



Credit Union National Association

cuna.org

DANIEL A. MICA
PRESIDENT & CEO

601 Pennsylvania Ave., NW | South Building, Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20004-2601 | **PHONE:** 202-638-5777 | **FAX:** 202-638-7734

December 8, 2009

Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Credit Union National Association (CUNA), I am writing to urge your support for the inclusion of the provisions of H.R. 3380, the Promoting Lending for America's Small Business Act in the job creation bill currently being drafted by Speaker Pelosi and House Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller. CUNA is the largest credit union trade association in the United States, representing nearly 90 percent of America's 8,000 state and federally chartered credit unions and their 92 million members.

H.R. 3380, a bi-partisan bill introduced by Representatives Paul Kanjorski and Ed Royce would increase the credit union member business lending cap to 25% of a credit union's total assets, raise the "de minimis" threshold for a loan to be considered a "member business loan" to \$250,000, and exempt loans made in qualified underserved areas from the cap. These changes will give credit unions currently serving the lending needs of their business-owning members the opportunity to help even more, and it will encourage credit unions that do not currently offer these loans to consider investing the necessary resources to do so.

Enactment of H.R. 3380 will help inject up to \$10.8 billion in new capital into small businesses and create approximately 108,000 new jobs.

Congress turned to credit unions during the Great Depression to give consumers access to financial services because the banks would not serve them. Today, small businesses face the same dilemma – they need access to credit, but it is not available through banks. Credit unions have been providing business loans to their members for over 100 years. In fact, as banks have pulled back credit from small businesses, credit unions have continued to lend and they have the available funds and expertise to do more. They have proven themselves as financial institutions that know their members and know how to lend to their members; they have demonstrated the ability to provide these loans safely and soundly; and most importantly, they can help address a real need in a difficult economic time.

The member business lending cap, currently 12.25% of a credit union's total assets, not only keeps credit unions from engaging in business lending at levels above the cap, it also discourages credit unions that may have member demand for business loans from starting programs. Simply put: credit unions have a disincentive to start business lending programs when they know they may quickly reach the business lending cap. Raising the cap will affect not only the credit unions approaching the cap, but it will also encourage credit unions that may have member demand for business lending to offer business loans to their members.



PO Box 431 | Madison, WI 53701-0431 | 5710 Mineral Point Road | Madison, WI 53705-4454 | **PHONE:** 608-231-4000

Increasing the Credit Union Member Business Lending Cap Could Provide As Much As \$10 Billion in New Capital to Small Businesses, Creating As Many As 108,000 New Jobs, at No Cost to Taxpayers

H.R. 3380 is precisely the type of legislation Congress should include in a job creation bill because it would give credit unions the opportunity to lend up to \$10 billion to small businesses in the first year after enactment, helping them to create approximately 108,000 new jobs during that time period.

The average credit union business loan is approximately \$200,000; this means that credit union business loans are used not only to start new businesses but also help business-owning credit union members make payroll, stay in business, create jobs, expand their businesses and stimulate the economy.

H.R. 3380 will not completely solve the problems small businesses face – no single proposal will – however, this is common sense legislation that will help create jobs and provide economic stimulus without increasing the size of government or costing taxpayers a dime.

Credit Unions Lend To Business-Owning Members Safely and Soundly

H.R. 3380 recognizes that credit unions have a track record that demonstrates they can help in a safe and sound manner and that they should be part of the solution to the credit crunch small businesses face.

National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation data suggest that credit unions have done this type of lending in a safer and sounder way than other lenders. Credit union business loans have significantly lower charge-off rates when compared both to other types of credit union lending as well as similar business loans made by banks. As not-for-profit institutions, credit unions are more conservatively managed, and the numbers bear this out. The net charge off rate for credit union member business loans in 2008 was 0.33% compared to 1.01% for commercial loans at banks. For the first half of 2009, the annualized charge-off rate for credit union business loans remained at 0.32% while rising to 1.96% at banks. Raising the cap would in no way limit the NCUA's authority to regulate the continued safe and sound practice of credit union business lending. Recently, NCUA Chairman Deborah Matz announced her support for lifting the statutory member business lending cap.

On behalf of the 92 million members of America's credit unions, we encourage you not to leave 108,000 new jobs uncreated. Now is the time to let credit unions help their small business-owning members. Please include H.R. 3380 in the job creation legislation.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Daniel A. Mica
President and CEO