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Wednesday, December 09, 2009

# **Senate Small Business Amendments Help Small Businesses Offer Health Benefits, Save Jobs**

## **Amendments to Senate Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Provide Support Small Businesses Need**

**Sausalito, CA** – The small business amendments introduced during a press conference today show that members of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship have listened to what the small business community wants out of healthcare reform, and crafted a package of amendments that provide the kind of additional support small business owners need from the Senate bill.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee Chairwoman Mary Landrieu was joined at the event by senators Blanche Lincoln and Debbie Stabenow, along with Small Business Majority's National Policy Director Terry Gardiner and Maryland small business owner Mike Brey.

“Small business owners face draconian choices when it comes to health insurance,” Gardiner said. “Failing to offer it can mean losing valuable employees, but paying high rates for insurance is forcing some small business owners to make hard choices when it comes to wages and growth. We’re pleased to see this broad package, which includes amendments from Senators Landrieu, Snowe, Lincoln and Stabenow, that go the extra mile in supporting small businesses, and will help give them some relief from this unfortunate dilemma.”

Several key amendments will not only help small businesses offer health benefits, but also save small business jobs. Those most crucial to small business success include:

- Senator Landrieu’s amendment to provide tax equity for the self-employed: Allowing the self-employed to deduct 50 percent of their health insurance costs will provide great financial benefit to the nation’s 22 million self-employed, who currently can’t deduct premiums as a business expense and are required to pay an additional 15 percent in self-employment tax on their healthcare costs. This puts them at a serious disadvantage to their larger counterparts and hinders entrepreneurship.
- Senator Landrieu’s amendment to provide small business owners with information about small business healthcare options: This will ensure all small

business owners have access to information that can ultimately help them afford and offer health insurance for their employees and themselves.

- Senator Stabenow's amendment to create a financial bridge to the establishment of the health insurance exchange by strengthening the tax credits: Robust tax credits are essential to achieving comprehensive reform. Making them available immediately upon enactment of the legislation, and lengthening the duration of the credits from two to five years, will give employers a strong incentive to provide health insurance to their employees and families or improve the coverage they already offer, and save small business jobs.
- Senator Lincoln's amendment to raise the limit on employee salaries (from \$20,000 to \$25,000) for full tax credit eligibility, and raise the cap for partial credits (from \$40,000 to \$50,000), will increase the number of small businesses able to receive tax credits and enable more small businesses to afford health insurance for their employees and themselves.
- Senator Snowe's amendment to allow small businesses with up to 100 employees to participate in the exchanges immediately, which will increase the number of businesses—and employees—who can benefit from the exchanges. Currently, the bill lets states prevent businesses with up to 50 employees from participating until 2016.

### **About Small Business Majority**

Small Business Majority is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded and run by small business owners and focused on solving the biggest problem facing small businesses today: the skyrocketing cost of health coverage. We speak for the nearly 28 million Americans who are self-employed or own businesses of up to 100 employees. Our organization sponsors scientific research that guides us to understand and advocate on behalf of the interests of small businesses across the country.

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