



Small business owners. Small business values.

May 19, 2010

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Small business opposition to Snowe-Pryor Amdt #3883, support for Landrieu-Dodd-Kerry side-by-side

Dear Members of the Senate:

On behalf of the Main Street Alliance, a national network of small business coalitions representing small business owners across the country, I write to urge you to vote no on Snowe-Pryor Amendment #3883 to the Senate's financial overhaul package, and to support the Landrieu-Dodd-Kerry side-by-side instead.

A strong, independent consumer financial protection arm is critically important to the future health and prosperity of America's small businesses. A strong consumer protection arm will do two things for small businesses. First, as small business owners often rely on personal financial products (such as personal credit cards) to finance their businesses, the consumer protection agency will provide small business owners with much-needed protections against potentially dangerous financial products. Second, the consumer protection bureau will protect our customers from the toxic financial products that triggered the financial crisis, destroying millions of jobs, siphoning away disposable income, and decimating our sales and customer base.

The Snowe-Pryor Amendment (#3883), though presented in the name of protecting small businesses, will actual harm small business owners' best interests by undermining the consumer protection bureau's ability to operate efficiently. The amendment will add between two and six months to the rules process, possibly much more, by adding a redundant comment window (the rulemaking process already includes ample comment opportunities and requires special consideration to small businesses) and by requiring a multi-agency panel to draft a joint report on new rules ideas before the rules are even proposed to the public. In this way, Amendment #3883 will compromise the efficiency of the new financial protection bureau and allow speculators to continue designing deceptive financial products and practices that skirt existing rules, leaving small businesses, our customers, and the overall economy at greater risk.

The Landrieu-Dodd-Kerry side-by-side amendment will more effectively address small business concerns. This amendment establishes the same commitment to small business input on rules and the same panel review process, but in a streamlined way that allows rulemaking to move forward without cumbersome and unnecessary delays.

The small business leaders of the Main Street Alliance are committed to working with you to complete and enact a financial overhaul package that protects small business owners as consumers of financial products, helps to restore and safeguard our customer base, stabilizes the economy with efficient, effective rules of the road that advance the small business values of honesty and transparency. In this spirit, we urge you to oppose Snowe-Pryor Amendment #3883 and support instead the Landrieu-Dodd-Kerry side-by-side.

Sincerely,

Sam Blair

Main Street Alliance Network Director