to understand a vehicle's horsepower when accelerating and stopping, particularly if you plan to do a lot of driving in the city. If your truck will be used primarily in the city, you will want an engine that will get up and go from low RPM, or from a stop.

In addition to the environment in which a truck will be used, you also need to take into consideration the type of work the truck will be doing. Varying loads, trailers and power levels can limit a truck's speed to well below the speed limit, making a truck's power specking much more critical. When a truck begins to accelerate with a heavy load, the engine is usually not working at high RPMs and its horsepower could be considerably less than the engine's maximum. In an ideal world, vehicles would be rated with a graph showing horsepower at the wheels at all speeds at which the vehicle operates.

So how do you compare two different engines for a particular truck? Here are a couple of steps to follow:

- First, try to acquire the engine's horsepower curves, which can be obtained from the engine manufacturer.
- Engines usually come with various torque ratings, so you should convert all torque ratings at a given RPM to horsepower.
- Next, consider the engine's RPM range during maximum power, from start to full speed, as well as the RPM during normal cruise.

Here is an example:

Engine A has a rating of 290 Horsepower at 4000 RPM and 400 ft/lb torque at 3000 RPM.

Engine B has a rating of 260 Horsepower at 4000 RPM and 300 ft/lb torque at 3000 RPM.

If these two engines are compared only on the basis of horsepower, engine A has 11.5 percent more power. Converting the maximum torque figures to horsepower, engine A has 228 Horsepower at 3000 RPM, while engine B has 171 Horsepower at 3000 RPM. In other words, engine A has 33 percent more horsepower at 3000 RPM. If this truck's engine drops to 3000 RPM when the transmission shifts to the next gear, engine B would stop accelerating and have to downshift earlier than engine A.

So the next time you are looking for a new truck or engine, look at the big picture. It will help you ensure that you are getting the best vehicle for you job.

Aaron Lindstrom, Senior Account Executive for Enterprise Fleet Management in Washington, can be reached at 206-423-3958. Lindstrom is supported by an experienced team of veteran mechanics and accredited Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) technicians to serve the fleet maintenance needs of businesses with mid-size fleets. In addition to maintenance management programs, Enterprise's services include vehicle acquisition, fuel management and insurance programs, as well as vehicle registration, reporting and remarketing. Visit the company's web site at [www.enterprise.com/fleets](http://www.enterprise.com/fleets) or call toll free 1-877-23-FLEET.

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## PHCC of Washington

### Best Practices – Do's and Don'ts on Collecting Feedback

(The following is an excerpt from a four-part article on *Empowering Employees* by John Zink, director for education and programs, PHCC Educational Foundation. The entire article is available on the Foundation's Contractor Resource Center at [www.foundation.phccweb.org](http://www.foundation.phccweb.org).)

**Y**our employees have great ideas about how improve productivity and reduce costs in your company. Are you asking for these ideas and listening when they are offered?

What is the best way to ask your employees for suggestions on improvement? An enlightened owner may be perfectly willing to listen to all complains and suggestions for improvement, not realizing that they have no way of collecting this feedback.



#### Suggestion Box

There are several problems with the traditional suggestion box hung on the wall in the office. Making suggestions anonymously is difficult with the box being in a public place. If there is only one suggestion in the box, it must be from that one person the receptionist saw at the box earlier that week.

Access is also an issue. You will not get suggestions put in the box in the office from field crews who never see the office or service techs who spend little time there.

#### Keep the Door Open, But Don't Depend on it

Companies that claim to have an "open door" policy should also consider the hurdles they are putting up for their employees.

Depending on the company culture, the average employee may not be comfortable bringing their concerns to the person with the open door. Intimidation and the fear of appearing to be a "complainer" will keep many employees silent about company issues.

What if the employee's issue is with the person whose door is open or one of their relatives? If the open door leads to the owner's office, few employees will be comfortable marching in and telling the boss that his son is driving the company into the ground.

And again, we find the problem of a separation of office and field employees. Field crews who never see the office or service techs who spend little time there face the additional hurdle of being out of their element & in uncomfortable territory while lodging their complaints or suggestions.

People don't like to be uncomfortable, but they would usually rather suffer in silence than deal with a face-to-face confrontation about the issue. The issue will remain unresolved and the employee may decide to move on a new job, leaving the problem for the next person.

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