

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1529

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 3 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4406) to amend the Small Business Act to improve the small business development centers program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4406

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. USE OF AUTHORIZED ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

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

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

(2) by inserting after section 48 the following new section:

“SEC. 49. USE OF AUTHORIZED ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

“(a) EXPANDED SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator shall only deliver entrepreneurial development services, entrepreneurial education, and support for the development and maintenance of the Regional Innovation Clusters Program (or similar business training services) through a program authorized under—

“(A) section 7(j), 7(m), 8(a), 8(b)(1), 21, 22, 29, or 32 of this Act; or

“(B) sections 358 or 389 of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to services provided to assist small business concerns owned by an Indian tribe (as such term is defined in section 8(a)(13)).

“(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning on the first December 1 after the date of the enactment of this section, the Administrator shall annually submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on the following:

“(1) All entrepreneurial development activities undertaken during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report through a program described in subsection (a), including—

“(A) a description and operating details for each program and the activities performed under each program;

“(B) operating circulars, manuals, and standard operating procedures for each program;

“(C) a description of the process used to award grants under such programs;

“(D) a list of all recipients of awards under a program described in subsection (a), contractors, and vendors (including organization name and location) and the amount of awards provided during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report for such programs and activities performed under such programs;

“(E) the total amount of funding obligated for such programs and activities for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report; and

“(F) the names and titles of the individuals responsible for such programs.

“(2) For entrepreneurial development activities undertaken during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report through the Small Business Development Center Program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’)—

“(A) the number of individuals counseled or trained through the Program;

“(B) the total number of hours of counseling and training services provided through the Program;

“(C) the demographics of participants in the Program, which shall include the gender, race, and age of each such participant;

“(D) the number of participants in the Program who are veterans;

“(E) the number of new businesses started by participants in the Program;

“(F) to the extent practicable, the number of jobs supported, created, or retained with assistance from small business development centers;

“(G) the amount of capital secured by participants in the Program, including through loans and equity investment;

“(H) the number of participants in the Program receiving financial assistance, including the type and dollar amount, under the loan programs of the Administration;

“(I) an estimate of gross receipts, including (to the extent practicable) a description of any change in revenue, of small business concerns assisted through the Program;

“(J) the number of referrals to other resources and programs of the Administration;

“(K) the results of satisfaction surveys of participants in the Program, including a summary of any comments received from such participants; and

“(L) any recommendations by the Administrator to improve the delivery of services by the Program.”.

SEC. 3. MARKETING OF SERVICES.

Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(o) NO PROHIBITION OF MARKETING OF SERVICES.—An applicant receiving a grant under this section may market and advertise the services of such applicant to individuals and small business concerns.”.

SEC. 4. DATA COLLECTION BY THE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER ASSOCIATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 21(a)(3)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(3)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “as provided in this section and” and inserting “as provided in this section.”; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and (iv) governing data col-

lection activities related to applicants receiving grants under this section”.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT ON DATA COLLECTION.—Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648), as amended by section 3 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(p) ANNUAL REPORT ON DATA COLLECTION.—The Administrator shall annually submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on any data collection activities related to the Small Business Development Center Program.”.

(c) WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION.

(1) ESTABLISHMENT AND STUDY.—The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall establish a group to be known as the “Data Collection Working Group” consisting of entrepreneurial development grant recipients, the associations and organizations representing such recipients, and officials from the Small Business Administration, to carry out a study to determine the best methods for conducting data collection activities and create or revise existing systems dedicated to data collection.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Data Collection Working Group shall issue a report to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate containing the findings and determinations made in carrying out the study required under paragraph (1), including—

(A) recommendations for revising existing data collection practices for the Small Business Development Center Program; and

(B) a proposed plan for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to implement such recommendations.

SEC. 5. FEES FROM PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COSPONSORSHIPS.

Section 21(a)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) FEES FROM PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COSPONSORSHIPS.—A small business development center that participates in a private partnership or cosponsorship, in which the Administrator or designee of the Administrator also participates, may collect fees or other income related to the operation of such private partnership or cosponsorship.”.

SEC. 6. EQUITY FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

Subclause (I) of section 21(a)(4)(C)(v) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(4)(C)(v)(I)) is amended to read as follows:

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts made available in any fiscal year to carry out this section, not more than \$600,000 may be used by the Administrator to pay expenses enumerated in subparagraphs (B) through (D) of section 20(a)(1).”.

SEC. 7. CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS.

Section 21(a)(7)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(7)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “or telephone number” and inserting “, telephone number, or email address”; and

(2) by inserting “, or the nature or content of such assistance, to any State, local, or Federal agency, or to any third party” after “receiving assistance under this section”.

SEC. 8. LIMITATION ON AWARD OF GRANTS TO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648), as amended by section 4, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking “any women’s business center operating pursuant to section 29.”;

(B) by striking “or a women’s business center operating pursuant to section 29”; and

(C) by striking “and women’s business centers operating pursuant to section 29”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(q) LIMITATION ON AWARD OF GRANTS.—Except for not-for-profit institutions of higher education, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator may not award a grant or contract to, or enter into a cooperative agreement with, an entity under this section unless that entity—

“(1) received a grant or contract from, or entered into a cooperative agreement with, the Administrator under this section before the date of the enactment of this subsection; and

“(2) seeks to renew such a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement after such date.”.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The amendments made by this section may not be construed as prohibiting a women’s business center (as described under section 29 of the Small Business Act) from receiving a subgrant from an entity receiving a grant under section 21 of the Small Business Act.

SEC. 9. MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

Section 21(a)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(3)), as amended by section 4, is further amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “upon, with full participation of both parties,” and inserting “upon with the full participation of all parties (including the association authorized in subparagraph (A)), and carried out”;

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and develop” and inserting “and negotiate the development of”; and

(3) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by striking “Whereas”;

(B) by inserting “Program” after “Center”;

(C) by striking “National” and inserting “national”; and

(D) by moving such subparagraph two ems to the left.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 21(a)(4)(C) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(4)(C)) is amended—

(1) in clause (vii), by striking “subparagraph” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “subparagraph \$175,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2023.”; and

(2) in clause (viii), by striking “shall reserve not less than \$1,000,000” and inserting “shall reserve not more than \$2,000,000”.

SEC. 11. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4406, the Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2019.

Mr. Speaker, as always, before we address the many benefits of the bill, I just want to thank the ranking member and his staff for all of their collaboration and hard work to bring this bipartisan package of bills to the floor. Our committee prides itself on our ability to put the noise aside and get meaningful work accomplished.

These bills are especially critical because they strengthen the entrepreneurial network of small businesses contributing to our country every day. It is once again a reminder of the importance of working across the aisle and getting things done for America’s 30 million small businesses.

H.R. 4406 bolsters the Small Business Development Center, or SBDC, Network, which is the Small Business Administration’s largest entrepreneurial resource partner.

The network delivers free face-to-face counseling and at-cost training in all aspects of business management to new and existing small firms. The services include, but are in no way limited to, assisting small businesses with developing a business plan, accessing capital, marketing, regulatory compliance, technology development, and international trade.

The benefits of the program are tangible to businessowners and the Federal taxpayer. For every Federal dollar spent on SBDCs, \$2 is returned to the U.S. Treasury, nearly \$3 to the States, and approximately \$48 in new capital is generated.

Unfortunately, over the years, Congress has asked them to take on additional responsibilities, ranging from cybersecurity to export promotion. Increasing the authorization level to \$175 million each year, just as this bill does, will allow the program to grow and reach more American entrepreneurs.

H.R. 4406 also requires regular reporting to Congress on new metrics to help us better assess the program and how improvements can be made in the future.

Starting a business is not for the faint of heart, and strengthening the network will enable SBDCs to continue providing the in-depth business training for aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GOLDEN and Vice Ranking Member RADEWAGEN for leading this effort to improve the program, measure its success, and increase awareness of the SBDC program and its many valuable services.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4406, the Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2019.

Mr. Speaker, before I speak on the bill, I would like to thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ for working with us in such a bipartisan manner. It is surely refreshing in this age of intense partisanship to work together the way that we do, and have for many years now, to improve the programs offered by the SBA. So I want to thank the chairwoman again for her leadership on the committee.

The Small Business Development Center program, or SBDC, is the largest of the SBA’s entrepreneurial development programs, with locations in all 50 States and also in all four territories.

In fiscal year 2019, more than 250,000 clients received low-cost training, and nearly 200,000 clients received no-cost business consulting.

H.R. 4406, this bill, includes several updates based on feedback from H.R. 1702, the Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of last year, 2018, which passed the House in May of 2018.

Over 99 percent of all businesses in our Nation are small, and those businesses employ nearly 60 million Americans. The U.S. economy depends on the success of small businesses. Providing support to entrepreneurs and small business owners must be a priority for this Congress. SBDCs offer that support. They offer minimal or no-cost business counseling and training to would-be entrepreneurs and existing small business owners, alike.

The support offered at these centers ranges from creating the business plans to commercial promotion and branding and navigating the international trade market. The importance of the assistance offered SBDCs cannot really be overstated.

It is not just the single entrepreneur who benefits; our Nation benefits as well. For every Federal dollar appropriated in the SBDC program, \$43.50 in new capital is generated. The legislation we are considering today will only serve to increase the positive impact of SBDCs to our entrepreneurs and national economy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. GOLDEN) and the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) for their hard work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. GOLDEN), the sponsor of the bill and chair of the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure.

Mr. GOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ for yielding me the time.

Since coming to Congress 10 months ago, I have been focused on protecting

jobs in the State of Maine, and that means helping small businesses succeed.

Thousands of small businesses in my State have launched or grown with help from small business development centers, or, as you heard them referred to, SBDCs.

Just last year, SBDCs served over 1,500 small businesses in my State, helped to start 136 new businesses, and worked to protect or create more than 800 jobs. Here are just a few of the small businesses that I have heard from directly in my district about this program:

SBDCs helped The Maine Meal in Skowhegan purchase a building in order to launch their new business;

The Milk House in Monmouth received the accounting and tax advice that they needed to help grow their business from an SBDC adviser, an important farming and dairy industry right there;

SBDCs helped Lost Valley Ski Area in Auburn, just across the river from my hometown, to develop a business plan so that they could secure the financing they needed to acquire and continue the Lost Valley Ski Area, which is very important to our community, particularly during the winter months.

I have visited each of these businesses and seen their work firsthand. These are just a few of the thousands of SBDC success stories in the State of Maine.

Given that small business development centers are the largest resource partner to SBA, it is particularly important for Congress to keep the program up to date and performing at a high level for small businesses throughout the country.

In Maine, the State's lead SBDC runs 11 outreach locations in my congressional district alone, in partnership with regional economic development entities, enabling small businesses in Maine's rural communities to access valuable assistance.

While the centers have had many successes, we have also learned lessons about ways to improve the programs in the year since it was last reauthorized. That is why I am excited to lead this bill, alongside Vice Ranking Member RADEWAGEN, to reauthorize the program. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank her for her support of the bill. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

The Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2019 will make a number of positive changes to improve oversight, better enable SBDCs to partner with other organizations, bolster the center accreditation process, and improve the voice of SBDCs in setting the program's direction.

I am particularly glad that the bill will help broaden rural small business access to this assistance by clarifying that centers are allowed to market and advertise their services. Rural access to SBA resources is key for States like

Maine and many rural communities all over the country.

Finally, the bill will reauthorize appropriations at the level of \$175 million for fiscal years 2020 through 2023, reaffirming Congress' commitment to the program.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank the chairwoman and the ranking member and, in particular, their staffs for forging a bipartisan path forward on the reauthorization of this program.

I would also like to thank Vice Ranking Member RADEWAGEN for coleading this bill with me, as well as Mr. HAGEDORN, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. FITZPATRICK for joining me as cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill to keep the SBDC program up to date for the good of America's small businesses.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. We have no further Members to speak on the bill, and I will be very brief.

The SBDC program positively affects hundreds of thousands of entrepreneurs each year and offers a significant return on investment for American taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, bipartisan bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

America's 30 million small businesses account for more than 56 million jobs and create two out of three private-sector jobs in the United States. The SBA offers a wide range of free or low-cost counseling and training services through its entrepreneurial ecosystem to help entrepreneurs launch and grow their businesses.

H.R. 4406 makes a number of improvements to the SBDC program. It will enable more collaboration between the centers and SBA, improve the ability of this committee to oversee its performance, while also clarifying other rules, such as confidentiality requirements.

Most importantly, this legislation is a much-needed reauthorization of the program for 4 years at greater authorization levels.

It is time for Congress to prove its commitment to entrepreneurs all over the country by strengthening one of the greatest resources, the SBA SBDC program. It is a commonsense move and one supported by the Association of Small Business Development Centers.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the ranking member for his support, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4406, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4405) to amend the Small Business Act to improve the women's business center program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4405

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended to read as follows:

SEC. 29. WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Assistant Administrator' means the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Women's Business Ownership established under subsection (k).

"(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means—

"(A) an organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code;

"(B) a State, regional, or local economic development organization, so long as the organization certifies that grant funds received under this section will not be commingled with other funds;

"(C) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), unless such institution is currently receiving a grant under section 21;

"(D) a development, credit, or finance corporation chartered by a State, so long as the corporation certifies that grant funds received under this section will not be commingled with other funds; or

"(E) any combination of entities listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

"(3) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.—The term 'small business concern owned and controlled by women' has the meaning given under section 3(n).

"(4) WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER.—The term 'women's business center' means the location at which counseling and training on the management, operations (including manufacturing, services, and retail), access to capital, international trade, Government procurement opportunities, and any other matter that is needed to start, maintain, or expand a small business concern owned and controlled by women.

"(5) WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIATION.—The term 'Women's Business Center Association' means a membership organization formed by women's business centers to pursue matters of common concern.