



January 30, 2024

Representative Nathan Small  
Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations & Finance  
490 Old Santa Fe Trail  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

*RE: Support HB 7, Health Care Affordability Fund Distribution*

Dear Chairman Small, Vice Chair Dixon, Ranking Member Armstrong and members of the Committee:

As a representative of New Mexico's small business community, Small Business Majority urges you to support HB 7, which would keep funding levels constant for the Health Care Affordability Fund. This would ensure the Fund could continue providing affordable coverage to our communities, particularly our small employers.

Small Business Majority is a national small business organization that empowers America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. We engage our network of more than 85,000 small businesses and 1,500 business and community organizations to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth. A key component of our work involves outreach to small business owners on a range of small business issues, including access to capital, workforce issues, healthcare and more.

The Health Care Affordability Fund has been able to lower costs on the exchange for the nearly 60,000 New Mexicans currently enrolled, provide \$0 premiums plans to Native Americans who make under three times the federal poverty line and help New Mexicans transition from Medicaid to the Exchange after the end of the public health emergency by covering the first month's premium. What's more, it has lowered premiums for 6,000 small businesses and their 41,000 employees each month.

This is an important issue for businesses across the state. Small businesses are directly impacted by unaffordable healthcare. In fact, [4 in 10](#) (41%) small businesses cite healthcare costs as a key factor that could harm their business. HB 7 would ensure the Fund does not receive a substantial cut to the program. If HB 7 is not passed, the Fund would receive between \$66 million to \$77 million less each year. These initiatives will not continue to be successful for small businesses if they are underfunded.

We urge you and the other members of the committee to vote yes on HB 7.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash  
Public Policy Director  
Small Business Majority