

Mr. Speaker, the average cost of a data breach in the United States is over \$9 million. For small businesses operating on razor-thin margins, an event like this can be catastrophic.

Small businesses must be confident that SBA systems are fully operational and capable of protecting their sensitive data. H.R. 3462 will go a long way toward rebuilding trust in the agency's IT infrastructure.

I thank my colleagues, Mr. CROW of Colorado and Mrs. KIM of California, for their leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to concur with the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 3462, 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 concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 3462.

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. ROSENDALE. 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.

#### STEP IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8844) to reauthorize the State Trade Expansion Program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8844

*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 "STEP Improvement Act of 2022".

#### SEC. 2. STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM.

(a) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 22(1)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(1)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (i), by inserting ", including a budget plan for use of funds awarded under this subsection" before the period at the end; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iii) TIMING.—The Associate Administrator shall—

"(I) publish information on how to apply for a grant under this subsection, including specific calculations and other determinations used to award such a grant, not later than March 31 of each year;

"(II) establish a deadline for the submission of applications that is not earlier than 60 days after the date on which the information is published under subclause (I) and that is not later than May 31; and

"(III) announce grant recipients not later than August 31 of each year."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

"(E) APPLICATION INFORMATION.—The Associate Administrator shall clearly commu-

nicate to applicants and grant recipients any information about State Trade Expansion Program, including—

"(i) for each unsuccessful applicant for a grant awarded under this subsection, recommendations to improve a subsequent application for such a grant; and

"(ii) for each successful applicant for such a grant, an explanation for the amount awarded, if different from the amount requested in the application.

"(F) BUDGET PLAN REVISIONS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—A State receiving a grant under this subsection may revise the budget plan of the State submitted under subparagraph (D) after the disbursement of grant funds if—

"(I) the revision complies with allowable uses of grant funds under this subsection; and

"(II) such State submits notification of the revision to the Associate Administrator.

"(ii) EXCEPTION.—If a revision under clause (i) reallocates 10 percent or more of the amounts described in the budget plan of the State submitted under subparagraph (D), the State may not implement the revised budget plan without the approval of the Associate Administrator, unless the Associate Administrator fails to approve or deny the revised plan within 20 days after receipt of such revised plan."

(b) SURVEY.—Section 22(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

"(7) SURVEY.—The Associate Administrator shall conduct an annual survey of each State that received a grant under this subsection during the preceding year to solicit feedback on the program and develop best practices for grantees."

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 22(1)(8)(B) of the Small Business Act, as redesignated by subsection (b), is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) in subclause (III), by inserting ", including the total number of eligible small business concerns assisted by the program (disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and rural small business concerns)" before the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subclause (IV), by striking "and" at the end;

(C) in subclause (V)—

(i) by striking "description of best practices" and inserting "detailed description of best practices"; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new subclauses:

"(VI) an analysis of the performance metrics described in clause (iii), including a determination of whether or not any goals relating to such performance metrics were met, and an analysis of the survey described in paragraph (7); and

"(VII) a description of lessons learned by grant recipients under this subsection that may apply to other assistance provided by the Administration."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iii) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—Annually, the Associate Administrator shall collect data on eligible small business concerns assisted by the program for the following performance metrics:

"(I) Total number of such concerns, disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and con-

trolled by women, and rural small business concerns.

"(II) Total dollar amount of export sales by eligible small business concerns assisted by the program.

"(III) Number of such concerns that have not previously participated in an activity described in paragraph (2).

"(IV) Number of such concerns that, because of participation in the program, have accessed a new market.

"(V) Number of such concerns that, because of participation in the program, have created new jobs.

"(VI) Number of such concerns participating in foreign trade missions or trade show exhibitions, disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and rural small business concerns."

(d) EXPANSION OF DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—Section 22(1)(1)(A) of the Small Business Act is amended—

(1) in clause (iii)(II), by adding "and" at the end;

(2) by striking clause (iv); and

(3) by redesignating clause (v) as clause (iv).

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 22(1)(10) of the Small Business Act, as redesignated by subsection (b), is amended by striking "fiscal years 2016 through 2020" and inserting "fiscal years 2023 through 2026".

(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Associate Administrator for International Trade of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the State Trade Expansion Program established under section 22(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(1)) that includes a description of—

(1) the process developed for review of revised budget plans submitted under section 22(1)(3)(F) of the Small Business Act, as added by this Act;

(2) any changes made to streamline the application process to remove duplicative requirements and create a more transparent process;

(3) the process developed to share best practices by States described in section 22(1)(8)(B)(i)(V) (as redesignated by this Act), particularly for first-time grant recipients under the State Trade Expansion Program or grant recipients that are facing problems using grant funds; and

(4) the process developed to communicate, both verbally and in writing, relevant information about the State Trade Expansion Program to all grant recipients in a timely manner.

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.

□ 1445

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8844, the STEP Improvement Act of 2022.

This bill reauthorizes the SBA's State Trade Expansion Program, or STEP, as we call it. This program is a proven and effective program that gives small businesses the tools they need to enter and thrive in the global marketplace.

Since its inception in 2010, STEP has helped firms access new markets and support \$832 million in export sales in fiscal year 2021 alone.

The program offers grants to all 50 States, U.S. territories, and D.C. This financial assistance aids export-related activities such as developing e-commerce capabilities, participating in export trade shows and foreign trade missions, creating international marketing materials and website globalization.

Our committee held two hearings on STEP this Congress where we heard that demand for the program continues to increase across the country, and improvements could be made to streamline the program.

To that end, the STEP Improvement Act of 2022 authorizes \$30 million per year through fiscal year 2026, and mandates a standardized application process, increases grant spending flexibility, improves communication between the SBA and States, and enhances reporting requirements.

The legislation allows businesses less than 1 year old to participate in the program, which would allow STEP to provide services to the most innovative small businesses that are exporting faster than ever before.

The legislation has the strong support of the State International Development Organizations. I thank the bill's sponsors, Mr. EVANS, Mrs. KIM of California, Ms. NEWMAN, and Mr. FLOOD for their continued bipartisan work to improve STEP.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 8844, 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. 8844, the STEP Improvement Act.

Small businesses are the drivers of innovation, leaders in job creation, and beacons of American ingenuity across the globe.

The State Trade Expansion Program, or STEP, is a valuable tool for small businesses looking to export and expand into global markets. This program has made a real impact on small business owners who have used the program to internationalize their websites and create relationships on foreign market sales trips.

In my district, this program has helped a veteran-owned business expand into 10 countries in Southeast

Asia and helped a consulting company transition from zero percent to 75 percent international sales.

The legislation will ensure small businesses can continue to benefit from STEP by reauthorizing the program through 2026. Additionally, H.R. 8844 will improve the program by creating a standardized application process.

Further, the legislation requires the SBA to report best practices, lessons learned, and the program's performance metrics.

I applaud Representatives KIM, FLOOD, EVANS, and NEWMAN for their bipartisan work on this legislation.

I also thank the chair for holding multiple hearings on the topic and for moving this legislation forward.

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS), the author of the bill.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, the State Trade Expansion Program Improvement Act.

This bill would reauthorize STEP for 4 more years and improve it in several ways, including creating a standardized application process and collecting performance metrics.

As a member of both the Small Business Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, I see trade as a tool in the economic toolbox to help small businesses expand and grow.

Since 2011, STEP has been assisting small businesses with export development through the use of grants and introduction into the international marketplace.

Trade helps to create and support jobs, which is good for the economy, community, and families in Pennsylvania. Over 1.5 million jobs were supported by international trade in 2019, which accounted for 20 percent of all jobs in the State.

Further, in 2020, nearly 15,000 companies exported goods from Pennsylvania of which 88 percent were small-and medium-sized enterprises.

Coming from the city of Philadelphia, where nearly half of the population is African American, I am especially interested in finding ways to improve minority entrepreneurship.

Many minority businesses and small businesses have a competitive advantage in conducting international business due to their cultural connections. It is important, and I thank the chair for showing the leadership to at least have this discussion.

STEP has helped minority entrepreneurs gain access to the international marketplace, which allows their businesses to grow and thrive.

I was excited to see that STEP awarded my home State of Pennsylvania a \$400,000 grant in 2022. This will go a long way to supporting small businesses across the State.

STEP needs to be reauthorized and improved. I am asking my colleagues

to support it. I thank the chairperson and my colleagues on the other side for making this a bipartisan effort and a collective interest.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FLOOD), one of our newest members on the committee, but he is a staunch supporter and has worked tirelessly for the small businesses in his community as well as those around the country.

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to co-lead H.R. 8844 with my colleagues, Congressman EVANS, Congresswoman NEWMAN, and Congresswoman KIM.

I also thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ and Ranking Member LUETKEMEYER for their support on this bill.

It is good to see Republicans and Democrats working in a bipartisan fashion on the Small Business Committee. When we can come to an agreement, the American people benefit.

H.R. 8844 would reauthorize the State Trade Expansion Program for 4 fiscal years. STEP provides financial awards to States to assist small businesses with export development.

To demonstrate the importance of this program, I would like to highlight an example of a business that has benefited from the STEP program in my district.

Paracclipse Systems, LLC, based in Columbus, Nebraska, manufacturers—of all things—nonintrusive fly—as in the insect—control products that you can install in your home.

With a \$10,000 investment, Paracclipse was able to expand its sales and create 14 jobs.

STEP leverages Federal resources to ensure small businesses across the country can compete in the global marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a co-lead of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, in a growing global economy, we must empower our small businesses to compete on the world stage.

This legislation will ensure that entrepreneurs have ample opportunities to engage in international trade.

H.R. 8844 also ensures accountability, which is very important, requiring an analysis of the performance metrics of the program to ensure that it is effectively and efficiently supporting small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 8844, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, small businesses are truly the bedrock of the American economy, and exporting is one sure way for them to expand their profits at home and their presence overseas.

H.R. 8844 will go a long way in ensuring small employers and entrepreneurs

at any stage in their business journey can grow and open the doors to the global marketplace.

By reauthorizing STEP, this legislation ensures that States and their small businesses will face fewer hurdles to participation and greater opportunities.

Once again, I commend my colleagues, Representatives EVANS, KIM, and FLOOD for their hard work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, 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 by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8844.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ROSENDALE. 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.

#### SMALL BUSINESS CYBER TRAINING ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1687) to amend section 21 of the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1687

*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 Cyber Training Act of 2022”.

#### SEC. 2. DUTIES OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER COUNSELORS.

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

“(c) CYBER STRATEGY TRAINING FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘cyber strategy’ means resources and tactics to assist in planning for cybersecurity and defending against cyber risks and attacks; and

“(B) the term ‘lead small business development center’ means a small business development center that receives reimbursement from the Administrator under paragraph (5).

“(2) CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall establish a cyber counseling certification program, or designate 1 or more substantially similar governmental or private cybersecurity certification programs, to certify the employees of lead small business development centers in providing cyber planning assistance to small business concerns.

“(3) NUMBER OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES.—The Administrator shall ensure that the number of employees of each lead small business development center who are certified in providing cyber planning assistance is not less than the lesser of—

“(A) 5; or

“(B) 10 percent of the total number of employees of the lead small business development center.

“(4) CYBER STRATEGY.—In carrying out paragraph (2), the Administrator, to the extent practicable, shall consider any cyber strategy methods included in the Small Business Development Center Cyber Strategy developed under section 1841(a)(3)(B) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328; 130 Stat. 2662).

“(5) REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTIFICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Administrator may reimburse each lead small business development center for costs relating to the certification of 1 or more employees of the lead small business center in providing cyber planning assistance under a program established or designated under paragraph (2).

“(B) LIMITATION.—The total amount reimbursed by the Administrator under subparagraph (A) may not exceed \$350,000 in any fiscal year.”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall implement paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of section 21(c) of the Small Business Act, as added by subsection (a).

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 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 in support of the bill before us today, S. 1687, the Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2022.

The House passed its companion bill, H.R. 4515, the Small Business Development Center Cyber Training Act on November 2, 2021.

S. 1687, would establish a cyber counseling certification program for lead SBDC staff to provide specific, free-of-charge cyber training for small businesses.

As more businesses utilize the internet for social media advertising, payment systems, and global markets, more of them become vulnerable to cyberattacks. The cyber disruptions can destroy IT systems and derail operations, sometimes forcing the business to shut down.

Cyberattack damage is not just limited to the IT systems; it can also erode customers' trust and tarnish a business' reputation.

With that said, a recent SBA survey found that 88 percent of small business owners felt their business was vulnerable to a cyberattack, but reported

that they couldn't afford professional IT solutions, have limited time to devote to cybersecurity, or just do not know where to begin.

Given the greater risk cyberattacks pose to small businesses and their limited capacity to protect against them, we must find ways to help entrepreneurs strengthen their cybersecurity posture. The SBA and SBDCs are ready, willing, and able to fill these gaps.

Under this legislation, lead SBDCs would be required to provide cyber training and resources and facilitate cybersecurity investments that are typically too expensive for small businesses.

S. 1687 makes minor technical changes to the House passed bill and were agreed upon by all stakeholders. I thank our House leaders, Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. EVANS, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. CHABOT, who have been true advocates on this issue. I applaud their commitment to helping small business owners protect their livelihood from destructive cyberattacks.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, as amended, 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 the House Amendment to S. 1687, the Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2022.

All businesses, regardless of size or available resources, are susceptible to cyber threats. If large businesses can become victims of cybercrimes, small businesses are even more vulnerable.

This bipartisan legislation directs Small Business Development Centers, SBDCs, to provide training to thwart potential attacks and educate small businesses on the most up-to-date cybersecurity practices. With over 1,000 local centers nationwide, SBDCs are well-positioned to assist small businesses with their cybersecurity needs.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GARBARINO for his leadership on this issue and commitment to enhancing Missouri's economic competitiveness and cyber resiliency.

I also thank my counterparts in the Senate for their work on this legislation.

S. 1687 passed the Senate in September, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill we have before us today that does not include unneeded reimbursement provisions included in the final form.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1500

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

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

S. 1687, as amended, takes important steps to prepare small businesses to combat cybersecurity threats.

This bipartisan bill to expand services at Small Business Development