



News Release

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National Women's Business Council Holds Town Hall Meeting for Women Entrepreneurs in St. Louis

Input from women business owners to inform future policies

St. Louis, MO – The National Women's Business Council (NWBC) held a town hall meeting for women entrepreneurs in St. Louis, Missouri yesterday. This free event was designed to promote dialogue among the St. Louis women's business community and to further the Council's mission of connecting the women's business community to policymakers. Breakout sessions focused on specific policy areas, such as affordable health care, access to capital, procurement, and taxes, and allowed participants to discuss the challenges and priorities they face running their businesses. The results of these discussions will contribute to policy recommendations the Council will make to the President, Congress, and the Small Business Administration this fall.

Susan Solovic, CEO of St. Louis-based SBTV.com, and a NWBC member, moderated the program, which included welcome remarks from St. Louis Mayor Francis G. Slay and St. Louis County Executive Charlie A. Dooley. Other speakers included Donna White of the State of Missouri Office of Supplier and Workforce Diversity, Judy Dungan of the Office of Senator Kit Bond (R-MO), and Anna Jinkerson of the Office of Congressman Russ Carnahan (D-MO). Council members Susan Bari, Women's Business Enterprise National Council, Rebecca Boenigk, Neutral Posture, Inc., and Kathy Eshelman, Grade A Notes, served as panelists.

"The National Women's Business Council is the federal government's only independent voice for women business owners," said Council member and town hall moderator Susan Solovic. "This town hall provided an opportunity for the Council to hear from a diverse population of women business owners who may not be involved regularly in the public policy process. The Council will bring the results of today's discussions directly to policymakers to ensure that the voices of women business owners are being heard on Capitol Hill." The Council will hold a similar event in the Portland, Oregon area in June 2007. Recommendations gathered during both events will be compiled later this year in a report that will help the Council formulate policy recommendations.

Several partner organizations contributed to the event's planning, including the Grace Hill Women's Business Center, the St. Louis District Office of the Small Business Administration, and local chapters of the National Association of Women Business Owners and Women Presidents' Organization. "We were delighted with the outcome of this town hall meeting," said NWBC Executive Director Margaret Barton. "The St. Louis women's business community contributed significantly to the discussion surrounding public policies affecting women-owned businesses. Their comments will have a direct impact on women entrepreneurs throughout the country."

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The National Women's Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council created to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. Members of the Council are prominent women business owners and leaders of women's business organizations. For more information about the Council, its mission and activities, contact: National Women's Business Council, 409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20024; phone: 202-205-3850; fax: 202-205-6825, e-mail: info@nwbc.gov; Web site: www.nwbc.gov.