

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1111

To provide continuing authorization for a National Conference on Small Business, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 24, 1999

Mr. BOND introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To provide continuing authorization for a National Conference on Small Business, 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 “National Conference
5 on Small Business Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act—

8 (1) the term “Administrator” means the Ad-
9 ministrator of the Small Business Administration;

1 (2) the term “Chief Counsel” means the Chief
2 Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Admin-
3 istration;

4 (3) the term “National Commission” means the
5 National Commission on Small Business established
6 under section 6;

7 (4) the term “National Conference”—

8 (A) means the National Conference on
9 Small Business conducted under section 3(a);
10 and

11 (B) includes the last White House Con-
12 ference on Small Business occurring before
13 2002;

14 (5) the term “small business” has the meaning
15 given the term “small business concern” under sec-
16 tion 3 of the Small Business Act;

17 (6) the term “State” means any of the 50
18 States of the United States; and

19 (7) the term “State Conference” means a State
20 Conference on Small Business conducted under sec-
21 tion 3(b).

22 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL AND STATE CONFERENCES ON SMALL**
23 **BUSINESS.**

24 (a) NATIONAL CONFERENCES.—There shall be a Na-
25 tional Conference on Small Business once every 4 years,

1 to be held during the second year following each Presi-
2 dential election, to carry out the purposes specified in sec-
3 tion 4.

4 (b) STATE CONFERENCES.—Each National Con-
5 ference referred to in subsection (a) shall be preceded by
6 a State Conference on Small Business, with not fewer
7 than 1 such conference held in each State, and with not
8 fewer than 2 such conferences held in any State having
9 a population of more than 10,000,000.

10 **SEC. 4. PURPOSES OF NATIONAL CONFERENCES.**

11 The purposes of each National Conference shall be—

12 (1) to increase public awareness of the con-
13 tribution of small business to the Nation's economy;

14 (2) to identify the problems of small business;

15 (3) to examine the status of minorities and
16 women as small business owners;

17 (4) to assist small business in carrying out its
18 role as the Nation's job creator;

19 (5) to assemble small businesses to develop
20 such specific and comprehensive recommendations
21 for legislative and regulatory action as may be ap-
22 propriate for maintaining and encouraging the eco-
23 nomic viability of small business and thereby, the
24 Nation; and

1 (6) to review the status of recommendations
2 adopted at the immediately preceding National Con-
3 ference on Small Business.

4 **SEC. 5. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—To carry out the purposes speci-
6 fied in section 4, the National Commission shall conduct
7 National and State Conferences to bring together individ-
8 uals concerned with issues relating to small business.

9 (b) CONFERENCE DELEGATES.—

10 (1) APPOINTMENTS.—Only individuals who are
11 owners or officers of a small business shall be eligi-
12 ble for appointment as delegates (or alternates) to
13 the National and State Conferences pursuant to this
14 subsection, and such appointments shall consist of—

15 (A) 1 delegate (and 1 alternate) appointed
16 by each Governor of each State;

17 (B) 1 delegate (and 1 alternate) appointed
18 by each Member of the House of Representa-
19 tives, from the congressional district of that
20 Member;

21 (C) 1 delegate (and 1 alternate) appointed
22 by each Member of the Senate from the home
23 State of that Member; and

24 (D) 50 delegates (and 50 alternates) ap-
25 pointed by the President, 1 from each State.

1 (2) POWERS AND DUTIES.—Delegates to each
2 National Conference—

3 (A) shall attend the State conferences in
4 his or her respective State;

5 (B) shall conduct meetings and other ac-
6 tivities at the State level before the date of the
7 National Conference, subject to the approval of
8 the National Commission; and

9 (C) shall direct such State level con-
10 ferences, meetings, and activities toward the
11 consideration of the purposes of the National
12 Conference specified in section 4, in order to
13 prepare for the next National Conference.

14 (3) ALTERNATES.—Alternates shall serve dur-
15 ing the absence or unavailability of the delegate.

16 (c) ROLE OF THE CHIEF COUNSEL.—The Chief
17 Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administra-
18 tion shall, after consultation and in coordination with the
19 National Commission, assist in carrying out the National
20 and State Conferences required by this Act by—

21 (1) preparing and providing background infor-
22 mation and administrative materials for use by par-
23 ticipants in the conferences;

24 (2) distributing issue information and adminis-
25 trative communications, electronically where possible

1 through an Internet web site and e-mail, and in
2 printed form if requested; and

3 (3) maintaining an Internet site and regular e-
4 mail communications after each National Conference
5 to inform delegates and the public of the status of
6 recommendations and related governmental activity.

7 (d) EXPENSES.—Each delegate (and alternate) to
8 each National and State Conference shall be responsible
9 for his or her expenses related to attending the con-
10 ferences, and shall not be reimbursed either from funds
11 appropriated pursuant to this section or the Small Busi-
12 ness Act.

13 (e) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The National Commission
15 shall appoint a Conference Advisory Committee con-
16 sisting of 10 individuals who were participants at
17 the last preceding National Conference.

18 (2) PREFERENCE.—Preference for appointment
19 under this subsection shall be given to those who
20 have been active participants in the implementation
21 process following the prior National Conference.

22 (f) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—National and State
23 Conferences shall be open to the public, and no fee or
24 charge may be imposed on such attendee, other than an
25 amount necessary to cover the cost of any meal provided,

1 plus a registration fee to defray the expense of meeting
 2 rooms and materials of not to exceed \$15 per person.

3 **SEC. 6. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SMALL BUSINESS.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Na-
 5 tional Commission on Small Business.

6 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

7 (1) APPOINTMENT.—The National Commission
 8 shall be composed of 9 members, including—

9 (A) the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the
 10 Small Business Administration;

11 (B) 2 members appointed by the President;

12 (C) 2 members appointed by the majority
 13 leader of the Senate;

14 (D) 1 member appointed by the minority
 15 leader of the Senate;

16 (E) 2 members appointed by the majority
 17 leader of the House of Representatives; and

18 (F) 1 member appointed by the minority
 19 leader of the House of Representatives.

20 (2) SELECTION.—Members of the National
 21 Commission shall be selected among distinguished
 22 individuals noted for their knowledge and experience
 23 in fields relevant to the issue of small business and
 24 the purposes of this Act.

1 (3) TIME OF APPOINTMENT.—The appoint-
 2 ments required by paragraph (1) shall be made 1
 3 year before the opening date of each National Con-
 4 ference, and shall expire 9 months after the date on
 5 which each National Conference is convened.

6 (c) ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON.—At the first meet-
 7 ing of each National Commission, a majority of the mem-
 8 bers of the National Commission present and voting shall
 9 elect the Chairperson of the National Commission.

10 (d) POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—The Na-
 11 tional Commission—

12 (1) may enter into contracts with public agen-
 13 cies, private organizations, and academic institutions
 14 to carry out this Act;

15 (2) shall consult, coordinate, and contract with
 16 an independent, nonpartisan organization that—

17 (A) has both substantive and logistical ex-
 18 perience in developing and organizing con-
 19 ferences and forums throughout the Nation
 20 with elected officials and other government and
 21 business leaders;

22 (B) has experience in generating private
 23 resource from multiple States in the form of
 24 event sponsorships; and

1 (C) can demonstrate evidence of a working
2 relationship with Members of Congress from the
3 majority and minority parties, and at least 1
4 Federal agency; and

5 (3) shall prescribe such financial controls and
6 accounting procedures as needed for the handling of
7 funds from fees and charges and the payment of au-
8 thorized meal, facility, travel, and other related ex-
9 penses.

10 (e) PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION OF CON-
11 FERENCES.—In carrying out the National and State Con-
12 ferences required by this Act, the National Commission
13 shall consult with the Office of Advocacy of the Small
14 Business Administration, the Congress, and such other
15 Federal agencies as it deems appropriate.

16 (f) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 6 months
17 after the date on which each National Conference is con-
18 vened, the National Commission shall submit to the Presi-
19 dent and to the chairpersons and ranking minority Mem-
20 bers of the Committees on Small Business of the Senate
21 and the House of Representatives a final report, which
22 shall—

23 (1) include the findings and recommendations
24 of the National Conference and any proposals for

1 legislative action necessary to implement those rec-
2 ommendations; and

3 (2) be made available to the public.

4 (g) QUORUM.—4 voting members of the National
5 Commission shall constitute a quorum for purposes of
6 transacting business.

7 (h) MEETINGS.—The National Commission shall
8 meet not later than 20 calendar days after the appoint-
9 ment of all members, and at least every 30 calendar days
10 thereafter.

11 (i) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy of the National Com-
12 mission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in
13 the manner in which the original appointment was made.

14 (j) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF.—The Na-
15 tional Commission may appoint and compensate an Exec-
16 utive Director and such other personnel to conduct the
17 National and State Conferences as it may deem advisable,
18 without regard to title 5, United States Code, governing
19 appointments in the competitive service, and without re-
20 gard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of
21 such title, relating to classification and General Schedule
22 pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the Executive
23 Director and other personnel may not exceed the rate pay-
24 able for level V of the Executive Schedule under section
25 5316 of such title.

1 (k) FUNDING.—Members of the National Commis-
 2 sion shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem
 3 in lieu of subsistence at rates authorized for employees
 4 of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5,
 5 United States Code, while away from their homes or reg-
 6 ular places of business in the performance of services for
 7 the National Commission.

8 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; AVAIL-**
 9 **ABILITY OF FUNDS.**

10 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 11 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out each Na-
 12 tional and State Conference required by this Act,
 13 \$5,000,000, which shall remain available until expended.
 14 New spending authority or authority to enter contracts as
 15 provided in this Act shall be effective only to such extent
 16 and in such amounts as are provided in advance in appro-
 17 priation Acts.

18 (b) SPECIFIC EARMARK.—No amount made available
 19 to the Small Business Administration may be made avail-
 20 able to carry out this Act, other than amounts made avail-
 21 able specifically for the purpose of conducting the National
 22 Conferences.

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