

Terry Neese
Cofounder, President and CEO

Barbara Kasoff
Cofounder, Chief Operating Officer

Coalition Partners

American Women in Radio and
Television

Association for Women in
Communications

Association of Women's Business
Centers

Black Women Enterprises

Boardroom Bound

Business Women's Network

Enterprising Women

Euro-American Women's Council
Europe – Greece

Hispanics Impacting Public Policy

Kansas City Council of Women
Business Owners

National Associations for Female
Executives

National Association of Small and
Disadvantaged Businesses

National Association of Women
Business Owners

National Business Association

National Indian Business Association

National Women Business Owners
Corporation

Native American Women's Business
Council

New Jersey Association of Women
Business Owners

San Francisco Small Business
Network

Small Business & Entrepreneurship
Council

UNIFEM / USA

Women Construction Owners &
Executives

Women Entrepreneurs, Inc.

Women Impacting Public Policy
Florida

Women Impacting Public Policy
Pennsylvania

Women in Technology International

Women Presidents' Organization

Women's Business Enterprise National
Council

WorldWIT



March 23, 2005

We are writing to express our strong support for S. 663 - Equity for Our Nation's Self-Employed Act- introduced by Senators Craig Thomas (R-WY) and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). Women Impacting Public Policy is a bipartisan organization representing 505,000 women in business nationwide.

As you know small businesses and particularly women owned small businesses are facing a health care crisis. An annual member survey recently conducted by WIPP was instructive to the health insurance crisis women owned businesses face and their overwhelming support of this legislation. The survey found that:

- Health care was by far the most important issue on their minds, with 71% of the respondents saying that this issue was important or extremely important to them.
- WIPP members are seeking relief from the rising health insurance rates with a shocking 93% expecting rate increases in 2005.
- Currently, small business have the ability to deduct the costs for health care coverage, and if that deduction were removed, 42% said that would force them to reduce the "employer-paid" portion, and an additional 42% said they would no longer provide health care coverage to their employees.
- 84% of WIPP members believe an overhaul of the health care system is necessary.

Self-employed business owners have long been plagued with the disparity in the treatment of deductibility of health insurance costs. S. 663 would allow the self-employed to fully deduct their health insurance premiums for the purposes of their income tax and self-employment tax (FICA tax) and thus, allow the self-employed to achieve parity with corporations that are currently allowed to deduct their health coverage costs as an ordinary business expense.

Women business owners and their employees cannot afford to wait and we are urging Senate support and cosponsorship of S. 663. Please feel free to contact our Federal Legislative Consultant, Ann Sullivan at 202-626-8528 if we can be of assistance to you in any way.

Sincerely,

Terry Neese
President & Cofounder

Barbara Kasoff
COO & Cofounder

2709 W I-44 Service Rd, Oklahoma City, OK 73112 ~ 405.943.4474 ~ Fax: 405.606.4855
48 San Antonio Place, San Francisco, CA 94133 ~ 415.434.4314 ~ Fax: 415.434.4331
1615 L Street NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20036 ~ 202.626.8562 ~ Fax: 202.223.6601
neese@wipp.org ~ bkasoff@wipp.org
Website: www.wipp.org