



Solving Small Businesses'
Biggest Problem: Healthcare

Newsletter: May 05, 2009

From John Arensmeyer, CEO

Welcome to our first 2009 newsletter. As you'll see, we've had a busy few months, conducting more scientific research and developing our nationwide network of partners and small business spokespeople. We've been very active in Washington, DC, and garnered some terrific media coverage—including a spot on "Hardball with Chris Matthews" and interviews with BusinessWeek, Roll Call, Politico, Reuters and others. We've also been participating in key events that clearly show that small business finally has a place at the table in the debate on healthcare reform.

I was excited to be part of the [White House healthcare summit on March 5](#), where my seat between Senators Baucus and Grassley during the breakout session provided an opportunity for lively discussion. We've been invited to a number of White House events since then, as well as high-profile panels and presentations organized by groups such as the National Coalition on Health Care.

Our message is resonating with policymakers at the highest levels. They understand that making health coverage affordable and accessible to every American is not an ideological issue, but an economic one, and essential to the future of our small businesses. We're playing a critical role as Congress focuses on the specifics of comprehensive healthcare reform; we have a real chance to make serious progress in the coming months. Thanks for your continuing support on this journey.

Focus on research

Ohio report released

Small Business Majority and the Ohio-based Small Business Network on Health Care released a survey of 300 Ohio-based small business owners on April 21. Our research found that the small business community sees healthcare reform as necessary to getting the economy back on track and health insurance costs as a significant barrier to entrepreneurship. Ohio small business owners see themselves as part of the solution and are open to an array of reform proposals.

The report's release drew significant media attention in Ohio, with prominent articles in the Columbus Dispatch, Cleveland Plain Dealer and Dayton Business Journal.

[>> View research](#)

New Mexico small business owners polled on healthcare

A significant majority of small business owners (80%) in New Mexico favor healthcare reform, according to a new Small Business Majority report based on a survey of 300 small business owners in that state. In findings that echo those in other states, New Mexico's small businesses are burdened by healthcare costs and willing to share the responsibility for establishing affordable coverage. The full report will be released soon; a one-page summary is available now on our site.

[>> View research](#)

More state surveys in the works

We're continuing to document the problems and opinions of small business owners throughout the country by conducting opinion research in multiple states. Lake Research Partners will be doing more surveys for us over the next month in Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Maine, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, and in additional states in the near future. Visit the research section on our website to see the findings from our national

Small Business Majority in the news

BusinessWeek

[Health-Care Debate: Issues for Small Business](#)

(May 04, 2009)

Roll Call

[CongressNow Overview: Health Care to Dominate Congressional Debate for Months](#)

(Mar 23, 2009)

Politico

[Wal-Mart lends muscle to health reform](#)

[» Small-business voice gets louder](#)

(Mar 17, 2009)

Hardball with Chris Matthews

[Can Obama reform health care? Interview with John Arensmeyer and Mike Tuffin](#)

(Mar 06, 2009)

The Washington Post

[Ex-Foes of Health-Care Reform Emerge as Supporters](#)

(Mar 06, 2009)

[>> More news](#)

Recent events

Small Business Majority

attends White House meeting

Small Business Majority was well represented at an April 24 roundtable discussion at the White House on small business and healthcare reform, which was led by Nancy-Ann DeParle, director of the White House office of Health Reform. Participants included Terry Gardiner, our national legislative director, and five small business owners in our network who discussed their own problems with the current system of health insurance coverage.

survey and others in California, New York, Ohio and New Mexico.

[>> View research](#)

Spokesperson spotlight

Jan Naylor

Naylor Hardware, Oakland, Maryland

Jan Naylor is an active member of our network of small business owners who speak out about the cost and availability of health insurance. Most recently, she spoke at the April 8 White House roundtable on healthcare reform, and took the initiative to write a compelling letter to the editor that was published in her local Cumberland, Maryland, newspaper. Thanks to Jan for stepping up to the plate.

[Read more about Jan and her business.](#)

Partner spotlight

Utah Health Policy Project

By Jessica Kendrick, Community Engagement Director, Utah Health Policy Project

Utah small business owners have spoken in unambiguous terms about the need for comprehensive health system reforms. When small business owners speak up, the state's pro-business policymakers tend to listen, and this is why the nonpartisan Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP) is working to mobilize small business voices around healthcare system reform.

For UHPP, the typical point of entry into the small business community is the nonprofit agency's StoryBank (<http://www.healthpolicyproject.org/Storybank.html>). Some storytellers will then write letters to the editor; others will meet with policymakers or speak with the media. To further organize small business voices, UHPP arranges meetings or speaking engagements with local chambers of commerce, the Local First coalition, and key industry associations.

The next step for UHPP is to partner with Small Business Majority on a statewide survey to gain some data in addition to the personal stories. For more information about UHPP, visit www.healthpolicyproject.org

Legislative activity

Our comment on Baucus/Grassley proposal

One of the first specific bipartisan congressional proposals to address containing medical costs and other key healthcare reforms came from the Senate Finance Committees leaders in late April—Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) and ranking Republican Charles Grassley (R-IA). The nation's small business owners would benefit tremendously from the proposed reforms, CEO John Arensmeyer said in a statement.

[>> Read our statement](#)

[>> Read more](#)

Small Business Majority CEO speaks at reform meeting

John Arensmeyer served on a panel of prominent healthcare reform experts on Tuesday, April 14, in Sacramento. The meeting, sponsored by the National Coalition on Health Care, addressed the urgent need for healthcare reform, the escalating debate about reform options, and the potential effects national reform would have on California.

John Arensmeyer at two America's Agenda events

John participated in an [April 7 panel](#) in Madison, Wisconsin, sponsored by America's Agenda, a coalition of nonprofit organizations focused on comprehensive healthcare reform. The group is hosting a series of 10 "summit conversations" in cities across the country this year. The high-level panel included former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson and former Rep. Dick Gephardt. John will also speak at their May 6 [Health Care Summit Conversation](#) in San Francisco.

Small business owners at the table at White House

Two small business people, members of our nationwide network, participated in a White House roundtable meeting on healthcare reform on April 8. The meeting, led by Nancy-Ann DeParle, head of the White House Office on Health Reform, brought together about 30 representatives of various stakeholder groups, including hospitals, doctors and consumers. Our spokespeople—Jan Naylor of Naylor Hardware, and Mike Brey of Hobby Works, both from Maryland—made opening statements about their health coverage woes that set the stage for the discussion. They both gave examples of how healthcare costs are hurting their businesses and their employees.