

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1056

To provide for a loan guarantee program to address the Year 2000 computer problems of small business concerns, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To provide for a loan guarantee program to address the Year 2000 computer problems of small business concerns, 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 “Small Business Year
5 2000 Readiness Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) the failure of many computer programs to
9 recognize the Year 2000 may have extreme negative

1 financial consequences in the Year 2000, and in sub-
 2 sequent years for both large and small businesses;

3 (2) small businesses are well behind larger busi-
 4 nesses in implementing corrective changes to their
 5 automated systems;

6 (3) many small businesses do not have access to
 7 capital to fix mission critical automated systems,
 8 which could result in severe financial distress or fail-
 9 ure for small businesses; and

10 (4) the failure of a large number of small busi-
 11 nesses due to the Year 2000 computer problem
 12 would have a highly detrimental effect on the econ-
 13 omy in the Year 2000 and in subsequent years.

14 **SEC. 3. YEAR 2000 COMPUTER PROBLEM LOAN GUARANTEE**
 15 **PROGRAM.**

16 (a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—Section 7(a) of the
 17 Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) is amended by
 18 adding at the end the following:

19 “(27) YEAR 2000 COMPUTER PROBLEM PRO-
 20 GRAM.—

21 “(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph—

22 “(i) the term ‘eligible lender’ means
 23 any lender designated by the Administra-
 24 tion as eligible to participate in the general

1 business loan program under this sub-
2 section; and

3 “(ii) the term ‘Year 2000 computer
4 problem’ means, with respect to informa-
5 tion technology, and embedded systems,
6 any problem that adversely affects the
7 processing (including calculating, compar-
8 ing, sequencing, displaying, or storing),
9 transmitting, or receiving of date-depend-
10 ent data—

11 “(I) from, into, or between—

12 “(aa) the 20th or 21st cen-
13 turies; or

14 “(bb) the years 1999 and
15 2000; or

16 “(II) with regard to leap year
17 calculations.

18 “(B) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The
19 Administration shall—

20 “(i) establish a loan guarantee pro-
21 gram, under which the Administration
22 may, during the period beginning on the
23 date of enactment of this paragraph and
24 ending on December 31, 2000, guarantee
25 loans made by eligible lenders to small

1 business concerns in accordance with this
2 paragraph; and

3 “(ii) notify each eligible lender of the
4 establishment of the program under this
5 paragraph, and otherwise take such actions
6 as may be necessary to aggressively market
7 the program under this paragraph.

8 “(C) USE OF FUNDS.—A small business
9 concern that receives a loan guaranteed under
10 this paragraph shall only use the proceeds of
11 the loan to—

12 “(i) address the Year 2000 computer
13 problems of that small business concern,
14 including the repair and acquisition of in-
15 formation technology systems, the pur-
16 chase and repair of software, the purchase
17 of consulting and other third party serv-
18 ices, and related expenses; and

19 “(ii) provide relief for a substantial
20 economic injury incurred by the small busi-
21 ness concern as a direct result of the Year
22 2000 computer problems of the small busi-
23 ness concern or of any other entity (includ-
24 ing any service provider or supplier of the
25 small business concern), if such economic

1 injury has not been compensated for by in-
2 surance or otherwise.

3 “(D) LOAN AMOUNTS.—

4 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding
5 paragraph (3)(A) and subject to clause (ii)
6 of this subparagraph, a loan may be made
7 to a borrower under this paragraph even if
8 the total amount outstanding and commit-
9 ted (by participation or otherwise) to the
10 borrower from the business loan and in-
11 vestment fund, the business guaranty loan
12 financing account, and the business direct
13 loan financing account would thereby ex-
14 ceed \$750,000.

15 “(ii) EXCEPTION.—A loan may not be
16 made to a borrower under this paragraph
17 if the total amount outstanding and com-
18 mitted (by participation or otherwise) to
19 the borrower from the business loan and
20 investment fund, the business guaranty
21 loan financing account, and the business
22 direct loan financing account would there-
23 by exceed \$1,000,000.

24 “(E) ADMINISTRATION PARTICIPATION.—

25 Notwithstanding paragraph (2)(A), in an agree-

1 ment to participate in a loan under this para-
2 graph, participation by the Administration shall
3 not exceed—

4 “(i) 85 percent of the balance of the
5 financing outstanding at the time of dis-
6 bursement of the loan, if the balance ex-
7 ceeds \$100,000;

8 “(ii) 90 percent of the balance of the
9 financing outstanding at the time of dis-
10 bursement of the loan, if the balance is
11 less than or equal to \$100,000; and

12 “(iii) notwithstanding clauses (i) and
13 (ii), in any case in which the subject loan
14 is processed in accordance with the re-
15 quirements applicable to the SBAExpress
16 Pilot Program, 50 percent of the balance
17 outstanding at the time of disbursement of
18 the loan.

19 “(F) PERIODIC REVIEWS.—The Inspector
20 General of the Administration shall periodically
21 review a representative sample of loans guaran-
22 teed under this paragraph to mitigate the risk
23 of fraud and ensure the safety and soundness
24 of the loan program.

1 “(G) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Administra-
2 tion shall annually submit to the Committees on
3 Small Business of the House of Representatives
4 and the Senate a report on the results of the
5 program carried out under this paragraph dur-
6 ing the preceding 12-month period, which shall
7 include information relating to—

8 “(i) the total number of loans guaran-
9 teed under this paragraph;

10 “(ii) with respect to each loan guaran-
11 teed under this paragraph—

12 “(I) the amount of the loan;

13 “(II) the geographic location of
14 the borrower; and

15 “(III) whether the loan was made
16 to repair or replace information tech-
17 nology and other automated systems
18 or to remedy an economic injury; and

19 “(iii) the total number of eligible lend-
20 ers participating in the program.”.

21 (b) GUIDELINES.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after
23 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
24 of the Small Business Administration shall issue
25 guidelines to carry out the program under section

1 7(a)(27) of the Small Business Act, as added by this
2 section.

3 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—Except to the extent that
4 it would be inconsistent with this section or section
5 7(a)(27) of the Small Business Act, as added by this
6 section, the guidelines issued under this subsection
7 shall, with respect to the loan program established
8 under section 7(a)(27) of the Small Business Act, as
9 added by this section—

10 (A) provide maximum flexibility in the es-
11 tablishment of terms and conditions of loans
12 originated under the loan program so that such
13 loans may be structured in a manner that en-
14 hances the ability of the applicant to repay the
15 debt;

16 (B) if appropriate to facilitate repayment,
17 establish a moratorium on principal payments
18 under the loan program for up to 1 year begin-
19 ning on the date of the origination of the loan;

20 (C) provide that any reasonable doubts re-
21 garding a loan applicant's ability to service the
22 debt be resolved in favor of the loan applicant;
23 and

24 (D) authorize an eligible lender (as defined
25 in section 7(a)(27)(A) of the Small Business

1 Act, as added by this section) to process a loan
2 under the loan program in accordance with the
3 requirements applicable to loans originated
4 under another loan program established pursu-
5 ant to section 7(a) of the Small Business Act
6 (including the general business loan program,
7 the Preferred Lender Program, the Certified
8 Lender Program, the Low Documentation Loan
9 Program, and the SBAExpress Pilot Program),
10 if—

11 (i) the eligible lender is eligible to par-
12 ticipate in such other loan program; and

13 (ii) the terms of the loan, including
14 the principal amount of the loan, are con-
15 sistent with the requirements applicable to
16 loans originated under such other loan pro-
17 gram.

18 (c) REPEAL.—Effective on December 31, 2000, this
19 section and the amendments made by this section are re-
20 pealed.

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