



Helen Han, CEO

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(213) 622-3200

Immediate Release

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS-LOS ANGELES (NAWBO-LA)  
LENDERS SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNOR'S MODIFIED HEALTH CARE PLAN  
*Shared Responsibility Crucial to Workable Health Care Reform***

The National Association of Women Business Owners-Los Angeles Chapter (NAWBO-LA), representing the voice of more than 417,000 privately held women-owned businesses in the greater Los Angeles region, today announced support of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's modified health care plan. The plan adopts elements of a compromise proposal released by California Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez.

NAWBO-LA CEO Helen Han said the organization's support is based partly on the governor's principle that any health care reform must protect small employers and California jobs, increase affordability, and reduce costs for all by making sure everyone is covered and everyone shares some responsibility.

"As business owners and as women, we care deeply about the well-being of our employees and families and share the business community's concern over the growing number of uninsured and the rising costs of providing health care to those we employ," Han said. "The small and medium-sized businesses owned and operated by our members have an enormous stake in the outcome of the Legislature's consideration of health care reform and serve as the force behind our commitment to seeing meaningful reform enacted."

She commended the governor and legislative leaders for their continued efforts to find a workable plan and added, "The compromise being put forward continues to represent the most viable health care reform option for women business owners - a vital component of the California economy."

Consistent with NAWBO-LA's belief in the need for shared responsibility to resolve the health care crisis, the organization supports the modification in the governor's proposal that ensures all employers, as well as individuals, government, hospitals and others, contribute to financing comprehensive health care reform.

Han explained, "We believe this change will move us closer to a final health care reform program around which a bipartisan, labor-management, business and consumer consensus can be built. As part of this, we pledge to remain actively involved in this issue, and to work closely with the governor's office and other stakeholders to ensure that women business owners and their employees are engaged in the development of a solution that is as well-considered as the issue is complex."

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## 2---NAWBO-LA Supports Modified Health Care Reform Proposal

Other aspects of the compromise proposal supported by NAWBO-LA include:

- A sliding scale that protects small employers by pegging the system to payroll sizes. Firms with payroll between 0 and \$250,000 would pay a 1% fee on total payroll based on social security wages. Those with payrolls between \$250,000 and \$1 million would pay a 3% fee, and those with payrolls above \$1 million would pay a 5.5% fee on total payroll based on social security wages.
- Equal treatment of wages of all employees regardless of their employment status. The proposal provides for a single, not two-part (similar to full-time/part-time), test to be applied to total payroll. Han noted that NAWBO-LA recognizes and supports the concept that employer fees must be established as part of a comprehensive health care reform financing package and that the financing package must be subject to a vote of the people.
- Expanded coverage of lower-wage Californians. The proposal extends the governor's plan to provide low-cost comprehensive health care coverage to Californians at 400% of the federal poverty level (up from 250%).

Han said, "We believe these modifications have strengthened and broadened the governor's original concept for shared responsibility in health care reform and urge the Legislature to continue working with the governor until a consensus is reached that we can all support."

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### **About NAWBO-LA**

One of 80-plus nationwide chapters of the National Association of Women Business Owners, NAWBO-LA represents the interests of more than 417,000 privately held women-owned businesses in the greater Los Angeles region, employing over 378,000 people and generating nearly \$68 billion in sales. NAWBO-LA strives to ensure that women entrepreneurs are recognized as a public policy voice to be reckoned with, a formidable economic force, and as effective agents for change in the dynamic business environment that is Southern California. For more information, visit [www.nawbola.org](http://www.nawbola.org).