Says resilient, innovative business leaders in southern Minnesota are the key to growing our economy

Brownsdale, MN – Today, Rep. Walz visited IBI Data in Brownsdale to highlight their entrepreneurial spirit and discuss tax credits for small businesses to create jobs and grow in the future.

“Our local small businesses power our economic engine and as we move forward with our economic recovery, we have to make sure they have the tools they need to succeed,” said Rep. Walz. “I am here today to get input from IBI Data and to hear their ideas for revitalizing our economy and creating jobs. Some of the best ideas for how to move our economy forward are coming from right here in southern Minnesota.”

“Katherine tells me she’s ready to start another small business but has had trouble getting a loan. I’m hopeful that the Small Business Jobs and Credit Act would help her get that financing directly from her local bank, making it possible to create more jobs here in southern Minnesota with someone who has been recognized not just as a great entrepreneur, but as someone who creates some of the best and most rewarding work places for employees,” concluded Walz.

Katherine Harte commented, “IBI Data, along with most small businesses, appreciates the opportunity to dialogue with elected representatives to discuss the realities of starting and growing a business. We asked two things of Congressman Walz today: first, when drafting legislation offering tax credits or incentives to include service and technology companies like IBI Data who do not need heavy equipment but can generate large numbers of jobs. Second, the opportunity today to hear about new incentives and legislation was helpful because it can be challenging to focus on running a small business and keep up on new laws meant to help us. Of note was hearing about the bill to expand lending to small business through community banks – hopefully this will open new avenues of lending to small yet growing businesses.”

“IBI Data was pleased to host Congressman Walz today. We had a good conversation about what businesses need to grow our economy,” said Geoff Smith, Executive Vice President of IBI Data. “Since IBI Data started in 1986, we have adapted to market needs and grown our business to where it is today. I appreciate the Congressman’s support of initiatives and legislation that will increase tax deductions for business start-up expenditures. I know there are thousands of businesses that would launch new enterprises generating dozens of jobs apiece with the right incentives. Thousands of small businesses are poised for growth and government should be receptive to such entrepreneurship.”

Congressman Walz has supported initiatives that encourage small business growth by increasing access to capital, encouraging investment and job creation through tax credits, and increasing financial security through affordable loans. In June, the House passed **HR 5297, the Small Business Jobs and Credit Act**
, which the Senate is currently negotiating passage of. HR 5297 would establish a $30 billion Small Business Lending Fund for the Treasury Department to invest in eligible community banks.
Participating banks would be charged lower fees by Treasury for increasing lending to small businesses, encouraging direct lending between local banks and small businesses.

Katherine Harte, winner of the 2010 Woman Business of the Year Award from National Association of Women Business Owners, founded IBI Data in 1986. Located on the former family farm in Brownsdale, Minnesota, the business focuses on foodservice companies that provide food away from home such as on college campuses, hospitals, corporate cafeterias. IBI's customers include Sara Lee, ConAgra, Kellogg, Del Monte and more. IBI provides direct marketing, incentive and product trial programs, business leads and promotions support as well as warehousing and fulfillment solutions. The staff of IBI data were recognized with the Best Places to Work Award in Southeast Minnesota in 2009 and the Best Retention Program in 2007 for flexible scheduling, family-friendly policies, motivational and empowering work programs, and employee-led improvements that help grow employees personally and professionally.

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