

with many other colleagues in a couple of different letters to the President, to allow the mask mandate to expire a few months ago. So finally, I was relieved and pleased to hear of this announcement by the judge.

Our celebration was short-lived, however, as the Biden administration soon announced they would sue to try to repeal the judge's ruling and force back in place mask mandates for people traveling.

Science has repeatedly found that the masks are not nearly as effective at preventing the spread of COVID as they previously had thought. It really boils down to that government likes controlling people with this. They like scaring them. They like putting them in a box and saying, If you don't do this, you might die.

People, if they are forced into having mask mandates on public transportation once again, there is going to be a lot of anger coming out that no mid-terms or nothing else will save if they force this onto us.

□ 1415

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 the yeas and nays are ordered.

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

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6445) to amend the Small Business Act to require an annual report on entrepreneurial development programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6445

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 2022".

SEC. 2. ANNUAL REPORT ON ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 10 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 639) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) ANNUAL REPORT ON ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.—

“(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall include in the comprehensive annual report required under subsection (a) the following data:

“(A) A list of all entrepreneurial development activities undertaken during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report through a covered program, including—

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

“(ii) operating circulars, manuals, and standard operating procedures for each such covered program;

“(iii) a description of the process used to make awards relating to the provision of entrepreneurial development activities under each such covered program;

“(iv) a list of all recipients of awards under each such covered program and the amount of each such award; and

“(v) a list of contractors, including the name and location of such contractor, of an award recipient.

“(B) The total amount of funding obligated for a covered program and the entrepreneurial development activities conducted under each such covered program for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report.

“(C) The names and titles of the individuals responsible for carrying out a covered program.

“(D) For entrepreneurial development activities undertaken during the fiscal year preceding the date of the report through the Small Business Development Center Program established under section 21 (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’)—

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

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

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

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

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

“(vi) to the extent practicable, the number of jobs supported, created, or retained with assistance from the Program;

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

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

“(ix) 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;

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

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

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

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) COVERED PROGRAM.—The term ‘covered program’ means a program authorized under section 7(j), 7(m), 8(a), 8(b)(1), 21, 22, 29, 32, or 34 of this Act.

“(B) ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY.—The term ‘entrepreneurial development activity’ means an activity related to the delivery of entrepreneurial development services, entrepreneurial education, or support for the development and maintenance of business training services carried out through a covered 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 use up to 10 percent of their budget to 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 collection 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 Administration 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”; and

(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 2 ems to the left.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR FORMULA GRANTS RECEIVED BY STATES.

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 2022 through 2025.”; 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. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO MATCHING FUNDS.

Section 21(a)(4)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(4)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Such matching funds shall be evidenced by good faith assertions from the applicant, and the expenditure of matching funds shall not be made a prerequisite of the reimbursement of Federal funds, notwithstanding the final reconciliation payment for the close-out of each award.”.

SEC. 12. CONTRACT PREREQUISITES.

Section 21(a)(5)(B) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(a)(5)(B)) is amended by

striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “Each contract shall be deemed approved under subparagraph (A) unless the Associate Administrator certifies in writing within 15 business days after award of the contract that the contract will not provide assistance to small business concerns and that performance of the contract will hinder the small business development center in carrying out the terms of the grant received by the small business development center under this section.”.

SEC. 13. DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

Section 21(h)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(h)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) MARKETING.—The Associate Administrator for Small Business Development Centers shall market and advertise the Small Business Development Center Program and participants in such Program as a resource available to any Federal program providing assistance to small business concerns, including the FAST program established under section 34.”.

SEC. 14. 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 Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) 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, before I begin, I thank all of our members for their tireless work on the bills before us today. As we head into National Small Business Week, the legislation we are passing today showcases the bipartisan nature of our committee and highlights how Congress supports the American entrepreneurial spirit.

I rise today in support of H.R. 6445, the Small Business Development Center Improvement Act of 2022, introduced by Representative GOLDEN from Maine and the late Representative Hagedorn from Minnesota.

I will take a moment to remember the late Representative Hagedorn and his work as a member of the Small Business Committee. Before and throughout his illness, Mr. Hagedorn maintained his steadfast commitment to small businesses. My thoughts con-

tinue to be with Mr. Hagedorn’s family, friends, and staff.

Today’s bill is a testament to his dedication to his community and small firms, and I am glad to honor his memory with this legislation.

H.R. 6445 strengthens SBA’s largest resource partner, the Small Business Development Center, or SBDC, network, by modernizing the program to meet the needs of today’s small businesses and entrepreneurs.

SBDCs deliver free face-to-face and virtual counseling and training in all aspects of business management to small business owners and entrepreneurs across the country. The services include: assisting entrepreneurs with developing a business plan, accessing capital, creating a marketing plan, procuring government contracts, strengthening cybersecurity protections, and entering into international trade.

Through their network of 62 lead centers, managing nearly 1,000 outreach locations, SBDCs assist small business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the country.

SBDCs are a remarkable investment of taxpayer dollars with every Federal dollar spent on the SBDC program generating \$1.99 in Federal revenue, a nearly 100 percent return on investment.

To build on this success, H.R. 6445 increases the authorization level to \$175 million for the next four fiscal years, allowing the program to grow and reach more of America’s 30 million small firms.

The bill also clarifies that SBDCs, and the SBA, may actively market their services. In the Small Business Committee, we often say that SBDCs are the best-kept small business secret.

This bill will go a long way to ensuring more small employers and entrepreneurs are aware that free or low-cost counseling and training exists to help them on their path to success.

I thank the sponsors for leading this effort to modernize and improve the SBDC program and its many valuable services. I urge Members to support this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6445, the Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2022.

Before we begin, I will highlight next week’s National Small Business Week celebration. This will be a time to honor and reflect upon some of America’s hardest working businesses and their employees.

It is with this in mind that I am glad that we are gathering on the House floor today to discuss a number of bills that improve and enhance the Small Business Administration.

Importantly, all five bills that we will be discussing today have been favorably reported out of our committee

in a bipartisan manner. I thank the chair for working with me to advance these bills to the floor.

Small Business Development Centers provide valuable resources and free counseling to entrepreneurs across this great Nation. This Congress, I have heard from several small businesses who have benefited from the SBDC's services.

In my home State of Missouri, the Missouri Small Business Development Center helped a local brewery create a business plan and apply for a 504 loan to grow their business. They also helped a veteran-owned food shipping business scale up and find new partnerships during the pandemic.

They supported countless small businesses in accessing SBA's COVID relief programs such as the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster loans. I am grateful for their wide range of services to entrepreneurs.

This important legislation will allow SBDCs to continue their important services and expand their network of small business beneficiaries through marketing.

This legislation also ensures SBDC's client information is protected and that cooperation, communication, and collaboration between SBA and SBDC networks is improved.

I thank Mr. GOLDEN for working on this legislation with the late Jim Hagedorn. As we all know, Jim was a champion for small businesses and a truly invaluable member of our Small Business Committee. He will certainly be missed. He leaves a huge hole on our side of the aisle with regard to support of small businesses, and we remember him today.

I also thank the chair for working with me in a bipartisan manner to advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to ensure that SBDCs can continue serving our small business constituents and communities, and to support H.R. 6445, which was passed favorably out of our committee by a voice vote and passed the House in a similar form last Congress.

The Small Business Development Center network is critical in assisting our small business owners during their entrepreneurial business journey. H.R. 6445 will enhance and improve this journey and ensure the program remains strong and vibrant on behalf of America's small businesses.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6445, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

There is no question that we need to support the cornerstone of the SBA's entrepreneurial programs, the Small Business Development Centers. SBDCs are SBA's premier resource partner with centers in communities across the country. Their free or low-cost counseling and training have helped sustain small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the pandemic.

H.R. 6445 continues the long tradition of SBDC's work to meet the ever-evolving needs of America's entrepreneurs as they emerge from the pandemic. Strengthening the SBDC network will, in turn, provide the support our small businesses need in order to thrive.

Today's bill is endorsed by America's SBDCs, an association representing the 63 SBDC networks and their nearly 1,000 centers.

I thank Mr. GOLDEN and remember the late Mr. Hagedorn for their bipartisan work on this bill.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and 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. 6445.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6441) 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. 6441

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 Improvement Act of 2022".

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, if 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), unless such institution is currently receiving a grant under section 21;

"(D) a development, credit, or finance corporation chartered by a State, if such 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) RESOURCE PARTNERS.—The term 'resource partners' means small business development centers, chapters of the Service Corps of Retired Executives (established under section 8(b)(1)(B)), and Veteran Business Outreach Centers (described under section 32).

"(5) 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.

"(6) 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.

"(b) AUTHORITY.—

"(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Women's Business Center Program under which the Administrator may enter into a cooperative agreement with an eligible entity to provide a grant to such eligible entity to operate one or more women's business centers for the benefit of small business concerns owned and controlled by women.

"(2) USE OF FUNDS.—A women's business center established using funds made available under this section shall be designed to provide entrepreneurial counseling and training that meets the needs of the small business concerns owned and controlled by women, especially such concerns owned and controlled by women who are both socially and economically disadvantaged (as defined under section 8(a)), and shall provide—

"(A) financial assistance, including counseling and training on how to—

"(i) apply for and secure business credit and investment capital;

"(ii) prepare and present financial statements; and

"(iii) manage cash flow and other financial operations of a small business concern;

"(B) management assistance, including counseling and training on how to plan, organize, staff, direct, and control each major activity and function of a small business concern; and

"(C) marketing assistance, including counseling and training on how to—

"(i) identify and segment domestic and international market opportunities;

"(ii) prepare and execute marketing plans;

"(iii) develop pricing strategies;

"(iv) locate contract opportunities;

"(v) negotiate contracts; and

"(vi) use various public relations and advertising techniques.

"(3) TYPES OF GRANTS.—

"(A) INITIAL GRANT.—The amount of an initial grant, which shall be for a 5-year term, provided under this subsection to an eligible entity shall be not more than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is annually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect the change in inflation).

"(B) CONTINUATION GRANTS.—The Administrator may award a continuation grant, which shall be for a 5-year term, of not more than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is annually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect the change in inflation) to an eligible entity that received an initial grant under subparagraph (A). There shall be no limitation on the number of continuation grants an eligible entity may receive under this section.

"(c) APPLICATION.—