

U.S. Chamber Foundation Highlights Small Business Preparedness Gap at National Resilience Conference

Natasha Broxton joins national resilience discussion as new data reveals gaps in small business disaster preparedness.

MILWAUKEE, WI, UNITED STATES, May 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As disasters become more frequent, severe, and economically disruptive across the United States, new national research released during the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's 2026 Building Resilience Conference is drawing attention to a growing operational risk facing America's small businesses: many owners believe they are prepared to recover from disaster, but few have formal systems in place to support that confidence.



Natasha Broxton speaks during the U.S. Chamber Foundation's 2026 Building Resilience Conference in Washington, D.C.

Held May 5–6 in Washington, D.C., the conference convened leaders from business, government, and nonprofit sectors around this year's theme, "Strengthening America for the Next Generation." During the event, the U.S. Chamber Foundation and Verizon announced a strategic partnership and released preliminary survey findings highlighting what organizers called a "confidence-preparedness gap" among America's 33 million small businesses.

“

I owe it to my community and my employees to have a plan. When people depend on your business, resilience can't just live in your head.”

Natasha Broxton, Founder of Alitura Group

According to the preliminary data:

94% of small business owners believe they could recover from a disaster
69% do not have a disaster plan

36% could not continue paying employees beyond one month after a disaster

65% have never sought preparedness assistance

Federally declared disasters have increased nearly 90% over the last decade, while small businesses continue to represent 99.9% of all U.S. businesses, employ nearly half of the American workforce, and contribute 43.5% of U.S. GDP.

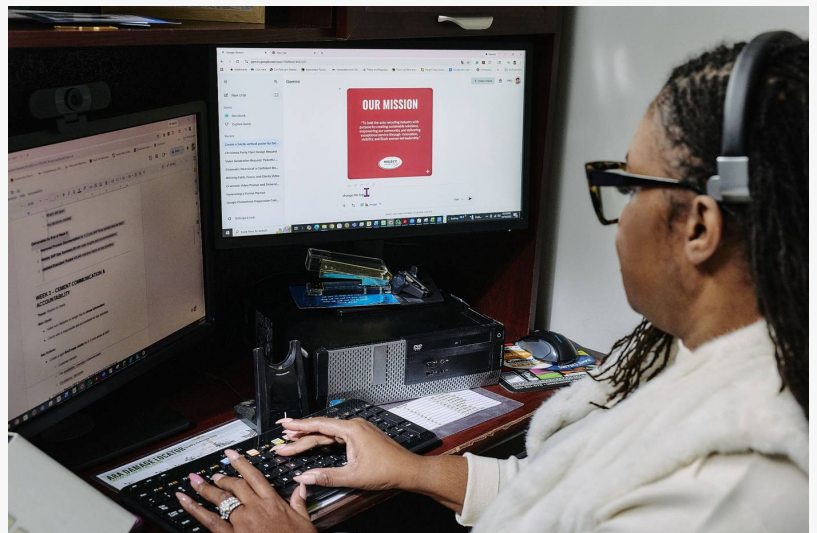
[Natasha Broxton](#), founder and CEO of Select Auto Parts & Sales and founder of Alitura Group, participated in the national conversation during a panel discussion moderated by U.S. Chamber Foundation Senior Vice President Marc DeCoursey. The panel, “Powering Small Business Success Through Resilience,” explored how [operational preparedness](#), systems, and recovery planning affect long-term business continuity.

“For many owners, resilience still lives inside the owner instead of inside the business,” said Broxton. “A lot of small businesses are running on tribal knowledge, memory, and manual processes. The problem is that when disruption happens, whether it’s a disaster, staffing issue, illness, or economic shock, the business becomes vulnerable very quickly if systems are not documented and operational knowledge is not shared.”

Broxton’s perspective is shaped by her experience leading Select Auto Parts & Sales, Milwaukee’s only fully indoor auto recycling facility, through years of operational modernization and systems development. Her work has increasingly focused on helping businesses reduce owner dependency, strengthen communication systems, and improve operational continuity through practical implementation strategies.



Business leaders discuss operational resilience and preparedness during the U.S. Chamber Foundation’s Building Resilience Conference.



Natasha Broxton works on operational systems and communication workflows designed to strengthen small business continuity and resilience.

The discussion comes as resilience planning is expanding beyond emergency response and becoming a broader business operations issue. Organizers emphasized that preparedness now includes communication systems, operational workflows, financial readiness, staffing continuity, and access to recovery resources.

As part of the newly announced partnership, Verizon will expand support for the U.S. Chamber Foundation's Readiness for Resiliency program, which provides preparedness resources and recovery grants for small businesses affected by disasters. The program has already supported nearly 5,000 businesses nationwide.

The broader conversation reflects a growing recognition that [small business resilience](#) is not only a local economic issue, but also a national infrastructure issue affecting jobs, supply chains, and community recovery across the country.

When small businesses are unprepared for disruption, the impact extends beyond the business itself. Employees lose income, customers lose services, and communities lose economic stability during recovery periods.

About Select Auto Parts & Sales

Select Auto Parts & Sales is Milwaukee's only fully indoor auto recycling facility. Operating from a 125,000-square-foot facility, the company combines recycled auto parts operations with systems-driven business practices designed to improve efficiency, communication, and long-term operational resilience.

About Alitura Group

Alitura Group is an AI modernization and operational strategy firm focused on helping founders and small business owners strengthen systems, reduce owner dependency, and build more resilient businesses through practical implementation strategies.

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