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## **STRONG INDEPENDENT BUSINESS COMMUNITIES LEAD TO HIGHER HOME VALUES**

*Independent We Stand Launches Home Value Calculator to Show Potential Growth*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – Homeowners now have a new tool to discover how supporting locally owned, independent businesses directly improves their home values: an online calculator, introduced today by national small business movement [Independent We Stand](#).

Based on a recent study by [American Express OPEN](#), home values in neighborhoods with strong independent retail districts grew at a much faster rate over a 14 year period than those without. Independent We Stand's Home Value Calculator (located at: [www.independentwestand.org/home-value-calculator/](http://www.independentwestand.org/home-value-calculator/)) gives homeowners an easy tool to determine how supporting their locally owned, independent businesses – and encouraging more to open in their areas – affects the value of their home.

“In Detroit, a city particularly hard-hit by the economic recession, the average home value would have increased 47% from 1997 to 2011 if it had been located near a successful independent business district,” said Bill Brunelle of Independent We Stand. “Studies continue to prove that buying local every time you can improves the economy - from the neighborhood level up. Independent business truly is the lifeblood of the American economy.”

The [Home Value Calculator](#) joins Independent We Stand's [Economic Impact Calculator](#), designed to show the direct impact on the local economy if each family spent just \$10 each month with a locally owned business instead of at a national chain. Both calculators are part of Independent We Stand's ongoing campaign to educate American communities about the positive economic benefits of buying from locally owned, independent businesses whenever possible.

Independent We Stand's website continues to offer free advertising and promotional materials for all locally owned businesses to promote their community impact, as well as a business database for consumers to find local, independent businesses in their area. Visit [www.IndependentWeStand.org](http://www.IndependentWeStand.org) to learn more.

**About Independent We Stand**



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Independent We Stand is a movement of independent business owners across the country to inform their communities about the importance of “Buying Local” and how these efforts bolster their local economy. This movement supports all local and national causes committed to boosting local economic development projects. Premium business listings are now available. The Independent We Stand movement is sponsored by STIHL Inc. [www.IndependentWeStand.org](http://www.IndependentWeStand.org)

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*\* Source: The Civic Economics “American Express OPEN Independent Retail Index” was used for the underlying finding on which the calculator is based, but not for the specific calculations. Civic Economics analyzed home values for 27 neighborhoods in 15 American cities. Neighborhoods were identified based on the presence of a strong, independent-dominated business district within the same ZIP code. Across all 27 neighborhoods, residential values gained, on average, 54.2% more in home values than their citywide markets over the most recent 14 year period. Home sale price data provided by Zillow.*