

May 4, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Policies that support small businesses this National Small Business Week

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Jeffries and Minority Leader Schumer:

As a leading representative of America's 36 million small businesses, Small Business Majority urges Congress to prioritize legislative proposals that address the growing affordability crisis facing small firms during this year's National Small Business Week. The best way for Congress to celebrate the vital contributions small businesses make to our local communities and national economy is to recognize the role lawmakers play in supporting small businesses as increasing costs and economic volatility are devastating Main Street businesses across the nation.

As engines of innovation and local economic growth, small businesses form the backbone of our national economy, making it imperative that policymakers take every possible step to ensure their long-term sustainability and success. Expansive policy changes brought forth by Congress and the administration in the last year, however, have instead created consequences for small businesses, leaving entrepreneurs left to navigate rampant uncertainty and skyrocketing costs.

In a recent national poll conducted by Small Business Majority, 82% of small business owners reported that increased costs of supplies and inventory are a challenge facing their business.¹ The rising cost of doing business on Main Street is directly tied to the administration's unprecedented global tariffs that have resulted in increased input costs for small businesses throughout the domestic supply chain. As a result, many have been forced to raise their prices on consumers, delay investments and hiring plans, change their business model and lay off workers. At the same time, 81% of small businesses cited reduced consumer spending as a concern.² Coupled with the recent surge in energy and gas prices due to the war abroad, these escalating overhead costs and lack of consumer confidence are placing an unsustainable burden on small businesses with no immediate relief in sight.

Small business owners and their employees are also facing rising healthcare costs, which makes it more difficult for small firms to attract and retain the skilled workforce that they need to compete and grow. While small businesses have long sounded the alarm on the rising cost of healthcare, Congress continues to fall short of providing actionable solutions to bring down the cost of healthcare for small businesses. Rather than providing relief, lawmakers enacted drastic cuts to two critical insurance options for the small business ecosystem, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicaid. The failure to extend the ACA's enhanced premium tax credits (EPTCs), paired with additional cuts enacted through H.R. 1 to Medicaid and the ACA Marketplace, have driven costs through the roof for small business owners and employees in the individual and small group health insurance markets.

¹ "Voice of Main Street: Small businesses being strained by rising costs." Small Business Majority. March 25, 2026. <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/voice-of-main-street/small-businesses-being-strained-rising-costs>

² Ibid.

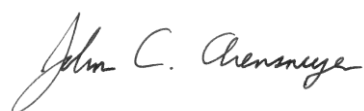
These pressures are further compounded by rising childcare costs, restrictive immigration policies that deplete the Main Street workforce, and a competitive landscape increasingly dominated by corporate giants. Together, these factors pose a direct threat to the long-term stability and viability of America's small businesses. This National Small Business Week, we are urging Congress to carefully consider enacting the following policies that would drive investment and growth to America's vibrant small business community.

1. **Lower healthcare costs for small business owners** and employees by extending the Affordable Care Act's EPTCs that help lower premium costs for the millions of entrepreneurs. Additionally, Congress could 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 (for example, by passing the bipartisan Patients Deserve Price Tags Act)
2. **Foster a trade environment that supports, not punishes, small businesses** by exempting small businesses from future tariffs and prioritizing relief for small business owners who paid tariffs collected illegally by the government (directly and indirectly). Congress should also pursue legislation that restores its constitutional authority to levy tariffs and regulate international trade.
3. **Promote competition and level the playing field** for America's small businesses by requiring strict enforcement of the Robinson-Patman Act for companies that hike up the prices on goods small businesses rely on. Congress can also promote competition for small businesses by passing legislation that limits the ability of credit card processors to continue raising credit card fees on digital and credit card payments.
4. **Increase access to affordable childcare and paid leave** on Main Street by enacting 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. Congress should also get serious about providing substantial federal investment into our nation's childcare infrastructure through direct investment and by strengthening pathways to business ownership for local childcare providers through business development and capital access.
5. **Protect access to capital for immigrant-owned small businesses** by passing the Investing in the American Dream Act, which would enable legally present immigrant-owned businesses to access SBA financing following SBA's restrictions on capital access for green card holders and businesses with partial foreign ownership.

As the nation reflects upon the vital role small businesses play in our local communities and national economy this week, we must also acknowledge the harsh reality facing Main Street. Without immediate action from Congress to address the affordability crisis that grows more urgent by the day for small businesses, irreparable harm will be inflicted on our nation's job creators and economic innovators. Small Business Majority urges lawmakers to work in a bipartisan manner to prioritize the policies and investments that will foster a more affordable and sustainable future for small businesses.

For any questions or additional information, please contact our Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs, Alexis D'Amato, at adamato@smallbusinessmajority.org.

Sincerely,



John Arensmeyer
Founder & CEO
Small Business Majority