

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8443

To amend the Small Business Act to provide re-entry entrepreneurship counseling and training services for incarcerated individuals, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to provide re-entry entrepreneurship counseling and training services for incarcerated individuals, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Prison to Proprietor-
5 ship Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. RE-ENTRY ENTREPRENEURSHIP COUNSELING AND**
7 **TRAINING FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.**

8 The Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) is
9 amended—

1 (1) by redesignating section 49 as section 50;

2 and

3 (2) by inserting after section 48 the following

4 new section:

5 **“SEC. 49. RE-ENTRY ENTREPRENEURSHIP COUNSELING**

6 **AND TRAINING FOR INCARCERATED INDIVID-**

7 **UALS.**

8 “(a) SERVICES REQUIRED.—The Administrator, in
9 coordination with the Director of the Bureau of Prisons,
10 shall require women’s business centers and small business
11 development centers identified under the plan described in
12 subsection (b) to provide entrepreneurship counseling and
13 training services to covered individuals.

14 “(b) PLAN.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

16 “(A) develop a plan, which shall be up-
17 dated annually, to match women’s business cen-
18 ters and small business development centers
19 with covered individuals in Federal prisons who
20 are eligible to receive services under this sec-
21 tion; and

22 “(B) seek to consult with both an associa-
23 tion formed to pursue matters of common con-
24 cern to women’s business centers and an asso-
25 ciation of small business development centers

1 formed pursuant to section 21(a)(3)(A) to de-
2 velop and update such plan.

3 “(2) MATCHING.—In determining matches
4 under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall
5 prioritize matching the women’s business center or
6 small business development center in closest prox-
7 imity to the applicable Federal prison.

8 “(3) ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES.—If the
9 women’s business center or small business develop-
10 ment center identified under the plan in paragraph
11 (1) is unable to provide such services to covered in-
12 dividuals in such Federal prison, another women’s
13 business center or small business development cen-
14 ter, an association of women’s business centers, or
15 an association of small business development centers
16 shall provide such services in accordance with the re-
17 quirements of this section.

18 “(c) GOALS.—The goals of the services provided
19 under this section is to provide covered individuals with
20 the following:

21 “(1) Assistance and in-depth training on how to
22 start or expand a small business concern.

23 “(2) Tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to
24 identify a business opportunity, including how to—

1 “(A) draft a résumé, business plan, and
2 transition plan;

3 “(B) identify sources of capital; and

4 “(C) connect with local resources for small
5 business concerns.

6 “(d) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—The services
7 provided under this section shall include—

8 “(1) a presentation providing exposure to the
9 opportunities involved in self-employment and own-
10 ership of a small business concern;

11 “(2) a self-study course manual focused on the
12 basic skills of entrepreneurship, financial literacy,
13 the language of business, and the considerations and
14 life skills relevant to self-employment and ownership
15 of a small business concern;

16 “(3) five two-day sessions of in-depth classroom
17 instruction introducing the foundations of self-em-
18 ployment and ownership of small business concerns,
19 including guided discussions to explore personal en-
20 trepreneurial development interests; and

21 “(4) in-depth one-on-one training, including in-
22 dividual support in the development of a business
23 plan, entrepreneurial skills, and strategies for start-
24 ing up a small business concern.

1 “(e) CERTIFICATE.—A covered individual shall re-
2 ceive a certificate upon completion of the counseling and
3 training provided under this section.

4 “(f) PRIORITY.—The Administrator shall, to the ex-
5 tent practicable, ensure that women’s business centers and
6 small business development centers prioritize providing en-
7 trepreneurship counseling and training services to covered
8 individuals who will be released from Federal custody not
9 later than 18 months after the date on which such a cov-
10 ered individual begins to receive such services.

11 “(g) CONTINUATION OF SERVICES.—A covered indi-
12 vidual receiving services under this section may continue
13 to receive such services after release from Federal custody.

14 “(h) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying out this sec-
15 tion, the Administrator may, subject to appropriation,
16 award a grant to an association formed to pursue matters
17 of common concern to women’s business centers or small
18 business development centers to coordinate the services
19 described under this section, including to develop cur-
20 riculum, train mentors and instructors, and establish pub-
21 lic-private partnerships to support covered individuals and
22 to identify opportunities to access capital for covered indi-
23 viduals.

24 “(i) CURRICULUM.—The Administration shall print
25 and make available to women’s business centers, small

1 business development centers, an association of women's
2 business centers, or an association of small business devel-
3 opment centers any curriculum or course materials devel-
4 oped pursuant to this section.

5 “(j) SURVEY.—Each women's business center, asso-
6 ciation of women's business centers, small business devel-
7 opment center, or association of small business develop-
8 ment centers that provided services under this section
9 shall survey covered individuals who received such services
10 to assess the satisfaction of such covered individuals with
11 such services.

12 “(k) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
13 of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter,
14 the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small
15 Business of the House of Representatives and the Com-
16 mittee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the
17 Senate a report on the performance and effectiveness of
18 the services provided under this section, which may be in-
19 cluded as part of another report submitted to such com-
20 mittees by the Administrator, and which shall include—

21 “(1) the number of covered individuals coun-
22 seled or trained under this section;

23 “(2) the number of hours of counseling pro-
24 vided by each women's business center and each

1 small business development center under this sec-
2 tion;

3 “(3) the number of certificates presented under
4 subsection (e);

5 “(4) the demographics of covered individuals
6 who received services, including age, gender, race,
7 and ethnicity;

8 “(5) the level of understanding of business con-
9 cepts of covered individuals upon completion of the
10 counseling and training provided under this section;

11 “(6) a summary and analysis of surveys con-
12 ducted under subsection (j); and

13 “(7) any additional information, as determined
14 by the Administrator.

15 “(l) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this sec-
16 tion, the term ‘covered individual’ means an individual in-
17 carcerated in a Federal prison designated as a minimum,
18 low, or medium security prison by the Director of the Bu-
19 reau of Prisons.

20 “(m) FUNDING.—Subject to the availability of appro-
21 priations, the Administrator shall reimburse women’s
22 business centers, small business development centers, an
23 association of women’s business centers, or an association
24 of small business development centers, as applicable, for

1 the costs relating to the services provided under the sec-
2 tion.”.

