



spotlight on healthcare

Healing Health Care For Small Business

(NAPSA)—There are nearly 6 million small-business employers in the U.S. But only about half can afford health insurance.

That's the word from analysts who say that small businesses are disproportionately burdened by health care costs and that their owners and employees often pay the price.

Of the 47 million Americans without health insurance, more than 28 million are small-business owners, their employees or their dependents. While a number of factors contribute to this coverage gap—including premiums jumping 129 percent in the last eight years—National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) CEO Todd Stottlemeyer says government policy plays a major role.

“Under current law, small businesses don't enjoy the same tax breaks, coverage or pooling options as large businesses and corporations,” says Stottlemeyer. “On average, they pay 18 percent more for the same health care benefits. Small-business owners and employees are shouldering an overwhelming and disproportionate burden of the health care system.”

Healthy Change

Fortunately for small businesses—which comprise a voting bloc larger than soccer moms and NASCAR dads—an aggressive health care campaign called “Solutions Start Here” could help bring about change.

Kicked off with a letter sent by NFIB to the presidential candidates, the movement urges policy-makers to deliver real and meaningful health care reform for small business—something that 71 percent of small-business voters



Seventy-one percent of small-business owners say health care should be a top priority in Washington.

believe should be a top priority for the next president.

The campaign included “Fix-it Forums” held in cities across the country, where small-business owners, employees and decision makers learn from each other's stories and struggles. But it will also serve to communicate with presidential candidates to ensure they fully consider small business as a significant voting bloc.

Additionally, NFIB members, presidential candidates and legislators will be invited to sign a petition that reinforces the need to drive down health care costs while maintaining quality and choice. The petition will be submitted to the 111th Congress and the incoming administration.

“The needs of small businesses must be included in health care reform,” says Stottlemeyer. “Because when it's fixed for small business, it's fixed for America.”

For more information, visit www.FixedForAmerica.com.