



NEWS RELEASE

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Utah Small Business Leaders Discuss Impact of Healthcare Law 1 Year On

Small business owners and advocates discuss impacts of Affordable Care Act

March 22, 2011 –Utah Health Policy Project and Small Business Majority joined Gerene Mason, owner of Southern Utah Insurance, on a tele-press conference today to discuss how small businesses have been affected by the Affordable Care Act in the year since its enactment.

March 23 marks the first anniversary of the law. The press call provided an open forum for small business leaders to give their take on the ACA and how it's impacted Utah's small business community.

"It's important at this stage of the process to make sure small business owners understand all of the changes in store for them in the ACA, and for two reasons: to bring immediate relief to their unmanageable costs AND to get on-the-ground feedback from them on how we can fine tune the law and improve the interface with state reforms right out of the gate," said Judi Hilman, executive director of Utah Health Policy Project. "We have our work cut out for us in terms of helping small business owners use the tax credits—and the new wellness grants coming on line later this year. We look forward to working with experienced brokers like Gerene to train brokers and accountants in the use of these tools."

The ACA includes provisions, such as small business tax credits, insurance reforms and the creation of insurance marketplaces, aimed at lowering small employers' costs and making it easier for them to buy insurance for themselves and their employees. Small business owners in Utah and across the country are already taking advantage of these and other provisions.

"While some are taking advantage of the tax credits, there's still a lot of confusion about this law, especially within the small business community," said Terry Gardiner, National Policy Director for Small Business Majority. "We've found many small business owners aren't even aware of the parts of the law that will put money back in their pockets right now. Small business owners are still struggling to keep their doors open. They need to know about provisions in this law that will help them."

"It has gotten more difficult over the years to cover the premium costs for our employees due to increasing costs. In fact, we were thinking about having to raise the deductible in order to continue providing it," said small business owner Gerene Mason. "That is, until we found out we would be receiving an approximately \$1,250 tax credit this year thanks to the new healthcare law."

About the Utah Health Policy Project

Utah Health Policy Project is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to lasting solutions to the crisis of the uninsured and rising health care costs. Through our award-winning research, education, and community engagement activities, we are closer to the day when all Utahns have access to quality, affordable, comprehensive health care and coverage. Since the historic passage of federal health reform in 2010, we are focused on making the new health reform law work for Utah.

Members of the media are invited to tomorrow's 1-year anniversary celebration and press conference, tomorrow at 5:00 pm at Caputo's Market & Deli—see separate advisory with details. Small business owners, Chamber leaders, individuals who are being helped by the early provisions, will be on hand. We expect about 100 attendees. RSVP to kim@healthpolicyproject.org

About Small Business Majority

Small Business Majority conducts extensive scientific polling and research to determine small business owners' perspectives on healthcare reform and brings a nonpartisan voice to policy discussions nationwide. Based in Sausalito, CA with offices in Washington, DC and New York City, the organization works with small business owners, healthcare policy experts and elected officials.

Background Materials

Let me now share those materials and tools referenced in the call (a press release will have more in a few minutes):

- A link to Small Business Majority's tax credit calculator: <http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/tax-credit-calculator/>
- The link to a brief we did for Utah small businesses called [Nuts & Bolts of Federal Health Reform: The Impact on Utah Small Businesses](#) (July 8, 2010). This has info on the rest of the changes for small businesses going into 2014 and beyond.
- The 2009 scientific survey of Utah small businesses: though it has maybe 5 minutes of shelf life left, this affirms Utah small business owners' interest in the robust changes that are now part of the ACA. This is UHPP's brief summary of the survey: http://www.healthpolicyproject.org/Publications_files/Business/2009/UHPPSmallBizSurveySummary7-14-09postJK.pdf; here is the full survey report: http://www.healthpolicyproject.org/Publications_files/Business/2009/Utah_research_report_062209.pdf
- The 2 most recent issues of Health Matters, our e-newsletter, describe the coming changes to Utah's Exchange as a result of the legislative session just completed:
 - March 14 edition: <http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=656a6686e0e46fdadf04f0a2e&id=52e5254972&e=d5101e9d0f>
 - March 7 edition: <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=656a6686e0e46fdadf04f0a2e&id=0231372ba8&e=d5101e9d0f>
- A brief report on Utah's Exchange (hot off the presses today from the Commonwealth Fund): <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Newsletters/States-in-Action/2011/Mar/February-March-2011/Snapshots/Utah.aspx>

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