



# News Release

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**For Release On:**  
May 14, 2003

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## Council Publishes Two Reports Exploring Policy Options for Access to Affordable Health Insurance

**Washington, DC**—Women business owners are growing increasingly concerned about the difficulty of securing affordable health care coverage for employees. It is estimated that 60% of the 41 million uninsured Americans reside in families with members employed by small businesses. The NWBC estimates that 7.3 million of the uninsured are employees or families of employees of the 9.1 million women-owned firms in the U.S.

The National Women's Business Council (NWBC) recognizes the need for more information about this critical issue, and has conducted an analysis of current research and the alternative solutions that have been proposed. This report, "Access to Affordable Health Coverage for Women-Owned Businesses: A Summary of Key Issues and Policy Options," is now available at the NWBC's Web site, [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov) (or by clicking <http://www.nwbc.gov/ResearchPublications/listReports.html>).

In response to the feedback and input received from women business owners across the country, the NWBC also convened a Roundtable discussion in February to hear from those who are directly affected by this problem. The Roundtable brought together women business owners, business association leaders, issue experts, and public policy makers from across the U.S. to discuss not only the concerns involved in providing affordable health care coverage, but also the most effective solutions that can be considered in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. A complete transcript of this event is now available at the NWBC's web site, [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov) (or by clicking <http://www.nwbc.gov/ResearchPublications/listReports.html>). The transcript includes testimony from Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao, Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration Hector Barreto, and Representative Donald Manzullo, Chair of the House Committee on Small Business.

"We are pleased to announce the publication of these two reports. We hope that they help to increase awareness

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among the general public and policy makers about the growing concern over this issue within the women's business owner community," said Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman and CEO of Carlson Companies and Chair of the National Women's Business Council. "The problem of the uninsured is one with many adverse and wide-reaching effects that touch us all in one way or another."

The NWBC supports proposals now under consideration to establish Association Health Plans as one option for small businesses to access affordable health insurance. Association Health Plans allow professional associations to offer lower cost insurance nationwide to their membership.

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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. The National Women's Business Council is committed to conducting research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations; to communicating these findings widely; to connecting the women's business community to public policy makers; and to providing programs and platforms for change in order to expand and improve opportunities for women business owners and their enterprises. For more information about the Council, its mission and activities, contact: National Women's Business Council, 409 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, SW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20024; phone: 202-205-3850; fax: 202-205-6825, e-mail: [nwbc@sba.gov](mailto:nwbc@sba.gov); Web site: [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov).