Huntington SBA Specialists Poised to Help Customers Benefit From Fee Waivers/Higher Loan Limits in Small Business Jobs Act

Act that includes new provisions for SBA loans, allowing small businesses to potentially save thousands of dollars over the next three months, to be signed into law on Monday, Sept. 27

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Sept. 27 /PRNewswire/ -- As the number one Small Business Administration (SBA) lender in many of its Midwest markets, Huntington (Nasdaq: HBAN; www.huntington.com) and its SBA specialists are poised to help customers benefit from new fee waivers and higher loan limits. These provisions are included in the Small Business Jobs Act passed by the House on Thursday, Sept. 23, and expected to be signed into law on Monday, Sept. 27.

"We've been working closely with our small business customers over the last few weeks, alerting them to the pending legislation," explained Mary Navarro, Huntington senior executive vice president and director of Retail and Business Banking. "For one of our customers who is seeking a nearly $2 million loan, the fee waivers will result in a savings of more than $50,000. The fee waivers offer a huge advantage for businesses and will only be available through the end of 2010."

The act eliminates fees charged for SBA 7(a) and 504 loans through Dec. 31, 2010. Additionally, the new legislation increases SBA 7(a) loan limits from $2 million to $5 million; SBA 504 loans from $1.5 million to $5.5 million; and SBA 7(a) Express Loans from $350,000 to $1 million.

Navarro explained that the loan limit increases should help a wide range of businesses, including capital-intensive manufacturing businesses that need to purchase high-priced equipment. Additionally, businesses that have already reached SBA limits with their current loans now will have access to more capital.

This is also an opportune time for businesses to consider buying their own building, said Navarro. "Real estate prices are low, interest rates are low, and fees are being waived. Especially with the higher loan limits available, this could be a great time for a business to purchase a building," she said.

The Small Business Jobs Act also raises the SBA-guaranteed portion of SBA 7(a) loans from 75 percent to 90 percent through the end of 2010, providing banks with increased assurance around SBA lending. Another provision creates the State Small Business Credit Initiative and provides $1.5 billion in grants to states to support small business lending

programs.

"Huntington has demonstrated its commitment to small business as one of the top SBA lenders in the country. We're pleased that government leaders at both the federal and state level recognize that together, we can bring even more support to small business job growth at this critical time," said Navarro.

While it is the 37th largest bank in the country, Huntington is currently the fifth largest SBA lender in the country. Huntington also was the number one SBA lender in fiscal year 2009 in four of the six states it serves – Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia and Indiana.

Also in 2009, Huntington entered into a unique, three-year partnership with the state of Ohio to provide $1 billion in loans to small businesses to retain and attract businesses, as well as generate jobs. This increased lending goal was expanded in February 2010 to include a commitment to provide $4 billion in small businesses lending in the Midwest over the next three years.

About Huntington

Huntington Bancshares Incorporated is a $52 billion regional bank holding company headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Through its affiliated companies, Huntington has been providing a full range of financial services including checking, loans, savings, insurance and investment services to customers for 144 years. Huntington has more than 600 branches. Huntington also offers retail and commercial financial services online at huntington.com; through its telephone bank; and through its network of more than 1,300 ATMs.

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