



## **NAWBO California Healthcare Policy Survey Results**

NAWBO CA conducted an online survey this August about healthcare policy in order to better understand the healthcare concerns of women business owners in their state. The survey was sponsored by NAWBO SF member Susan Shargel, Chair of NAWBO's National Healthcare Policy Task Force and owner of Shargel & Co Insurance Services. It asked NAWBO members about their feelings concerning the current healthcare system, their priorities for reform, and their support or opposition for three proposals under consideration by the California legislature.

The survey revealed that NAWBO CA members are not united in support of any of the major proposals for healthcare reform under consideration in Sacramento. There were also a very high number of 'no opinion' answers to many of the questions. We believe this indicates a lack of familiarity with the issues and see this as a problem not only in California but nationwide.

NAWBO can be part of the solution by educating its members about healthcare issues and fostering a dialogue about how to make the system better. The California survey can be used as a model for other states; a survey can be used to spark a new conversation about healthcare reform inside your local NAWBO organization. NAWBO National's Healthcare Task Force members will be developing programming ideas for chapters across the country.

We thought that the results of the California survey would be interesting for all NAWBO members.

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's healthcare reform proposal has been publicized nationally. 45% of NAWBO CA members surveyed support this proposal. The Democrat's proposal, AB 8 received 26% support, and the government run single payer system proposed by Legislator Kuehl was supported by only 13% of respondents.

What do NAWBO CA members support?

- Reducing costs and increasing affordability for all
- Maintaining choice of healthcare providers available in current insurance plans
- Expansion of access to more low income Californians
- A requirement for insurers to accept all applicants for individual insurance
- The establishment of a high risk pool for people with serious medical conditions
- A requirement for health insurers to spend 85% of premiums on patient care

What do NAWBO CA member oppose?

- A single-payer, government run healthcare system
- Coverage for illegal immigrants
- An employer mandate that would require **all** employers to provide health insurance to their employees or contribute money into a new state run health plan

On what key issues do NAWBO CA members have mixed responses?

- *Limited/Lower Cost Employer Mandate:* The Governor's plan would require all employers with 10 or more employees to provide health insurance or contribute 4% of payroll towards the cost of their employee's coverage. 50% supported this measure and 42% opposed it.
- *Individual Mandate:* A requirement for all Californians to purchase a minimum benefit health insurance plan. 52% supported, 42% opposed.
- *Funding:* No clear opinion about where the money for expanded or new programs would come from. There was mainly opposition to a payroll tax on employers. Suggestions for funding included personal income tax, sales tax, and alcohol and cigarette taxes.

For more information about how to conduct a survey, please contact Shargel & Co Insurance Services at (415) 543-8949 or [sshargel@shargel.com](mailto:sshargel@shargel.com).