



# News Release

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## U.S. Census Report Indicates Strong Growth for Women-Owned Businesses

**Washington, DC** – The National Women’s Business Council is pleased with the findings of this morning’s U.S. Census report which indicates a 20% increase in women’s business ownership. Estimates from the [2007 Survey of Business Owners \(SBO\)](#) indicates that majority-owned (51%+), women-owned businesses increased from 6.5 million to 7.8 million over the years 2002 - 2007. This number, however, does not reflect the current economic downturn, first evidenced in December 2007.

“The Council is pleased with the growth of the number of majority-owned, women-owned businesses during this five year span, but we are particularly interested in the impact of the economic downturn, the effects of which we do not yet have statistics. We’d like to know whether the downturn has created more opportunities for entrepreneurs, or, in fact, has forced small businesses to close,” observed Margaret Mankin Barton, Executive Director of the National Women’s Business Council.

Last fall, the NWBC, in collaboration with WIPP and WalMart, released an [economic impact study](#) which measured the total contributions of women’s entrepreneurship on the economy. The findings suggest that women-owned businesses provide over \$3 trillion to the U. S. economy, despite only 20% of these firms having employees. The economic growth potential for both women-owned businesses and the overall U.S. economy is simply enormous.

This fall, the NWBC, WIPP and Walmart will release a new study examining why the overwhelming majority of women business owners are non-employer firms. “This study will be a snapshot of the current situation for women’s businesses, released in real time. The report will help the Council make policy recommendations to key leadership, enabling them to remove federal barriers to growth, if they exist,” Barton said. “We are very pleased with the growth as reflected in the Census report, but need to continue to support women entrepreneurs at all stages along the business continuum, especially during this difficult economic time”.

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The National Women’s Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council created to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. Members of the Council are prominent women business owners and leaders of women’s business organizations. As the nation’s advocate for the more than 10.4 million women-owned businesses in the U.S., the National Women’s Business Council works to promote increased access to affordable health care, access to capital, access to federal contracts and international markets, and access to the information and expertise women business owners most need to succeed. The Council conducts research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations and connects the women’s business community to policy makers in order to expand and improve opportunities for women business owners and their enterprises.