

KAREN ZIMBELMAN

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

Ownership by co-op members brings a powerful difference to our businesses and to our communities. Through our unique economic model and democratic structure, cooperative businesses bring integrity and economic security into the lives of millions of people and are a needed “force for good” in our world today.

Today, co-ops are poised to be on the forefront of building a more inclusive, just and dynamic economy for all. NCBA CLUSA brings over 100 years of service to the cooperative movement and has profoundly contributed to co-ops worldwide. It is an organization uniquely positioned to help co-ops grow, thrive and increase their vital impact. All co-ops, and each of our co-op sectors, faces periods of growth and periods of challenges. But with a strong and vibrant national association, our co-ops have the leadership to weather these cycles as a steady force to build a strong cooperative economy. The national and global reach of NCBA CLUSA provides U.S. co-ops with an important forum for building and strengthening our common bonds.

With its deep roots and a vision for building an inclusive economy, NCBA CLUSA stands as a champion of cooperatives in all forms. But we need our national association to be even more. In these days of growing inequality and a widening wealth gap, we need NCBA CLUSA to find ways and challenge us all to envision new ways that can support the growth, development and success of co-ops to truly serve all—especially in providing leadership to support the economic empowerment co-ops can offer communities with limited economic access.

I’ve been lucky enough to spend over four decades pursuing my personal and professional passion for co-ops in a range of roles—including service as a manager, board member, consultant and just plain member. I’ve also been honored to serve on the NCBA CLUSA Board of Directors for the past nine years and to be elected to serve on several committees, including the Nominating Committee, Governance Committee, Executive Committee, and as co-chair of NCBA CLUSA’s Membership Growth Task Force.

I look forward to bringing my passion for co-ops, as well as my vision for the significant and profound impact co-ops can have, to the NCBA CLUSA Board of Directors. We are, indeed, stronger together!