



News Release

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President Obama Proclaims National Small Business Week Highlights Small Business Growth and Job Creation

WASHINGTON – Calling small business the backbone of the nation’s economy, President Barack Obama stressed his Administration’s commitment “to helping small businesses drive our economy toward recovery and long-term growth” in his proclamation of the week of May 23-29 as National Small Business Week.

The President’s proclamation was issued yesterday prior to the U.S. Small Business Administration’s 47th annual observance of National Small Business Week in Washington, D.C. (May 23-25). The event honors the nation’s most outstanding entrepreneurs, and features the announcement of the National Small Business Person of the Year for 2010 from among the 53 state small business winners, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam.

President Obama will meet with Small Business Week award winners at the White House Tuesday.

“Small business owners embody the spirit of entrepreneurship and strong work ethic that lie at the heart of the American dream. They are the backbone of our Nation’s economy, they employ tens of millions of workers, and, in the past 15 years, they have created the majority of new private sector jobs. During Small Business Week, we reaffirm our support for America’s small businesses and celebrate the proud tradition of private enterprise they represent.

“Our Nation is still emerging from one of the worst recessions in our history, and small businesses were among the hardest hit. From mom-and-pop stores to high tech start-ups, countless small businesses have been forced to lay off employees or shut their doors entirely. In these difficult times, we must do all we can to help these firms recover from the recession and put Americans back to work. Our Government cannot guarantee a company’s success, but it can help create market conditions that allow small businesses to thrive.

“My Administration is committed to helping small businesses drive our economy toward recovery and long-term growth. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has supported billions of dollars in loans and Federal contracts for small businesses across the country. The Affordable Care Act makes it easier for small business owners to provide health insurance to their employees, and gives entrepreneurs the security they need to innovate and take risks. We have also enacted new tax cuts and tax credits for small firms. Still, we must do more to empower these companies.

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“In this year's State of the Union address, I proposed creating a \$30 billion lending fund to help increase the flow of credit to small businesses, and I call on the Congress to pass this legislation quickly. My Administration is also working to extend and enhance Small Business Administration programs that have helped small business owners acquire loans and hire workers.

“This week, we celebrate the role of entrepreneurs and small businesses in our national life. They are the engine of our prosperity and a proud reflection of our character. A healthy small business sector will give us vibrant communities, cutting edge technology, and an American economy that can compete and win in the 21st century.”

The full text of the President's National Small Business Week proclamation can be found at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-proclamation-small-business-week>

National Small Business Week 2010 will begin with two-and-a-half days of events in Washington, D.C., at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, where more than 100 outstanding business owners from across the country will be recognized. In addition to the State Small Business Persons of the Year, men and women involved in disaster recovery, government contracting, small business champions as well as SBA partners in financial and entrepreneurial development will be honored.

A Keynote Address by SBA Administrator Karen Mills will highlight Monday morning's agenda followed by Mills hosting a Town Hall Meeting entitled Small Business: Driving America's Economy. Also featured are a series of executive panel forums on Innovation, Exporting and Social Media.

Among the featured speakers confirmed are The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and The Honorable Ray LaHood, Secretary of Transportation. A list of other outstanding speakers including prominent business leaders, CEOs and politicians, are listed with the full agenda at www.NationalSmallBusinessWeek.com.

The public can “attend” Small Business Week events virtually, via the SBA's streaming video on the Web at <http://www.NationalSmallBusinessWeek.com/>.

Editors – please note: A complete list of all award winners also is available on the National Small Business Week Web site at <http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com> and click on Winners.

Small Business Week 2010 sponsors and cosponsors include: Sam's Club, Visa, Ford, ADP, Raytheon, Cbeyond, UPS, Intuit, Google, eBay, AT&T, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, D&B, Verio, Nomadic Display, ASBDC, NADCO, NAGGL, NASE, NSBA, WIPP and SCORE.

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