

# News Release

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409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210 ★ Washington, DC 20024 ★ 202-205-3850 (p) ★ 202-205-6825 (f) ★ [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov)

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**Contact:** Allison Gilmore  
202-205-6827  
[allison.gilmore@nwbc.gov](mailto:allison.gilmore@nwbc.gov)

## Women Business Owners State Priorities in New NWBC Town Hall Report *Access to Capital and Affordable Health Care are Top Concerns of Atlanta Town Hall Meeting Participants*

**Washington, DC** – A new report released today by the National Women’s Business Council (NWBC) outlines policy recommendations for addressing women business owners’ access to capital and affordable health care during the current economic downturn. Proposals include evaluating all SBA-backed lending programs to determine if they are meeting the needs of small business owners, supporting legislation to create tax credits for parties who make capital investments in small businesses, exploring alternatives to traditional means of offering health insurance, and creating tax credits to help small business owners improve the quality of life of their employees.

The report, *2009 Policy Priorities of Women Business Owners*, is based on discussions from an April 2009 town hall meeting hosted by NWBC at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia. Participants at the meeting included women business owners, NWBC members, and representatives of local, state, and federal organizations serving the needs of women business owners. The event was the seventh in a series of meetings, beginning in March 2007, designed to generate grassroots-level recommendations of women business owners to inform NWBC’s future policy counsel to the President, Congress and U.S. Small Business Administration. The meetings were held outside of the Washington, DC area to engage women entrepreneurs who might not be connected to the national-level policy process.

“We were honored to support the National Women’s Business Council in hosting this dynamic exchange of information and networking among the Atlanta women’s business community,” stated Donna Ennis of the Enterprise Innovation Institute at the Georgia Institute of Technology. “In a time when those outside of Washington, DC often feel ignored by the policy process, the Council’s continued commitment to involving the nation’s women business owners in the policy process is commendable.”

Other topics outlined in the report include education and workforce development, procurement, and taxes. Participants were especially vocal about the need for increased funding for government-supported entrepreneurial development resources and training centers, as more Americans turn to business ownership in an increasingly difficult job market.

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“Small and women-owned firms make substantial contributions to the U.S. economy and must play a critical role in its recovery,” said NWBC Executive Director Margaret Barton. “We urge policymakers to consider the recommendations of these businesses as they attempt to solve the country’s economic and policy challenges.”

The full report is now available on the NWBC website, [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov).

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### **The National Women’s Business Council**

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. For more information about the Council, its mission and activities, contact: National Women’s Business Council, 409 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, SW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20024; phone: 202-205-3850; fax: 202-205-6825, e-mail: [info@nwbc.gov](mailto:info@nwbc.gov); Web site: [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov).