

the ranking member's efforts on this. I urge all my colleagues to support this.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, fraud associated with the EIDL program is a serious matter. Due to mismanagement and poor oversight capabilities, the EIDL program has been overwhelmed with fraud.

As I mentioned earlier, the SBA's inspector general has found more than \$80 billion within the \$400 billion program that could potentially be fraudulent. This represents a double-digit fraud rate.

However, recouping these dollars has just begun and the current statute of limitations is limited. My bill, H.R. 7334, will ensure the statute of limitations runway is recalibrated and extended out to 10 years. By passing this bill, Congress will allow the time needed to correct all wrongdoing within the program.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7334, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, our Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies are diligently investigating and prosecuting pandemic loan fraud, and we must continue to support those efforts, whether in the COVID EIDL program or the Paycheck Protection Program.

We all agree that anyone who took advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime crisis to commit fraud and enrich themselves at the expense of hard-working Main Street businesses must be held accountable.

It is unacceptable to allow anyone to get off the hook for defrauding a government relief program simply because the statute of limitations expired. We cannot let this happen, and we must pass this bill.

Once again, I thank our Ranking Member, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, for introducing this important measure, and I am pleased to support it.

I also thank all the members of the Small Business Committee for their bipartisan work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Madam 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. 7334.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

HUBZONE PRICE EVALUATION PREFERENCE CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2021

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5879) to amend the Small Business Act to clarify the application of the price evaluation preference for qualified HUBZone small business concerns to certain contracts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5879

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 "Hubzone Price Evaluation Preference Clarification Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. APPLICATION OF PRICE EVALUATION PREFERENCE FOR QUALIFIED HUBZONE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS TO CERTAIN CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 31(c)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657a(c)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(E) APPLICATION TO CERTAIN CONTRACTS.—The requirements of subparagraph (A) shall apply to an unrestricted order issued under an unrestricted multiple award contract or the unrestricted portion of a contract that is partially set aside for competition restricted to small business concerns."

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall revise any rule or guidance to implement the requirements of this section.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5879, the HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference Clarification Act of 2021.

The HUBZone program is a contracting assistance program based on locality. It helps small businesses in urban and rural communities gain preferential access to Federal procurement

opportunities. By ensuring that small businesses in disadvantaged communities participate in the Federal marketplace, it, in turn, boosts job creation and economic growth.

One of the main incentives of the HUBZone program is the price evaluation preference. This tool gives a slight competitive advantage to HUBZone firms competing against large companies. In doing so, it meets the objectives of the program because every contract awarded to a qualified HUBZone firm is an opportunity for developing and uplifting America's most distressed communities.

Unfortunately, this tool is not being used as often as it should be due to agencies misinterpreting that it does not apply to orders. There is nothing in the Small Business Act that excludes the price evaluation preference from being used at the ordering level, and it is our intention that it be used at that level.

Given the prevalence of government-wide and agency-wide vehicles, it is now necessary to state in clear and unequivocal terms that the price evaluation preference does apply to orders. This is precisely the goal of H.R. 5879. With this clarification, this legislation incentivizes the use of this important tool so that one day we can finally meet the 3 percent HUBZone contracting goal and, ultimately, bring economic development to those communities that need it the most.

I thank Representatives NEWMAN and SALAZAR for leading this effort, which will bolster the HUBZone program.

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

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) be allowed to manage the remainder of the time for the minority.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of H.R. 5879, the HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference Clarification Act of 2021.

The SBA's contracting programs deliver for this Nation's smallest businesses and the country's smallest contractors. Unfortunately, consolidation with all of the Federal Government's contracting programs continues to be problematic. Our committee has examined many of these programs and has offered solutions that would deliver change.

H.R. 5879 takes important steps within the HUBZone program and ensures that the 10 percent price preference is available on all task orders within large multiple award contracts.

I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR),

the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure, for working in a collaborative manner to address the HUBZone program. Bills like this have the ability to make a difference within Federal contracting, and I commend the Chair for bringing this bill forward.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5879, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN).

Ms. NEWMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ for all her great work on the Small Business Committee.

I rise in strong support of my bipartisan bill, the HUBZone Price Evaluation Preference Clarification Act. This legislation is designed to expand contracting opportunities to millions of small businesses located in historically underutilized business zones.

More specifically, it would clarify the program's price evaluation language to ensure adequate spending toward HUBZone small businesses, giving more communities the resources they need to build vibrantly. We must ensure that small business in every community is and can benefit from Federal contracting.

By passing this legislation, we will take a crucial step toward a more equitable distribution of resources to small businesses throughout our country. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Federal contracting remains a significant endeavor for many of the Nation's small businesses. H.R. 5879 ensures one of these programs, the HUBZone program, is ready to assist small business contractors. This legislation, which passed favorably out of committee by a voice vote, will level the playing field within the program.

I thank the Chair for bringing this legislation through regular order, and I thank the sponsor and cosponsor for working to address these issues. I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The statutory goal of awarding 3 percent of all prime Federal contracts to HUBZone firms has never been met. H.R. 5879 will enable agencies to better meet this goal by eliminating all ambiguity and clarifying that the HUBZone price evaluation preference applies to orders.

I commend the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN), the sponsor of the

bill, and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR), the cosponsor, for working together on this sensible piece of legislation. H.R. 5879 will undoubtedly strengthen the HUBZone program which, in turn, will create jobs and stimulate local economies across the Nation.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 5879 "Hubzone Price Evaluation Preference Clarification Act".

The Small Business Act is instrumental in allowing small businesses to remain competitive amid complex markets.

Small businesses are the engine of our economy and exist as the backbone of local communities across the nation. They are essential contributors to our society, as we must support their growth and progress.

The Hubzone program supports small businesses that are part of historically underutilized business zones. These zones are low-income communities that have increased levels of poverty and high unemployment rates.

The program works to target inequities that make it at times difficult for small businesses within these economically distressed communities to compete.

Within the Small Business Act, preferential price evaluations are given to small businesses participating in the Hubzone program.

Price evaluation preferences ensure that a price offered by a qualified Hubzone small business entity is deemed lower than the price offered by another offeror if the qualified Hubzone business's price is not more than 10 percent higher than the price offered by the otherwise lowest offeror.

These price evaluation preferences are a key feature which allow Hubzone contracts to act as an economic boost for small businesses within high unemployment and low-income areas.

These price evaluation preferences help level the playing field for small businesses that are often minority-owned. In Houston alone, nearly 35 percent of small businesses are minority-owned.

The Hubzone program gives these businesses a chance to compete in competitive markets. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, these small businesses need institutional support more than ever.

H.R. 5879 is necessary to clarify how small businesses can be eligible for price evaluation preferences outlined in the Small Business Act.

The number of Hubzone locations, or areas with historically underutilized business zones, has nearly doubled in the past 20 years according to the Small Business Administration.

Small businesses and the communities they benefit depend on the success of the Hubzone program. It is vital to detail how small businesses can receive benefits from the program.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for passage of H.R. 5879.

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. 5879.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

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SMALL BUSINESS WORKFORCE PIPELINE ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7622) to amend the Small Business Act to include requirements relating to apprenticeship program assistance for small business development centers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7622

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 Workforce Pipeline Act of 2022".

SEC. 2. SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM ASSISTANCE.

Section 21(c)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (T), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in clause (v) of the first subparagraph (U) (relating to succession planning), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in second subparagraph (U) (relating to training on domestic and international intellectual property protections)—

(A) in clause (ii)(II), by striking the period at the end and inserting "and"; and

(B) by redesignating such subparagraph as subparagraph (V); and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(W) providing information and assistance to small business concerns, including by disseminating relevant information from the Department of Labor and other Federal agencies, on how to establish and improve—

"(i) work-based learning opportunities (as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302));

"(ii) apprenticeship programs registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; commonly known as the 'National Apprenticeship Act'; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);

"(iii) pre-apprenticeship programs; and

"(iv) job training programs."

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam 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?