



News Release

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Susan Phillips Bari Re-Appointed to National Women's Business Council

Washington, DC—Susan Phillips Bari, President of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), has been re-appointed to a three-year term on the National Women's Business Council as the representative of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). WBENC is the leading advocate for the advancement of women-owned businesses as vendors and suppliers to the nation's corporations, and is one of six organizational members of the National Women's Business Council. As a founding architect of WBENC in 1997, Bari has helped make the organization the nation's leading third-party certifier of businesses owned and operated by women.

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 Council is committed to:

- *Conducting* research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations;
- *Communicating* these findings widely;
- *Connecting* the women's business community to public policy makers; and
- Providing programs and platforms for *change* in order to expand and improve opportunities for women business owners and their enterprises.

"I am delighted to continue working with Susan Bari on the Council," said Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman and CEO of Carlson Companies and Chair of the National Women's Business Council. "WBENC has made critical contributions to advancing opportunities for women business owners across the nation and Susan's experience as a leader in the women's business movement provides invaluable insight to the Council. I am grateful that our work will continue to be strengthened by her contributions."

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As head of WBENC, Bari is committed to creating success for its certified women business enterprises and corporate members. WBENC promotes best practices through the recognition of superior programs and policies in corporate America and the Federal government that foster a level playing field for America's economic growth market—women-owned and managed companies. Her ongoing dedication to these goals is illustrated by Bari's own career path through the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

Bari started out in the early 1970s as a maverick, the first woman to be an independent manufacturer's representative in the textile industry and subsequent owner of manufacturing and consulting businesses. In 1986, while serving as an Associate Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel, she entered the public advocacy arena on behalf of women business owners as the Chair of President Reagan's Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise. From 1990 to 1995 she continued to champion women business owners as a founding Executive Director of the American Women's Economic Development Corporation Washington Regional Training Center, assisting more than 2,000 women with the start-up and growth of their companies. In 1994, she received the Small Business Administration's Small Business Advocate of the Year award for Women in Business for the Washington, D.C., region.

In 1997, Bari was appointed by Virginia Governor George Allen to a four-year term on the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, from whose Pamplin College of Business she received her MBA degree. She is a member of the Women's Leadership Board of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, the Diversity Council of Merrill Lynch and the Women's Advisory Council of Wells Fargo Bank. In 2003 she was inducted into the Enterprising Women Hall of Fame and received the Impact Award from the Billion Dollar Roundtable. Her first book, *Breaking Through: Creating Opportunities for America's Women and Minority-owned Businesses*, will be published in June 2004.

"I am honored to be able to continue serving the women's business community through the National Women's Business Council," said Bari. "The Council is a leading voice for women's entrepreneurship in Federal policy circles, and I look forward to continuing to contribute to the Council's efforts to improve access to markets for women's business enterprises."

As the Nation's independent advocate for the more than 10.1 million women and equally-owned businesses in the U.S., the National Women's Business Council works to promote increased access to affordable health care; access to capital; access to federal contracts and international markets; and access to the information and expertise women business owners most need to succeed. Majority and equally women-owned businesses currently represent almost 46% of all U.S. firms, employing 18.2 million people and contributing \$2.32 trillion in annual revenues.

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