

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5217

To direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to conduct a demonstration program to raise awareness about telework among small business employers, and to encourage such employers to offer telework options to employees, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 29, 2008

Mr. UDALL of Colorado introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to conduct a demonstration program to raise awareness about telework among small business employers, and to encourage such employers to offer telework options to employees, 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
5 Telework Promotion Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds that—

1 (1) Federal, State, and local governments spend
2 billions of dollars annually on the Nation's transpor-
3 tation needs;

4 (2) congestion on the Nation's roads costs lost
5 work time and increased fuel consumption;

6 (3) on average, on-road vehicles contribute 34
7 percent of nitrogen oxides emissions;

8 (4) it is estimated that staying at home to work
9 requires 3 times less energy consumption than com-
10 muting to work;

11 (5) the average travel time to work is 25 min-
12 utes each way;

13 (6) telework reduces the volume of peak com-
14 muter traffic, thereby reducing traffic congestion
15 and air pollution;

16 (7) the Nation's communities can benefit from
17 telework, which gives workers more time to spend at
18 home with their families;

19 (8) it is in the national interest to raise aware-
20 ness within the small business community of
21 telework options for employees;

22 (9) the small business community can benefit
23 from offering telework options to employees because
24 such options make it easier for small employers to

1 retain valued employees and employees with irre-
2 placeable institutional memory;

3 (10) companies with telework programs have
4 found that telework can boost employee productivity
5 5 percent to 20 percent, thereby saving businesses
6 valuable resources and time;

7 (11) individuals with disabilities, including serv-
8 ice-disabled veterans, who own or are employed by
9 small businesses could benefit from telework to their
10 workplaces;

11 (12) telework has the potential to provide more
12 employment opportunities in rural communities; and

13 (13) telework is seen as a valuable tool in dis-
14 aster preparedness and business continuity.

15 **SEC. 3. SMALL BUSINESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Small
17 Business Administration shall carry out a competitive
18 grant program under this section to raise awareness about
19 telework among small business employers and to encour-
20 age such employers to offer telework options to employees.

21 (b) SPECIAL OUTREACH TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DIS-
22 ABILITIES.—In carrying out the program, the Adminis-
23 trator shall make special efforts to conduct outreach to—

1 (1) businesses owned by or employing individ-
2 uals with disabilities, and service-disabled veterans
3 in particular;

4 (2) Federal, State, and local agencies having
5 knowledge and expertise in assisting individuals with
6 disabilities or service-disabled veterans; and

7 (3) any group or organization, the primary pur-
8 pose of which is to aid individuals with disabilities
9 or service-disabled veterans.

10 (c) PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.—Funds received
11 under a grant may be used only to—

12 (1) produce educational materials and conduct
13 presentations designed to raise awareness in the
14 small business community of the benefits and the
15 ease of telework;

16 (2) conduct outreach—

17 (A) to small business concerns that are
18 considering offering telework options; and

19 (B) to entities described in subsection (b);
20 and

21 (3) acquire telework technologies and equip-
22 ment to be used for demonstration purposes.

23 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than the end
24 of fiscal year 2009, the Administrator shall transmit to
25 the Committee on Small Business of the House of Rep-

1 representatives and the Committee on Small Business and
2 Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report containing the
3 results of an evaluation of the program and any rec-
4 ommendations as to whether the program, with or without
5 modification, should be extended.

6 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

7 (1) the term “disability” has the same meaning
8 as in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities
9 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102); and

10 (2) the term “telework” means the performance
11 of any portion of work functions by an employee out-
12 side the normal place of business under cir-
13 cumstances which reduce or eliminate the need to
14 commute.

15 (f) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out the
16 program under this section shall terminate at the end of
17 fiscal year 2009.

18 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
19 authorized to be appropriated to the Small Business Ad-
20 ministration \$5,000,000 to carry out this section.

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