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December 2019

Business Economists Predict a Slowdown, But No Recession in 2020

Business economists forecast that the U.S. economy will slow this year and next, but put the odds of a recession by mid-2020 relatively low.

Read more [here](#).



China Agrees to 'Phase One' Trade Deal with U.S.

China and the U.S. have reached a partial trade deal, marking a step toward resolving a tit-for-tat battle that has dragged on for more than a year.

Read more [here](#).



USMCA: Agreement Reached on NAFTA Trade Deal Replacement

The U.S., Mexico and Canada have finalized a trade deal that will replace the 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Read more [here](#).



U.S. Hiring Rebounds in November

U.S. employers added 266,000 jobs in November, the Labor Department reported, and the unemployment rate fell slightly to 3.5 percent.

Read more [here](#).



Manufacturers Likely to Cut Capital Expenditures in 2020, Survey Says

U.S. manufacturing executives plan to spend 2.1 percent less on capital expenditures next year, the first drop since 2009, according to a survey by the Institute for Supply Management.

Read more [here](#).



Mack McLarty: Bipartisanship Is Still Possible

Despite reports of hyper-partisanship and gridlock in Congress, regular meetings occur in the Capitol between Democrats and Republicans that are civil, respectful and even fruitful, McLarty writes.

Read more [here](#).



House Planning Vote on Sweeping Bill to Lower Drug Prices

The House is planning to vote on a sweeping Democratic prescription drug bill that would allow the secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate lower prices.

Read more [here](#).



Manufacturing Shifting to a College-Educated Workforce

U.S. manufacturers are hiring more workers with college degrees, who are expected to eventually outnumber those with just high school diplomas.

Read more [here](#).



Mnuchin Says China Should Be ‘Graduated’ From World Bank Loan Program

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the World Bank should expel China from a loan program that helps middle- and low-income nations finance government projects.

Read more [here](#).



Proposed Rule Would Require Health Plans to Disclose Out-of-Pocket Costs

Federal agencies have suggested a rule that would require employer-sponsored group health plans to provide plan enrollees with estimates for out-of-pocket expenses.

Read more [here](#).



U.S. Exporters Benefit from Growing Gas Demand in Mexico

The U.S. fulfills 65 percent of Mexico’s natural gas needs and that figure is projected to increase over the next 20 years as gas demand grows.

Read more [here](#).



Ross Says U.S. Has Much to Learn from Indiana’s Workforce Programs

Indiana is leading the nation by creating the workforce of the future, according to U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.

Read more [here](#).



Holidays Bring Phishing Scam Surge Aimed at Small Business

While cyber-criminals strike at any time of the year, they're particularly active during the holiday and income tax filing seasons.

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How Manufacturers Can Increase Their Pricing Power

Manufacturers that succeed in terms of pricing power have deliberate strategies to set themselves apart.

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Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/Associated Industries of Arkansas
1200 W. Capitol Ave., Little Rock, AR 72201
P.O. Box 3645, Little Rock, AR 72203
501-372-2222 | arkansasstatechamber.com