



The Daily Dish

August 8th Edition

SAM BATKINS | AUGUST 8, 2014

The U.S. Postal Service wants to follow in the footsteps of the EPA. This week, a [final rule was issued](#) allowing the USPS to garnish the wages of private-sector workers. After the massive backlash the EPA faced when issuing a similar rule, one would think the USPS would hesitate to garnish wages. [AAF's research](#) on the EPA's rule found that it "more closely resembles a power grab than an appropriate administrative step to rectify an observed issue in their fine repayment process." The USPS rule doesn't seem to be much different.

A [congressional report found](#) the White House will be exempting millions from the individual mandate. This is an interesting decision by the administration considering when Obamacare went before the Supreme Court in 2012 the [Solicitor General wrote](#) that the individual mandate was "essential" to guaranteeing the success of the act. The administration needs to make up its mind on whether or not the individual mandate is "essential" or can be waved off with the stroke of a pen.

Eakinomics: A Back to School Guide to Federal Regs– Guest Authored by Sam Batkins, AAF Director of Regulatory Policy

As students from around the nation return to school, it's important to recognize that from their first day of kindergarten to their last in college, their lives might be changed due to new federal regulations. Although students are hardly the first target when "federal regulations" are mentioned, several recent rules are finding their way into halls of education.

1. Why is my bake sale disappearing? The short answer is a [federal rule](#) from 2013 regulating "competitive foods" sold in schools. The effective date is [July 1, 2014](#), so it applies for the upcoming fall semester. The regulation does not directly limit bake sales, but it does set [nutrition requirements](#) for whole grains, fruits, fat, and sugar content. Regrettably, cookies and cakes generally have lots of fat and sugar, but schools can conduct "infrequent" fundraisers. The administration adopted an exemption that would allow states to determine the frequency of bake sales. However, "If a State agency does not specify the exemption frequency, no fundraiser exemptions may be granted." Sadly, [numerous reports](#) have found states unwilling or unable to grant such exemptions.

2. Why is my tuition increasing? There are numerous factors driving tuition spikes across the country: demand, funding streams from states and the federal government, and large increases in administrative staff. Recent research from [AAF found](#) significant jumps in the Department of Education's paperwork burden. In turn, general administrative staff in higher education has increased by more than 31 percent, including a 32 percent increase in "compliance officers" who ensure conformity with regulations. Not surprisingly, there is a strong relationship between the rise in administrative staff and tuition increases.

3. Why is my car more expensive? For students older than 16 and lucky enough to have a car, they might notice a higher sticker price. More than likely, it's their parents who are experiencing sticker shock, but initial impressions are correct: vehicle costs are rising and federal regulations are partly to blame. As [AAF detailed](#), a suite of recent vehicle efficiency regulations will raise the price of most vehicles by more than \$3,100. One [regulation managed](#)

to raise both vehicle and gas prices.

Forget homework, classroom bullies, and not making varsity. Students returning to school this month noticing the lack of bake sales, higher tuition, and pricier cars can turn their attention to the usual suspect for most of the nation's scorn: Washington, D.C.