



Instant Impact Legislative Update – May 23, 2011

1) WIPP Members Cautiously Optimistic for 2011

The results of WIPP's 2011 Annual Survey are in and WIPP members are optimistic about 2011. While the economic recovery remains a top concern for women business owners, 65% predict an increase in revenue as compared with 52% in 2010. In addition, fewer firms anticipate downsizing than in the past. Although optimistic, women business owners are being cautious, one third of the respondents in the coming year do not plan to hire any additional employees.

Healthcare continues to rank as a top concern for women business owners. Only 56% of firms, as compared to 65% in 2010, are offering healthcare benefits to their employees. For those companies not offering insurance, cost is a major factor.

WIPP conducts its annual membership survey to gain insight and information, assess the importance of economic issues and evaluate the importance of policy issues relative to their businesses. The results shape WIPP's advocacy, outreach, and organizational agenda.

To read WIPP's Annual Survey Results Press Release [click here](#).

To view an executive summary of the data [click here](#).

2) Small Businesses Celebrated During SBA's Small Business Week

Under the theme, *Empowering Entrepreneurs*, this year's National Small Business Week took place May 16th through 20th in Washington, D.C. During the week, the Small Business Administration honored the nation's top entrepreneurs for their achievements and recognized the contribution of small business champions.

WIPP congratulates the following members who were recognized for their achievements:

- Sherrie Aycock and Tara Olson, WIPP National Partners and Co-CEO's of AllPoints Research, Inc. in Winston-Salem, North Carolina have been named the SBA's 2011 Women in Business Champions of the Year for both North Carolina and SBA's Southeast Region IV.
- Laurie Simon, WIPP National Partner and CEO and Founder of Umbrella, Inc., has been selected as the 2011 Women in Business Champion of the Year in the 2011 Washington State Small Business Award competition.
- WIPP National Partner Judy K. Sheppard, President/CEO of Professional Services of America Inc., has been selected as the 2011 West Virginia State Small Business Person of the Year.
- Karen Caruso, WIPP National Partner and Founder/CEO of Mind Your Business, Inc., was recognized as North Carolina's State Small Business Person of the Year.
- WIPP National Partner Nancy Allen, President/CEO of Women's Business Development Center, Inc., was named SBA's South Florida District 2011 Women in Business Champion of the Year.

In the midst of celebrating small business successes, the Senate passed one-year extensions of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. These programs assist small businesses by encouraging the development and commercialization of new technologies. The House is expected to vote to pass the Senate bill later this week.

In conjunction with Small Business Week, the White House released a comprehensive report detailing all the tax changes and assistance programs available to small businesses enacted within the last year. To read the comprehensive report, *The Small Business Agenda: Growing America's Small Businesses to Grow the Future* [click here](#).

3) House Republicans Set to Unveil Tax Reform Legislation

Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) is expected to release a tax package later this week for the purpose of encouraging job growth in the current economy. In the Senate, Small Business Committee Chair Mary Landrieu (D-LA) announced her support for tax reform because she believes it is critical to small business growth. Statistics back up her belief that small businesses face an unfair tax burden. Firms with fewer than 20 employees spend 67% more per employee on tax compliance than their larger counterparts.

4) President Considers Linking Contractors' Political Donations with Bid Proposals

Republicans blasted President Obama for proposing an Executive Order that would require government contractors to release a list of political contributions exceeding \$5,000 when bidding on federal contracts. House Republicans have threatened to introduce legislation to block the order. According to the draft Executive Order, disclosures from individual officers would be part of the record as would corporate donations to third-party advocacy groups running with campaign ads for federal candidates. Contracting officers would see the disclosures as part of the bid process.

Republican opponents argue that the draft Executive Order politicizes the federal contracting process and contractors could be penalized because of their political preferences. The President believes the Order will bring greater transparency to the procurement selection process and it informs taxpayers of contractors who spend money to influence elections. Earlier this month, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held a hearing about the draft Executive Order.

To read the draft executive order, [click here](#).

To read about the House Committee hearing on Politicizing Procurement, please [click here](#).

5) Small Steps Ensure Cybersecurity for Small Businesses

As part of National Small Business Week, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) held a roundtable empowering small businesses to take preventative measures against cybersecurity threats. The discussion focused on protecting the significant competitive advantages small businesses receive by using broadband technology. The roundtable emphasized that small businesses need to be aware that while broadband use comes with a risk, there are easy and inexpensive steps to lower this risk.

The FCC announced the following actions to assist small businesses with cybersecurity risks:

- The launching of a Small Business Cybersecurity section on the FCC website.
- The creation and distribution of 10 Cybersecurity Tips for Small Businesses.
- The FCC is partnering with SCORE eBusiness Now Program and other partners to prepare and provide materials to meet the diverse needs of small business owners.
- The FCC is joining the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) partnership which runs the **Stop. Think. Connect.** Campaign to raise awareness about cybersecurity.

To read the 10 Cybersecurity Tips for Small Businesses, please [click here](#).