

Small Business Affordability in Action

Small business owners are at the epicenter of a growing national affordability crisis. The cost of starting and growing a small business continues to rise, from **ballooning healthcare premium rates and rising childcare costs to inflated tariff rates impacting global supply chains**. Key policy changes in Washington have only compounded these impacts for Main Street, yet policymakers also have a unique opportunity to address some of these challenges head on by implementing the following policies.

Lower healthcare costs for small business owners and employees

- **Extend the Affordable Care Act's enhanced premium tax credits (EPTCs)** that help lower premium costs for the millions of entrepreneurs and small business employees enrolled in the Marketplace. Three in four small business owners support extending the enhanced credits.
- **Tackle the underlying causes of rising healthcare costs** by enacting bipartisan proposals that promote competition and lower costs across the healthcare market, **including strengthening hospital service and health plan price transparency**. Nearly all small business owners (96%) agree that healthcare providers should be required to publicly post the prices they charge for services and 88% agree that hidden fees like 'facility fees' should be banned.

Foster a trade environment that supports, not punishes, small businesses

- **Restore Congress's constitutional authority to levy tariffs and regulate international trade following SCOTUS' decision to strike down the administration's global baseline and reciprocal tariffs** imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). More than 8 in 10 small businesses are concerned about the impact of recent tariffs on their business, and half of small businesses have already been forced to increase the prices of certain materials or products which impacts their customers.
- **Exempt small businesses from global baseline and reciprocal tariffs**, and ensure the federal government provides **refunds to any small business that has already paid tariffs**. Three in four small businesses support an exemption from tariffs for small businesses.

Promote competition and level the playing field for America's small businesses

- **Rein-in the use of anti-competitive practices** like price discrimination and predatory pricing that drive up costs and restrict access to competitive markets for small businesses by reinvigorating investigations and enforcement of the Robinson Patman Act (RPA).
- **Lower credit card transaction, or 'swipe,' fees by enacting the bipartisan Credit Card Competition Act (H.R. 7035/S. 3623)**. Swipe fees, which range anywhere from 2-4% per transaction, represent an immense burden for small businesses operating on razor-thin margins, forcing them to either absorb or pass on billions of dollars in fees each year. More than 7 in 10 small businesses support legislation to limit swipe fees, like the Credit Card Competition Act.

Increase access to affordable childcare and paid leave on Main Street

- Enact the *FAMILY Act (S. 2823/H.R. 5390)*, which would **establish a national paid family and medical leave insurance program to provide partial wage replacement for small business owners**, self-employed entrepreneurs and small business employees for up to 12 weeks of family and medical leave. The vast majority (79%) of small business owners support enacting a national paid family and medical leave program.
- **Expand access to affordable, reliable childcare** for small business owners and their employees by strengthening federal investments in local childcare providers and delivering robust business development support and capital access programs to small business childcare operators.