



History of the Association

In 1981, the Alliance for Affordable Services set out to prove that you don't have to be in corporate America to have access to great benefits at a substantial savings. Armed with a power of numbers philosophy, the Alliance brought together a group of small-business owners and individuals. Together they had the clout to negotiate valuable savings.

The Alliance spent its formative years defining the types of benefits members needed most--business, personal and health benefits. When members of the young organization demonstrated a growing need for information about healthcare issues, the Alliance created its first newsletter, *Health Matters*, in 1990.

Responding to the business, healthcare, and political environments, the organization grew, changed, and adapted over time and, in 1989, adopted its current name and structure.

Since its inception the Alliance has been directly involved in a number of key legislative victories that have benefited America's self-employed:

- The Alliance helped rally small business owners working from their homes and successfully pushed for reinstatement of the much needed Home-Office Tax Deduction in 1994.
- In 1995, the Alliance played an important role in the reinstatement of the expired health insurance deduction, increasing it from 25 to 30 percent.
- In 1996, the Alliance was the voice of small business owners as Congress passed the Small Business Regulatory Act that mandated major improvements in the way federal agencies treat small businesses.
- One year later, the Alliance returned to the deduction for health insurance premiums, helping to achieve a 100 percent phase-in by 2007, and once again in 1998, accelerating the date for reaching 100 percent to 2003.

Over the years, the Alliance has added an impressive array of membership benefits. In response to requests from members, the Alliance established one of its premier benefits in 1996. The Alliance Scholarship Program was designed to give members' dependents access to a scholarship program not available through their parents' employers. To date, the program has awarded more than half a million dollars in scholarships.



In 1998, the association newsletter evolved into an impressive, four-color, 12-page magazine with comprehensive articles about business practices, tips and trends, healthcare news and benefit information.

Currently, the Alliance is working closely with members of Congress and influential coalitions in Washington to secure passage of the Health Care Choice Act. By allowing health insurance providers to market policies across state lines while maintaining important consumer protections, this legislation will create more consumer choice and potentially drive down health insurance costs.

Much has changed in the world since the Alliance was founded in 1981, but the heart of the association has remained constant. The Alliance worked diligently to meet the needs of its members then—and it continues to do so today—leveraging the power of the group to help Alliance Members save time and money.