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NATIONAL POLL RANKS HEALTH CARE AND ENVIRONMENT AS TOP CONCERNS OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

“What Women Want” Bipartisan Survey Reveals Common Ground

Virginia Beach, VA (May 15, 2007) -- Although health care was overwhelmingly named the most critical issue affecting their businesses, nearly two thirds of women business owners surveyed also believe that global warming and changes to the environment will affect them professionally and/or personally. These results of a national bipartisan survey of women business owners were released today by Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP), the nation’s largest bipartisan women’s business group. “What Business Women Want” is an annual online poll conducted by WIPP to gain insight on issues affecting the growth of women-owned businesses.

“Women entrepreneurs have a unique perspective on national issues because they are the only demographic with their finger on the pulse of both the business and the family wallets,” said Doña Storey, President and CEO of Quality Technical Services, Inc. in Virginia Beach, VA. “WIPP’s surveys continue to be an accurate forecast of general populace opinion on economic issues because the results reveal common sense and common ground across party lines.”

While this was the fifth year that health care concerns were ranked number one, in a significant shift from previous surveys, half of those surveyed do not believe that business should be the main provider of health care coverage. The survey respondents also were definitive in discussing possible solutions to the health care crisis and in the belief that business, large or small, should not shoulder the responsibility of being the main provider of health care coverage.

In a show for current legislation, more than 85% of those surveyed want small employers to have the option to access the same insurance programs offered to government employees and 64% believe that the number of uninsured individuals would decrease if business owners were allowed to shop across state lines for more competitive rates. The majority supported small business tax breaks as an incentive to offer employee health coverage

Concern about energy costs ranked as the second most critical issue at 52%. More than half of all businesses (52%) said they have plans to alter business practices to either conserve energy or become more environmentally friendly and 35% reported offering technological initiatives and/or business/service product offerings to increase energy efficiencies.

Two-thirds of the respondents believe that global warming and environmental changes will affect them or their businesses and 45% want to see the government use both incentives and regulations to encourage businesses to encourage conservation.

Tax reform and the federal deficit tied at 51% each for third place. Eighty-one percent believe the current tax structure is in need of comprehensive reform. Women entrepreneurs want several tax cuts made permanent, including the estate tax, capitol gains and dividends, and expensing for small business. Regarding the federal deficit, 67% stated that federal spending should be reduced to decrease the rising deficit.

“The results of this survey will impact our efforts in working with Congress and the Administration to develop common-sense solutions that foster the growth of America’s 10.6 million women-owned businesses,” said Ms. Storey.

The 2007 “What Business Women Want” bipartisan national survey was conducted Jan. 22 – Feb. 9 and included 400 respondents. To read the complete survey, visit www.wipp.org.

Federal Contracts to Women Business Owners

Another issue of concern to women entrepreneurs is the number of federal contracts granted to women-owned businesses. Of the 22% who responded as currently federal contractors, 44% believe that the federal contracting goal of 5% women-owned businesses should be increased.

About Women Impacting Public Policy:

Women Impacting Public Policy is a non-profit, national bipartisan group with over half a million members. WIPP is The Collective Voice in Washington, DC, for 46 national women and small business organizations. WIPP strengthens its members’ sphere of influence in the legislative process, creates economic opportunities for members and builds alliances with other small business organizations. Visit www.wipp.org.