



September 24, 2012

Obama for America
P.O. Box 803638
Chicago, IL 60680

RE: Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

Dear President Obama:

The National Association for the Self-Employed represents the 22 million self-employed Americans, from the sole-proprietor to the micro-business owner with 10 or less employees. The self-employed have shouldered the brunt of the economic downturn, most notably, from 2008 to 2009 when the number of self-employed Americans declined by 300,000.

Of paramount concern to the self-employed is the nation's continued economic uncertainty, increasing health care costs, and persistent tax inequities in our country's current tax code. At a time when government should be working to unburden and motivate small businesses, the self-employed feel burdened and overwhelmed and, unfortunately, many who are looking to the dream of self-employment are dissuaded to do so by this negative environment.

Additional facts about the nation's largest job sector:

- Four in five small businesses in the United States are self-employed
- 43% of the self-employed and micro-business owners say that this is the worst economic downturn that they have experienced
- When asked for the most important component of health reform, 60% of micro-business owners cited cost containment, over access and choice.

The NASE is a non-partisan organization and will not endorse a candidate for President. However, through this questionnaire, we will educate and inform the 22 million self-employed on your positions on small business taxes and economic recovery so that they may make the best decision for their business in November.

As we look toward the November election, the self-employed would like to hear your vision for the country and how your Administration will develop policies that are inclusive and supportive of the self-employed community. Given that your website lacks specifics on how you would support and motivate the self-employed, the completion of our candidate questionnaire will allow the 22 million self-employed to fully understand your position and vision moving forward.

Completed questionnaires are due to Katie Vlietstra, Director of Government Affairs, at kvlietstra@NASEadmin.org or at the address above no later than October 5, 2012.

Thank you,
Kristie Arslan
CEO and President

1. What role do you think the self-employed play in our nation's economy?
2. Currently the self-employed (sole proprietors) do not receive a business deduction for their health insurance costs. All other business entities are allowed this tax benefit. The self-employed received a temporary one-year reprieve from these extra taxes on their 2010 tax return due to the passage of the Small Business Jobs Act. However, they again were required to pay more in taxes than all other business for their 2011 taxes. Would you support providing the self-employed with a permanent, full tax deduction for their health insurance costs?
3. Do you support permanently increasing the federal tax deduction for startup expenses, allowing business owners to deduct \$10,000 of start-up costs?
4. Do you support simplifying the current home office deduction, allowing home-based business owners to have the option of choosing a standard \$1,500 deduction to simplify their tax preparation?
5. What type of business environment would you seek to create to encourage economic growth within the United States?
6. Currently, the tax rates are set to increase effective January 1, 2013. What proposals would you offer to address the nation's rising tax rate?
7. What do you feel has been your biggest accomplishment as president in support of the self-employed community?
8. The Affordable Care Act included small business health tax credits that excluded the self-employed. How would you make health coverage affordable for the 22 million self-employed Americans of which a majority purchases coverage in the individual health insurance market?
9. What types of policy would you propose to encourage the creation of new small businesses?
10. What two or three priorities will you give to the Small Business Administration?