

THE NFIB VOICE IN SOUTH DAKOTA



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Small Business Votes as State's Political Climate Heats Up to New Levels

It wasn't until South Dakota voted in June that a Democratic candidate for president of the United States could declare himself his party's nominee, but that was just one of the many instances of the never-seen-before, feverish pace of politics in the state.

South Dakota also had many primary elections for the state Legislature that garnered much attention, and for good reason: The South Dakota Legislature will undergo big changes this November, particularly in the Senate, where a number of incumbents were either term-limited or chose not to run again. Some current members of the House are seeking to fill those Senate seats.

South Dakotans are also witnessing more and more ballot issues each election. One reason for this is that it is relatively inexpensive to place measures on the ballot in our state, but that doesn't mean it's easy to get

them passed. South Dakotans look skeptically upon ballot measures unless they understand the particular nature and intent of them.

What has gone largely unreported not only in South Dakota, but almost everywhere in the United States, is the quiet, but important voting bloc of small business owners. Part of the reason for this omission is that many small business owners themselves are unaware of their power. Consider these statistics:

Small business owners make up 15 percent of all U.S. registered voters, according to a survey conducted for NFIB. This is a larger percentage than union members (12 percent), African-American voters (11 percent) and Hispanic voters (8 percent).

Add in the 28 percent of Americans who work for a small business, and the small business voting bloc swells to 43 percent of all U.S. voters.

According to an NFIB poll on political participation, 43 percent of small business owners have contributed to causes. The most common public affairs and political activities they engage in include initiating discussions with employees regarding the impact of a policy issue on the firm.

According to a *USA Today/CNN/Gallup* poll conducted last election, 75 percent of Americans trust small business owners more than doctors (66 percent) or lawyers (25 percent).

The Winston Group found voters prefer candidates supported by small business owners over those supported by labor unions by a margin of 3 to 1.

And a Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates study found 68 percent of voters saying small business owners were more honest than labor unions (7 percent), the federal government (3 percent) and big business (3 percent).

South Dakota Students Take Home NFIB Young Entrepreneur Awards

WE CONGRATULATE the winners of the sixth annual NFIB Young Entrepreneur Awards, a scholarship program designed to reward and encourage entrepreneurial talents among high school students.

NFIB YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

- Home-schooled student **Cole Adema** of Barnard
- Garretson High School senior **Samuel Quaintance** of Garretson
- Yankton High School senior **Jarrett Brenner** of Yankton

Award recipients will attend the university, college, community college or vocational/technical

institute of their choice with \$1,000 to \$10,000 in tuition assistance from NFIB.

The awards program made its debut in 2003, when it awarded a total of 110 scholarships nationwide. This year, more than 400 \$1,000 to \$2,000 scholarships were awarded, thanks to financial support from major corporate sponsors Visa, The McKelvey Foundation and Sam's Club.

"We are overjoyed by the tremendous amount of interest in our scholarship program. This year more than 8,000 students applied to receive an NFIB YEF Award, demonstrating that today's youth embody an entrepreneurial spirit and seek a place in tomorrow's free enterprise system," says

Don V. Cogman, chairman of the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation Board of Directors. "NFIB congratulates this year's winners for their tremendous accomplishments and hopes the scholarships will assist these young entrepreneurs as they continue on their paths toward successful futures."

YEF and Visa also awarded four \$5,000 scholarships and one \$10,000 scholarship to the student selected as the 2008 NFIB/Visa Young Entrepreneur of the Year. (See related story on page 22.)

To earn a scholarship, students were required to write an essay describing their entrepreneurial endeavors and future goals. Standardized test scores, GPA and class rank were also considered. NFIB members around the country nominated applicants for the Young Entrepreneur Awards.