

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Its time for all the empty rhetoric to stop**

Today President Bush held a press conference where he talked about lowering taxes and pushing for a consumer driven health care system in order to help small businesses. Unfortunately, there have been many ideas in Washington DC on how to help small business owners over the years, however; it's all simply empty talk. Nothing ever gets done and as a result small businesses owners are left to fend for themselves.

Despite talk of the government's understanding of the burden on small businesses and promise for change, we cannot afford to wait for government officials to correct the problem.

Small business owners must not sit back and wait for things to change. They need to be proactive and focus on making money so that at the end of the day, increased health care costs or other issues don't cause businesses to suffer. If they are able to do this, time – the most valuable commodity of a small business owner – will no longer be wasted.

Small business owners form the backbone of the economy, supplying 99.6% of all employer units, credited with empowering minorities across the board with economic stability, and probably the most essential building block of communities in rural and urban areas and are an important voting bloc in each state and federal election.

A new poll from American Management Services and Suffolk University largely confirms that small businesses are being alienated from the 2008 Presidential election by both major parties, with 66% of respondents unable to identify a single policy proposal targeted for the nation's small business owners.

For small businesses, their modus operandi is more complex than simply "it's the economy, stupid." On health care reform, 73% said the government should implement a plan to help small business owners for coverage for themselves and their employees. On illegal immigration, 72% opposed the idea of granting amnesty. Despite historic all-time highs on the Dow Jones this year, 70% of respondents said they did not benefit from the surge on Wall Street.

Bottom line is that small business owners cannot wait for our presidential candidates, Wall Street or our current president to make meaningless promises and calls for change while nothing gets done.

It's time that we as small business owners make sure that our voices are heard, so that our votes are not taken for granted. All 23 million small business owners in this country must stand up and take action before it's too late. If we do not act now, our small businesses will be shut down one by one all across America.

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*Currently, Cloutier also serves as the Chairman of PartnerAmerica™, a public/private partnership between The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and American Management Services, Inc. PartnerAmerica™ is dedicated to helping small and medium-sized businesses in cities nationwide by focusing on improving profits and sales, utilizing local and federal governmental resources and programs in conjunction with management and technical expertise provided by private enterprise. American Management Services and USCM recently signed an unprecedented 20 year extension to this strategic initiative.*

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