

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6441

To amend the Small Business Act to improve the women’s business center program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 20, 2022

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas (for herself and Ms. TENNEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to improve the women’s business center program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Women’s Business
5 Centers Improvement Act of 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER**
7 **PROGRAM.**

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

1 **“SEC. 29. WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.**

2 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 “(1) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term
4 ‘Assistant Administrator’ means the Assistant Ad-
5 ministrator of the Office of Women’s Business Own-
6 ership established under subsection (k).

7 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
8 tity’ means—

9 “(A) an organization described in section
10 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
11 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a)
12 of such Code;

13 “(B) a State, regional, or local economic
14 development organization, if the organization
15 certifies that grant funds received under this
16 section will not be commingled with other
17 funds;

18 “(C) an institution of higher education (as
19 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education
20 Act of 1965), unless such institution is cur-
21 rently receiving a grant under section 21;

22 “(D) a development, credit, or finance cor-
23 poration chartered by a State, if such corpora-
24 tion certifies that grant funds received under
25 this section will not be commingled with other
26 funds; or

1 “(E) any combination of entities listed in
2 subparagraphs (A) through (D).

3 “(3) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN OWNED AND
4 CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.—The term ‘small business
5 concern owned and controlled by women’ has the
6 meaning given under section 3(n).

7 “(4) RESOURCE PARTNERS.—The term ‘re-
8 source partners’ means small business development
9 centers, chapters of the Service Corps of Retired Ex-
10 ecutives (established under section 8(b)(1)(B)), and
11 Veteran Business Outreach Centers (described under
12 section 32).

13 “(5) WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER.—The term
14 ‘women’s business center’ means the location at
15 which counseling and training on the management,
16 operations (including manufacturing, services, and
17 retail), access to capital, international trade, govern-
18 ment procurement opportunities, and any other mat-
19 ter that is needed to start, maintain, or expand a
20 small business concern owned and controlled by
21 women.

22 “(6) WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIA-
23 TION.—The term ‘Women’s Business Center Asso-
24 ciation’ means a membership organization formed by

1 women’s business centers to pursue matters of com-
2 mon concern.

3 “(b) AUTHORITY.—

4 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a
5 Women’s Business Center Program under which the
6 Administrator may enter into a cooperative agree-
7 ment with an eligible entity to provide a grant to
8 such eligible entity to operate one or more women’s
9 business centers for the benefit of small business
10 concerns owned and controlled by women.

11 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—A women’s business cen-
12 ter established using funds made available under
13 this section shall be designed to provide entrepre-
14 neurial counseling and training that meets the needs
15 of the small business concerns owned and controlled
16 by women, especially such concerns owned and con-
17 trolled by women who are both socially and economi-
18 cally disadvantaged (as defined under section 8(a)),
19 and shall provide—

20 “(A) financial assistance, including coun-
21 seling and training on how to—

22 “(i) apply for and secure business
23 credit and investment capital;

24 “(ii) prepare and present financial
25 statements; and

1 “(iii) manage cash flow and other fi-
2 nancial operations of a small business con-
3 cern;

4 “(B) management assistance, including
5 counseling and training on how to plan, orga-
6 nize, staff, direct, and control each major activ-
7 ity and function of a small business concern;
8 and

9 “(C) marketing assistance, including coun-
10 seling and training on how to—

11 “(i) identify and segment domestic
12 and international market opportunities;

13 “(ii) prepare and execute marketing
14 plans;

15 “(iii) develop pricing strategies;

16 “(iv) locate contract opportunities;

17 “(v) negotiate contracts; and

18 “(vi) use various public relations and
19 advertising techniques.

20 “(3) TYPES OF GRANTS.—

21 “(A) INITIAL GRANT.—The amount of an
22 initial grant, which shall be for a 5-year term,
23 provided under this subsection to an eligible en-
24 tity shall be not more than \$300,000 annually
25 (as such amount is annually adjusted by the

1 Administrator to reflect the change in infla-
2 tion).

3 “(B) CONTINUATION GRANTS.—The Ad-
4 ministrator may award a continuation grant,
5 which shall be for a 5-year term, of not more
6 than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is an-
7 nually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect
8 the change in inflation) to an eligible entity
9 that received an initial grant under subpara-
10 graph (A). There shall be no limitation on the
11 number of continuation grants an eligible entity
12 may receive under this section.

13 “(c) APPLICATION.—

14 “(1) INITIAL GRANTS AND CONTINUATION
15 GRANTS.—To receive an initial grant or continuation
16 grant under this section, an eligible entity shall sub-
17 mit an application to the Administrator in such
18 form, in such manner, and containing such informa-
19 tion as the Administrator may require, including—

20 “(A) a certification that the eligible enti-
21 ty—

22 “(i) has designated an executive direc-
23 tor or program manager, who may be com-
24 pensated using grant funds awarded under
25 this section or other sources, to manage

1 each women’s business center for which a
2 grant under subsection (b) is sought; and

3 “(ii) meets accounting and reporting
4 requirements established by the Director of
5 the Office of Management and Budget;

6 “(B) information demonstrating the expe-
7 rience and effectiveness of the eligible entity
8 in—

9 “(i) providing entrepreneurial coun-
10 seling and training described under sub-
11 section (b)(2);

12 “(ii) providing training and services to
13 a representative number of women who are
14 both socially and economically disadvan-
15 tagged; and

16 “(iii) working with resource partners,
17 offices of the Administration, and other
18 public and private entities engaging in en-
19 trepreneurial and small business develop-
20 ment; and

21 “(C) a 5-year plan that—

22 “(i) includes information relating to
23 the assistance to be provided by each wom-
24 en’s business center in the area in which
25 each such center is located;

1 “(ii) describes the ability of the eligi-
2 ble entity to meet the needs of the market
3 to be served by each women’s business cen-
4 ter;

5 “(iii) describes the ability of the eligi-
6 ble entity to obtain the matching funds re-
7 quired under subsection (e); and

8 “(iv) describes the ability of the eligi-
9 ble entity to provide entrepreneurial coun-
10 seling and training described under sub-
11 section (b)(2), including to a representative
12 number of women who are both socially
13 and economically disadvantaged.

14 “(2) RECORD RETENTION.—

15 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
16 shall maintain a copy of each application sub-
17 mitted under this subsection for not less than
18 5 years.

19 “(B) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—The Ad-
20 ministrator shall take steps to reduce, to the
21 maximum extent practicable, the paperwork
22 burden associated with carrying out subpara-
23 graph (A).

24 “(d) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In selecting recipients of
2 initial grants, the Administrator shall consider—

3 “(A) the experience of the applicant in pro-
4 viding entrepreneurial counseling and training;

5 “(B) the amount of time needed for the
6 applicant to commence operation of a women’s
7 business center;

8 “(C) in consultation with a Women’s Busi-
9 ness Center Association, the capacity of the ap-
10 plicant to meet the accreditation standards es-
11 tablished under subsection (k)(4) in a timely
12 manner;

13 “(D) the ability of the applicant to sustain
14 operations, including the applicant’s ability to
15 obtain matching funds under subsection (e), for
16 a 5-year period;

17 “(E) the proposed location of a women’s
18 business center to be operated by the applicant
19 and the location’s proximity to Veteran Busi-
20 ness Outreach Centers and to recipients of
21 grants under section 8(b)(1) or 21;

22 “(F) the population density of the area to
23 be served by the women’s business center oper-
24 ated by the applicant; and

1 “(G) the advice and counsel of a Women’s
2 Business Center Association to determine areas
3 with unmet needs and the likelihood that the
4 recipient will become accredited.

5 “(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

6 “(A) RULEMAKING.—The Administrator
7 shall issue regulations to specify the criteria for
8 review and selection of applicants under this
9 subsection.

10 “(B) MODIFICATIONS PROHIBITED AFTER
11 ANNOUNCEMENT.—With respect to a public an-
12 nouncement of any opportunity to be awarded
13 a grant under this section made by the Admin-
14 istrator pursuant to subsection (l)(1), the Ad-
15 ministrator may not modify regulations issued
16 pursuant to subparagraph (A) with respect to
17 such opportunity unless required to do so by an
18 Act of Congress or an order of a Federal court.

19 “(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
20 in this paragraph may be construed as prohib-
21 iting the Administrator from modifying the reg-
22 ulations issued pursuant to subparagraph (A)
23 (after providing an opportunity for notice and
24 comment) as such regulations apply to an op-
25 portunity to be awarded a grant under this sec-

1 tion that the Administrator has not yet publicly
2 announced pursuant to subsection (l)(1).

3 “(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (5),
5 upon approval of an application submitted under
6 subsection (c), the eligible entity shall agree to ob-
7 tain contributions from non-Federal sources—

8 “(A) in the first and second year of the
9 term of an initial grant, if applicable, 1 non-
10 Federal dollar for every 2 Federal dollars; and

11 “(B) in each subsequent year of the term
12 of an initial grant, if applicable, or for the term
13 of a continuation grant, 1 non-Federal dollar
14 for each Federal dollar.

15 “(2) FORM OF MATCHING FUNDS.—Not more
16 than one-half of non-Federal matching funds de-
17 scribed under paragraph (1) may be in the form of
18 in-kind contributions that are budget line items only,
19 including office equipment and office space.

20 “(3) SOLICITATION.—Notwithstanding any
21 other provision of law, an eligible entity may—

22 “(A) solicit cash and in-kind contributions
23 from private individuals and entities to be used
24 to operate a women’s business center; and

1 “(B) use amounts made available by the
2 Administrator under this section for the cost of
3 such solicitation and management of the con-
4 tributions received.

5 “(4) DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.—The Admin-
6 istrator may disburse an amount not greater than
7 25 percent of the total amount of a grant awarded
8 to an eligible entity before such eligible entity ob-
9 tains the matching funds described under paragraph
10 (1).

11 “(5) FAILURE TO OBTAIN MATCHING FUNDS.—
12 If an eligible entity fails to obtain the required
13 matching funds described under paragraph (1), the
14 eligible entity may not be eligible to receive advance
15 disbursements pursuant to paragraph (4) during the
16 remainder of the term, if applicable, of an initial
17 grant awarded under this section. Before approving
18 such eligible entity for a continuation grant under
19 this section, the Administrator shall make a written
20 determination, including the reasons for such deter-
21 mination, of whether the Administrator believes that
22 the eligible entity will be able to obtain the requisite
23 matching funding under paragraph (1) for such con-
24 tinuation grant.

25 “(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by an
2 eligible entity and in accordance with this para-
3 graph, the Administrator may waive, in whole
4 or in part, the requirement to obtain matching
5 funds under paragraph (1) for a grant awarded
6 under this section for the eligible entity for a 1-
7 year term of the grant.

8 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining
9 whether to issue a waiver under this paragraph,
10 the Administrator shall consider—

11 “(i) the economic conditions affecting
12 the eligible entity;

13 “(ii) the demonstrated ability of the
14 eligible entity to raise non-Federal funds;
15 and

16 “(iii) the performance of the eligible
17 entity under the initial grant.

18 “(C) LIMITATION.—The Administrator
19 may not issue a waiver under this paragraph if
20 the Administrator determines that granting the
21 waiver would undermine the credibility of the
22 Women’s Business Center Program.

23 “(7) EXCESS NON-FEDERAL DOLLARS.—The
24 amount of non-Federal dollars obtained by an eligi-
25 ble entity that is greater than the amount that is re-

1 quired to be obtained by the eligible entity under
2 this subsection shall not be subject to the require-
3 ments of part 200 of title 2, Code of Federal Regu-
4 lations, or any successor thereto, if such amount of
5 non-Federal dollars—

6 “(A) is not used as matching funds for
7 purposes of implementing the Women’s Busi-
8 ness Center Program; and

9 “(B) was not obtained by using funds
10 granted under the Women’s Business Center
11 Program.

12 “(8) CARRYOVER.—An eligible entity may use
13 excess non-Federal dollars described in paragraph
14 (7) to satisfy the matching funds requirement under
15 paragraph (1) for the subsequent 1-year grant term,
16 if applicable, except that such amounts shall be sub-
17 ject to the requirements of part 200 of title 2, Code
18 of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.

19 “(f) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—

20 “(1) SEPARATION OF FUNDS.—An eligible enti-
21 ty shall—

22 “(A) operate a women’s business center
23 under this section separately from other
24 projects, if any, of the eligible entity; and

1 “(B) separately maintain and account for
2 any grant funds received under this section.

3 “(2) EXAMINATION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

4 “(A) REQUIRED SITE VISIT.—Before re-
5 ceiving an initial grant under this section, each
6 applicant shall have a site visit by an employee
7 of the Administration, in order to ensure that
8 the applicant has sufficient resources to provide
9 the services for which the grant is being pro-
10 vided.

11 “(B) ANNUAL REVIEW.—An employee of
12 the Administration shall—

13 “(i) conduct an annual programmatic
14 and financial examination of each eligible
15 entity, as described in subsection (g); and

16 “(ii) provide the results of such exam-
17 ination to the eligible entity.

18 “(3) REMEDIATION OF PROBLEMS.—

19 “(A) PLAN OF ACTION.—If an examination
20 of an eligible entity conducted under paragraph
21 (2)(B) identifies any problems, the eligible enti-
22 ty shall, within 45 calendar days of receiving a
23 copy of the results of such examination, provide
24 the Assistant Administrator with a plan of ac-

tion, including specific milestones, for correcting such problems.

“(B) PLAN OF ACTION REVIEW BY THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The Assistant Administrator shall review each plan of action submitted under subparagraph (A) within 30 calendar days of receiving such plan. If the Assistant Administrator determines that such plan—

“(i) will bring the eligible entity into compliance with all the terms of a cooperative agreement described in subsection (b), the Assistant Administrator shall approve such plan; or

“(ii) is inadequate to remedy the problems identified in the annual examination to which the plan of action relates, the Assistant Administrator shall set forth such reasons in writing and provide such determination to the eligible entity within 15 calendar days of such determination.

“(C) AMENDMENT TO PLAN OF ACTION.—An eligible entity receiving a determination under subparagraph (B)(ii) shall have 30 calendar days from the receipt of the determination to amend the plan of action to satisfy the

1 problems identified by the Assistant Adminis-
2 trator and resubmit such plan to the Assistant
3 Administrator.

4 “(D) AMENDED PLAN REVIEW BY THE AS-
5 SISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—Within 15 calendar
6 days of the receipt of an amended plan of ac-
7 tion under subparagraph (C), the Assistant Ad-
8 ministrator shall either approve or reject such
9 plan and provide such approval or rejection in
10 writing to the eligible entity.

11 “(E) APPEAL OF ASSISTANT ADMINIS-
12 TRATOR DETERMINATION.—

13 “(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Assistant
14 Administrator rejects an amended plan
15 under subparagraph (D), the eligible entity
16 shall have the opportunity to appeal such
17 decision to the Administrator, who may
18 delegate such appeal to an appropriate of-
19 ficer of the Administration.

20 “(ii) OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPLA-
21 NATION.—Any appeal described under
22 clause (i) shall provide an opportunity for
23 the eligible entity to provide, in writing, an
24 explanation of why the eligible entity’s
25 amended plan remedies the problems iden-

1 tified in the annual examination conducted
2 under paragraph (2)(B).

3 “(iii) NOTICE OF DETERMINATION.—

4 The Administrator shall provide to the eli-
5 gible entity a determination of the appeal,
6 in writing, not later than 15 calendar days
7 after the eligible entity files an appeal
8 under this subparagraph.

9 “(iv) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO ACT.—

10 If the Administrator fails to act on an ap-
11 peal made under this subparagraph within
12 the 15-day period specified under clause
13 (iii), the eligible entity’s amended plan of
14 action submitted under subparagraph (C)
15 shall be deemed to be approved.

16 “(4) TERMINATION OF GRANT.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
18 shall terminate a grant to an eligible entity
19 under this section if the eligible entity fails to
20 comply with—

21 “(i) a plan of action approved by the
22 Assistant Administrator under paragraph
23 (3)(B)(i); or

24 “(ii) an amended plan of action ap-
25 proved by the Assistant Administrator

1 under paragraph (3)(D) or approved on
2 appeal under paragraph (3)(E).

3 “(B) APPEAL OF TERMINATION.—An eligi-
4 ble entity shall have the opportunity to chal-
5 lenge the termination of a grant under subpara-
6 graph (A) on the record and after an oppor-
7 tunity for a hearing.

8 “(C) FINAL AGENCY ACTION.—A deter-
9 mination made pursuant to subparagraph (B)
10 shall be considered final agency action for the
11 purposes of chapter 7 of title 5, United States
12 Code.

13 “(5) CONSULTATION WITH MAJORITY WOMEN’S
14 BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIATION.—If on the date of
15 the enactment of this subsection, a majority of wom-
16 en’s business centers that are operating pursuant to
17 agreements with the Administration are members of
18 an individual Women’s Business Center Association,
19 the Administrator shall—

20 “(A) recognize the existence and activities
21 of such Association; and

22 “(B) consult with the Association on, and
23 negotiate with the Association in the develop-
24 ment of documents with respect to—

1 “(i) announcing the annual scope of
2 activities pursuant to this section;

3 “(ii) requesting proposals to deliver
4 assistance as provided in this section; and

5 “(iii) governing the general operations
6 and administration of women’s business
7 centers, specifically including the develop-
8 ment of regulations and a uniform nego-
9 tiated cooperative agreement for use on an
10 annual basis when entering into individual
11 cooperative agreements with women’s busi-
12 ness centers.

13 “(6) ENFORCEMENT.—

14 “(A) GRANTS.—The Assistant Adminis-
15 trator shall develop policies and procedures to
16 minimize the possibility of awarding a grant to
17 an eligible entity that will operate a women’s
18 business center that likely will not remain in
19 compliance with program and financial require-
20 ments.

21 “(B) INDIVIDUAL COOPERATIVE AGREE-
22 MENTS.—The Assistant Administrator shall en-
23 force the terms of any individual cooperative
24 agreement described in paragraph (5)(B)(iii).

25 “(g) PROGRAM EXAMINATION.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administration shall—

2 “(A) develop and implement an annual
3 programmatic and financial examination of
4 each eligible entity receiving a grant under this
5 section, under which each such eligible entity
6 shall provide to the Administration—

7 “(i) an itemized cost breakdown of ac-
8 tual expenditures for costs incurred during
9 the preceding year; and

10 “(ii) documentation regarding the
11 amount of matching assistance from non-
12 Federal sources obtained and expended by
13 the eligible entity during the preceding
14 year in order to meet the requirements of
15 subsection (e) and, with respect to any in-
16 kind contributions described in subsection
17 (e)(2) that were used to satisfy the re-
18 quirements of subsection (e), verification of
19 the existence and valuation of those con-
20 tributions; and

21 “(B) analyze the results of each such ex-
22 amination and, based on that analysis, make a
23 determination regarding the programmatic and
24 financial viability of each women’s business cen-
25 ter operated by the eligible entity.

1 “(2) CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING.—

2 In determining whether to award a continuation
3 grant to an eligible entity, the Administrator—

4 “(A) shall consider the results of the most
5 recent examination of the eligible entity under
6 paragraph (1);

7 “(B) shall determine if—

8 “(i) the eligible entity has failed to
9 provide, or provided inadequate, informa-
10 tion under paragraph (1)(A); or

11 “(ii) the eligible entity has failed to
12 provide any information required to be pro-
13 vided by a women’s business center for
14 purposes of the management report under
15 subsection (m)(1), or the information pro-
16 vided by the center is inadequate; and

17 “(C) shall consider the accreditation status
18 as described in subsection (k)(4).

19 “(3) ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT.—The Assistant
20 Administrator shall work with the Women’s Busi-
21 ness Center Association recognized under subsection
22 (f)(5) (as applicable) to develop, implement, and
23 maintain policies and procedures for conducting fi-
24 nancial examinations under this subsection and to

1 maintain internal controls that ensure that such fi-
2 nancial examinations are conducted properly.

3 “(h) NOTICE AND COMMENT REQUIRED.—The Ad-
4 ministrator may only make a change to the standards by
5 which an eligible entity obtains or maintains grants under
6 this section, the standards for accreditation, or any other
7 requirement for the operation of a women’s business cen-
8 ter if the Administrator first provides notice and the op-
9 portunity for public comment, as set forth in section
10 553(b) of title 5, United States Code, without regard to
11 any exceptions provided for under such section.

12 “(i) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—

13 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—An eligible entity that
14 receives a grant under this section may enter into a
15 contract with a Federal department or agency to
16 provide specific assistance to small business concerns
17 owned and controlled by women and other under-
18 served small business concerns, if performance of
19 such a contract does not hinder the ability of the eli-
20 gible entity to carry out the terms of a grant re-
21 ceived under this section.

22 “(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The authority of the
23 Administrator to enter into contracts shall be in ef-
24 fect for each fiscal year only to the extent and in the
25 amounts as are provided in advance in appropria-

1 tions Acts. After the Administrator has entered into
2 a contract, either as a grant or a cooperative agree-
3 ment, with any applicant under this section, the Ad-
4 ministrator shall not suspend, terminate, or fail to
5 renew or extend any such contract unless the Ad-
6 ministrator provides the applicant with written noti-
7 fication setting forth the reasons therefore and af-
8 fords the applicant an opportunity for a hearing, ap-
9 peal, or other administrative proceeding under chap-
10 ter 5 of title 5, United States Code.

11 “(j) PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A women’s business center
13 may not disclose the name, address, or telephone
14 number of any individual or small business concern
15 receiving assistance under this section without the
16 consent of such individual or small business concern,
17 unless—

18 “(A) the Administrator orders such disclo-
19 sure after the Administrator is ordered to make
20 such a disclosure by a court in any civil or
21 criminal enforcement action initiated by a Fed-
22 eral or State agency; or

23 “(B) the Administrator considers such a
24 disclosure to be necessary for the purpose of
25 conducting a financial audit of a women’s busi-

1 ness center, except that such a disclosure shall
2 be limited to the information necessary for such
3 audit.

4 “(2) ADMINISTRATION USE OF INFORMATION.—

5 This subsection shall not—

6 “(A) restrict Administration access to
7 women’s business center data; or

8 “(B) prevent the Administration from
9 using information about individuals who use
10 women’s business centers to conduct surveys of
11 such individuals.

12 “(3) REGULATIONS.—The Administrator shall
13 issue regulations to establish standards for disclo-
14 sures for purposes of a financial audit described
15 under paragraph (1)(B).

16 “(k) OFFICE OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.—

17 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established
18 within the Administration an Office of Women’s
19 Business Ownership, which shall be responsible for
20 the administration of the Administration’s programs
21 for the development of women’s business enterprises
22 (as defined in section 408 of the Women’s Business
23 Ownership Act of 1988). The Office of Women’s
24 Business Ownership shall be administered by an As-

1 sistant Administrator, who shall be appointed by the
2 Administrator.

3 “(2) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE OF-
4 FICE OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.—

5 “(A) QUALIFICATION.—The position of As-
6 sistant Administrator shall be a Senior Execu-
7 tive Service position under section 3132(a)(2)
8 of title 5, United States Code. The Assistant
9 Administrator shall serve as a noncareer ap-
10 pointee (as defined in section 3132(a)(7) of
11 that title).

12 “(B) DUTIES.—The Assistant Adminis-
13 trator shall administer the programs and serv-
14 ices of the Office of Women’s Business Owner-
15 ship and perform the following functions:

16 “(i) Recommend the annual adminis-
17 trative and program budgets of the Office
18 and eligible entities receiving a grant
19 under the Women’s Business Center Pro-
20 gram.

21 “(ii) Review the annual budgets sub-
22 mitted by each eligible entity receiving a
23 grant under the Women’s Business Center
24 Program.

1 “(iii) Collaborate with other Federal
2 departments and agencies, State and local
3 governments, not-for-profit organizations,
4 and for-profit organizations to maximize
5 utilization of taxpayer dollars and reduce
6 (or eliminate) any duplication among the
7 programs overseen by the Office of Wom-
8 en’s Business Ownership and those of
9 other entities that provide similar services
10 to women entrepreneurs.

11 “(iv) Maintain a clearinghouse to pro-
12 vide for the dissemination and exchange of
13 information between women’s business cen-
14 ters.

15 “(v) Serve as the vice chairperson of
16 the Interagency Committee on Women’s
17 Business Enterprise and as the liaison for
18 the National Women’s Business Council.

19 “(3) MISSION.—The mission of the Office of
20 Women’s Business Ownership shall be to assist
21 women entrepreneurs to start, grow, and compete in
22 global markets by providing quality support with ac-
23 cess to capital, access to markets, job creation,
24 growth, and counseling by—

1 “(A) fostering participation of women en-
2 trepreneurs in the economy by overseeing a net-
3 work of women’s business centers throughout
4 States and territories;

5 “(B) creating public-private partnerships
6 to support women entrepreneurs and conduct
7 outreach and education to small business con-
8 cerns owned and controlled by women; and

9 “(C) working with other programs of the
10 Administrator to—

11 “(i) ensure women are well-rep-
12 resented in those programs and being
13 served by those programs; and

14 “(ii) identify gaps where participation
15 by women in those programs could be in-
16 creased.

17 “(4) ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.—

18 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than
19 270 days after the date of enactment of this
20 paragraph, the Administrator shall publish
21 standards for a program to accredit eligible en-
22 tities that receive a grant under this section.

23 “(B) PUBLIC COMMENT; TRANSITION.—
24 Before publishing the standards under subpara-
25 graph (A), the Administrator—

1 “(i) shall provide a period of not less
2 than 60 days for public comment on such
3 standards; and

4 “(ii) may not terminate a grant under
5 this section absent evidence of fraud or
6 other criminal misconduct by the recipient.

7 “(C) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The Ad-
8 ministrator may provide financial support, by
9 contract or otherwise, to a Women’s Business
10 Center Association to provide assistance in es-
11 tablishing the standards required under sub-
12 paragraph (A) or for carrying out an accredita-
13 tion program pursuant to such standards.

14 “(5) CONTINUATION GRANT CONSIDER-
15 ATIONS.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining wheth-
17 er to award a continuation grant under this sec-
18 tion, the Administrator shall consider the re-
19 sults of the annual programmatic and financial
20 examination conducted under subsection (g)
21 and the accreditation program.

22 “(B) ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENT.—
23 After the end of the 2-year period beginning on
24 the date of enactment of this subsection, the
25 Administration may not award a continuation

1 grant under this section unless the applicable
2 eligible entity has been approved under the ac-
3 creditation program conducted pursuant to this
4 subsection, except that the Assistant Adminis-
5 trator for the Office of Women’s Business Own-
6 ership may waive such accreditation require-
7 ment, in the discretion of the Assistant Admin-
8 istrator, upon a showing that the eligible entity
9 is making a good faith effort to obtain accredi-
10 tation.

11 “(6) ANNUAL CONFERENCE.—Each women’s
12 business center shall participate in annual profes-
13 sional development at an annual conference facili-
14 tated by a Women’s Business Center Association.

15 “(1) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE
16 WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.—The Adminis-
17 trator shall provide the following:

18 “(1) A public announcement of any opportunity
19 to be awarded grants under this section, to include
20 the selection criteria under subsection (d) and any
21 applicable regulations.

22 “(2) To any applicant for a grant under this
23 section that failed to obtain such a grant, an oppor-
24 tunity to debrief with the Administrator to review
25 the reasons for the applicant’s failure.

1 “(3) To an eligible entity that receives an initial
2 grant under this section, if a site visit or review of
3 the eligible entity is carried out by an officer or em-
4 ployee of the Administration (other than the Inspec-
5 tor General), a copy of the site visit report or eval-
6 uation, as applicable, within 30 calendar days of the
7 completion of such visit or evaluation.

8 “(m) ANNUAL MANAGEMENT REPORT.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall
10 prepare and submit to the Committee on Small
11 Business of the House of Representatives and the
12 Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
13 of the Senate an annual report on the effectiveness
14 of women’s business centers operated through a
15 grant awarded under this section.

16 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under
17 paragraph (1) shall include—

18 “(A) information concerning, with respect
19 to each women’s business center established
20 pursuant to a grant awarded under this section,
21 the most recent analysis of the annual pro-
22 grammatic and financial examination of the ap-
23 plicable eligible entity, as required under sub-
24 section (g)(1)(B), and the subsequent deter-

1 mination made by the Administration under
2 that subsection;

3 “(B) the number of persons counseled and
4 trained through the Women’s Business Center
5 Program;

6 “(C) the total number of hours of coun-
7 seling and training through the Program;

8 “(D) the demographics of Program partici-
9 pants to include gender, race, and age of each
10 such participant;

11 “(E) the number of Program participants
12 who are veterans;

13 “(F) the number of new businesses started
14 by participants in the Program;

15 “(G) to the extent practicable, the number
16 of jobs supported, created or retained with as-
17 sistance from women’s business centers;

18 “(H) the amount of capital secured by par-
19 ticipants in the Program, including through
20 loans and equity investment;

21 “(I) the number of participants in the Pro-
22 gram receiving financial assistance, including
23 the type and dollar amount, under the loan pro-
24 grams of the Administration;

1 “(J) an estimate of gross receipts, includ-
 2 ing to the extent practicable a description of
 3 any change in revenue of small business con-
 4 cerns assisted through the Program;

5 “(K) to the maximum extent practicable,
 6 increases or decreases in revenues for the as-
 7 sisted small business concerns;

8 “(L) the number of referrals made to other
 9 resources and programs of the Administration;

10 “(M) the results of satisfaction surveys of
 11 participants, including a summary of any com-
 12 ments received from such participants; and

13 “(N) any recommendations by the Admin-
 14 istrator to improve the delivery of services by
 15 women’s business centers.

16 “(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
 18 appropriated to the Administration to carry out this
 19 section, to remain available until expended,
 20 \$31,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through
 21 2025.

22 “(2) USE OF AMOUNTS.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
 24 subparagraph (B), amounts made available
 25 under this subsection for fiscal year 2022, and

1 each fiscal year thereafter, may only be used for
2 grant awards and may not be used for costs in-
3 curred by the Administration in connection with
4 the management and administration of the pro-
5 gram under this section.

6 “(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Of the amount made
7 available under this subsection for a fiscal year,
8 the following amounts shall be available for
9 costs incurred by the Administration in connec-
10 tion with the management and administration
11 of the program under this section:

12 “(i) For the first fiscal year beginning
13 after the date of the enactment of this sub-
14 paragraph, 2.65 percent.

15 “(ii) For the second fiscal year begin-
16 ning after the date of the enactment of
17 this subparagraph and each fiscal year
18 thereafter through fiscal year 2025, 2.5
19 percent.

20 “(3) EXPEDITED ACQUISITION.—Notwith-
21 standing any other provision of law, the Adminis-
22 trator may use such expedited acquisition methods
23 as the Administrator determines to be appropriate to
24 carry out this section, except that the Administrator

1 shall ensure that all small business sources are pro-
2 vided a reasonable opportunity to submit proposals.

3 “(4) ACCREDITATION AND ANNUAL CON-
4 FERENCE.—Not less than \$500,000 of the amounts
5 appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) for a fiscal
6 year shall be available for purposes of carrying out
7 subsection (k), of which no less than \$50,000 shall
8 be available to support an annual conference de-
9 scribed under subsection (k)(6).”.

10 **SEC. 3. EFFECT ON EXISTING GRANTS.**

11 (a) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A nonprofit organiza-
12 tion receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small
13 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day
14 before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue
15 to receive the grant under the terms and conditions in ef-
16 fect for the grant on the day before the date of enactment
17 of this Act, except that the nonprofit organization may
18 not apply for a continuation of the grant under section
19 29(m)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
20 656(m)(5)), as in effect on the day before the date of en-
21 actment of this Act.

22 (b) LENGTH OF CONTINUATION GRANT.—The Ad-
23 ministrator of the Small Business Administration may
24 award a grant under section 29 of the Small Business Act,
25 as amended by this Act, to a nonprofit organization receiv-

1 ing a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business
2 Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before
3 the date of enactment of this Act, for the period—

4 (1) beginning on the day after the last day of
5 the grant agreement under such section 29(m); and

6 (2) ending at the end of the third fiscal year be-
7 ginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

8 **SEC. 4. REGULATIONS.**

9 Not later than 270 days after the date of the enact-
10 ment of this Act, the Administrator of Small Business Ad-
11 ministration shall issue such rules as are necessary to
12 carry out section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
13 656), as amended by this Act, and ensure that a period
14 of public comment for such rules is not less than 60 days.

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