

Make Small Business Tax Deduction Permanent

As part of tax reform, the Big “I” secured a significant victory for its members when the Treasury Department issued regulations last year ensuring that insurance agents and brokers could take full advantage of the 20% deduction for certain small businesses. The 20% deduction is currently scheduled to expire at the end of 2025. As a result, the Big “I” supports H.R. 216 by Reps. Jason Smith (R-MO) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX) and S. 1149 by Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) which would make the small business deduction permanent and avoid an unlevel playing field between pass-through businesses and C-corps.

Secure a Long-Term Flood Insurance Reauthorization

Currently, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is scheduled to expire in September. The Big “I” supports a long-term reauthorization of a modernized NFIP that would increase take-up rates, both in the NFIP and the private market. Specifically, the Big “I” supports allowing private flood insurance to satisfy NFIP continuous coverage requirements, which ensures that if consumers leave the program for the private market and later must return, they can do so without penalty. Agents and insurers play an essential role in the sale and servicing of flood insurance and the Big “I” opposes any policies that would harm the Write-Your-Own Program (including compensation reductions), make it more complex, or limit the program by negatively impacting NFIP take-up rates.

Defend a Modernized State-Based Regulatory System

The Big “I” opposes legislative efforts that recklessly preempt state insurance law, interfere with states’ ability to exercise control over their respective markets, or allow federal agencies to regulate state insurance issues. The Big “I” opposes the expansion of the types of coverages that Risk Retention Groups (RRGs) can offer. As a result, the Big “I” strongly opposes H.R. 4523, introduced by Rep. Al Green (D-TX), that would allow RRGs to offer commercial property and auto insurance needlessly preempting state insurance laws. The Big “I” also opposes H.R. 1756 by Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) which would prohibit the use of credit scoring in auto insurance underwriting and H.R. 3693 by Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) which would undermine state regulators and give the Federal Trade Commission some regulatory authority over insurance underwriting. Finally, the Big “I” supports H.R. 1862 by Rep. Alex Mooney (R-WV) and S. 1586 by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) to eliminate the Federal Insurance Office which has historically proven to have questionable value for insurance markets and consumers.

Protect Small Business from Overly Burdensome Data Security Requirements

With each passing security breach, the amount of compromised data is on the rise. Consequently, the desire by Congress to take legislative action is also on the rise. If a nationwide uniform data security standard is created, it is vital that enforcement is done at the state level and not by a federal agency. Additionally, many Big “I” members are small businesses so any nationwide standards or requirements must be scalable, flexible and reasonable for all insurance agencies and brokerages no matter their size.

Preserve Employer-Sponsored Health Care

It is imperative that Congress protects the employer-sponsored health care system for the more than 180 million Americans who depend on it. The Big “I” opposes any efforts to enact a single payer or “Medicare for All” system which would have a devastating impact on the employer-sponsored market. Congress must build on what’s working in our health care system and fix what’s broken, not start over with a one-size-fits-all new government health insurance system we can’t afford.

Defend the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIP)

Crop insurance is essential for the security of America’s economy and food supply and independent agents play an important role in the sale and servicing of crop insurance. The Big “I” urges Congress to oppose any proposal that would increase the cost of crop insurance to farmers, reduce the number of farmers eligible for crop insurance and thereby destabilize the FCIP risk pool, or weaken the efficient and effective private sector delivery of the product. Thus, the Big “I” opposes S. 3292, the AFFIRM Act of 2020, introduced by Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Pat Toomey (R-PA), as it would impose deep cuts on the FCIP.

Protect Insurance Agents from Cannabis Business Liability

Despite being illegal at the federal level, many states offer medical marijuana, have decriminalized recreational marijuana, or have given full legal status to cannabis. In 2019, the House passed H.R. 1595, the SAFE Banking Act, which includes a safe harbor for agents and brokers who choose to do business with cannabis related legitimate businesses, protecting them from criminal and civil liability. The Big “I” encourages the Senate to consider S. 1200 by Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Cory Gardner (R-CO), the companion bill to the House SAFE Banking Act, and supports its passage.



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