

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, every year, our Nation sets aside a week to honor 25 million Americans whose entrepreneurial drive personifies the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, America's 23 million small businesses reflect the things that make our Nation great: vision, responsibility, innovation, dedication and hard work. It is often small entrepreneurs who are our inventors, our risk-takers, and our job creators; and

WHEREAS, small businesses are a vital part of our Nation's economy, and they are leading the way during the current economic recovery. They represent 99 percent of employers. More than half of all private sector employees work at small businesses. Three out of every four net new jobs created in this country are created by small businesses; and

WHEREAS, as our nation continues on the path of economic recovery, it is important to appreciate the role that our small entrepreneurs are playing. Government does not create jobs. Small businesses do. Although the government can help to liberate the energies of our small business owners – whether by cutting taxes by almost \$3,000 per business, reducing burdensome regulations, or fighting to curtail frivolous lawsuits – it is, in the end, those entrepreneurs who are growing our economy. Their efforts are vital to the creation of new jobs for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, despite their successes, it is appropriate during Small Business Week to examine the challenges still faced by America's entrepreneurs; and

WHEREAS, rising health care costs disproportionately affect small businesses and their employees. Health Savings Accounts, created as part of last year's Medicare Reform Act, can help small business owners and employees pay for their health care costs, and owners whose employees use HSAs can save as much as 40 percent in health care costs. But that will not be enough. Small businesses deserve the same purchasing and bargaining power that large corporations have. Legislation introduced in the United States Congress to create Association Health Plans will give them that power; and

WHEREAS, frivolous lawsuits still threaten far too many small business owners. The right to redress is an essential right in our Nation, but its abuse is putting Americans out of work; and

WHEREAS, the death tax remains a dark cloud over the heads of family-owned businesses. It is fundamentally unfair when family businesses are sold or broken up upon the death of the owners because their sons and daughters cannot afford to pay the tax bill; and

WHEREAS, Small Business Week is a time for us to talk about these challenges, and plan for how they can be overcome; and

WHEREAS, it is also a time to celebrate our successes, and to thank America's small business owners for their contribution to our communities, our economy, and our nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. EUILLE, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim May 16 -22, 2004, as:

"SMALL BUSINESS WEEK"

in the City of Alexandria.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 12th day of May 2004.

WILLIAM D. EUILLE **MAYOR**
*On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia*

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk