

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2126

To reauthorize the women’s business center program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 1, 2015

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. VITTER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

A BILL

To reauthorize the women’s business center program of the Small Business Administration, 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 Small Busi-
5 ness Ownership Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act—

8 (1) the terms “Administration” and “Adminis-
9 trator” mean the Small Business Administration
10 and the Administrator thereof, respectively;

1 (2) the term “small business concern” and
2 “small business development center” have the mean-
3 ings given those terms in section 3 of the Small
4 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

5 (3) the term “women’s business center” has the
6 meaning given that term in section 29(a) of the
7 Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(a)), as added by
8 section 4(a)(1) of this Act.

9 **SEC. 3. OFFICE OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.**

10 Section 29(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
11 656(g)) is amended—

12 (1) in paragraph (2)—

13 (A) in subparagraph (B)—

14 (i) in clause (i), by striking “in the
15 areas” and all that follows through the end
16 of subclause (I), and inserting the fol-
17 lowing: “to address issues concerning the
18 management, operations, manufacturing,
19 technology, finance, retail and product
20 sales, international trade, Government con-
21 tracting, and other disciplines required
22 for—

23 “(I) starting, operating, and in-
24 creasing the business of a small busi-
25 ness concern;”; and

1 (ii) in clause (ii)—

2 (I) by striking “Women’s Busi-
3 ness Center program” each place that
4 term appears and inserting “women’s
5 business center program”;

6 (II) in subclause (IX), by strik-
7 ing “and” at the end;

8 (III) in subclause (X), by strik-
9 ing the period at the end and insert-
10 ing “; and”; and

11 (IV) by adding at the end the fol-
12 lowing:

13 “(XI) work with Administration
14 officials and collaborate with entities
15 other than the Administration to en-
16 sure that the work of the women’s
17 business center program—

18 “(aa) maximizes taxpayer
19 dollars; and

20 “(bb) coordinates effectively
21 with and is not duplicative of the
22 efforts of other Federal Govern-
23 ment and private sector pro-
24 grams.”; and

1 (B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting be-
2 fore the period at the end the following: “, the
3 National Women’s Business Council, and any
4 organization representing the majority of wom-
5 en’s business centers”; and

6 (2) by adding at the end the following:

7 “(3) MISSION.—The mission of the Office of
8 Women’s Business Ownership shall be to assist
9 women entrepreneurs to start, grow, and compete in
10 global markets by providing quality support with ac-
11 cess to capital, access to markets, job creation,
12 growth, and counseling and training by—

13 “(A) fostering participation of women en-
14 trepreneurs in the economy by overseeing a net-
15 work of women’s business centers throughout
16 States and territories;

17 “(B) creating public-private partnerships
18 to support women entrepreneurs and conduct
19 outreach and education to startup and existing
20 small business concerns owned and controlled
21 by women; and

22 “(C) working with other initiatives and
23 programs of the Administration to ensure
24 women are well-represented and being served

1 and to identify gaps where participation by
2 women could be increased.

3 “(4) TRAINING.—The Administrator shall—

4 “(A) provide annual programmatic and fi-
5 nancial examination training for women’s busi-
6 ness center representatives and district office
7 technical representatives of the Administration
8 to enable representatives to carry out their re-
9 sponsibilities;

10 “(B) in carrying out subparagraph (A),
11 award grants or enter into contracts or coopera-
12 tive agreements related to training; and

13 “(C) not later than September 30, 2016,
14 develop a plan for a professional development
15 training program for women’s business centers,
16 including attendance to relevant national con-
17 ferences, related to—

18 “(i) the managing, financing, and op-
19 eration of small business concerns;

20 “(ii) marketing, including the use of
21 social media;

22 “(iii) management and technology as-
23 sistance regarding small business concern
24 participation in international markets, ex-

1 port promotion, and technology transfer;
2 and

3 “(iv) delivery or distribution of the
4 services and information described in
5 clauses (i), (ii), and (iii).

6 “(5) PROGRAM AND TRANSPARENCY IMPROVE-
7 MENTS.—The Administrator shall maximize the
8 transparency of the women’s business center finan-
9 cial assistance proposal process and the pro-
10 grammatic and financial examination process by—

11 “(A) providing public notice of any an-
12 nouncement for financial assistance under sub-
13 section (b) or a grant under subsection (l);

14 “(B) in the announcement described in
15 subparagraph (A), outlining award and pro-
16 gram evaluation criteria and describing the
17 weighting of the criteria for financial assistance
18 under subsection (b) and grants under sub-
19 section (l); and

20 “(C) not later than 60 days after the com-
21 pletion of a site visit to the women’s business
22 center (whether conducted for an audit, per-
23 formance review, or other reason), when fea-
24 sible, providing to each women’s business center
25 a copy of any site visit reports or evaluation re-

1 ports prepared by district office technical rep-
2 resentatives or officers or employees of the Ad-
3 ministration.

4 “(6) ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.—Not later
5 than September 30, 2016, the Administrator shall
6 submit to the Committee on Small Business and En-
7 trepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on
8 Small Business of the House of Representatives a
9 plan to develop, including identification of funding
10 needs, an accreditation program of women’s business
11 centers under this section that would—

12 “(A) be developed with the consultation
13 and collaboration of organizations representing
14 a majority of women’s business centers;

15 “(B) be carried out by and for women’s
16 business centers under contract with the Ad-
17 ministration;

18 “(C) establish a regular system of site vis-
19 its at the discretion of the Administration and
20 peer review to be conducted in addition to the
21 regular inspections and audits conducted under
22 subsection (h); and

23 “(D) develop standards for assessment of
24 the performance of women’s business centers,
25 including—

- 1 “(i) leadership and center manage-
2 ment;
3 “(ii) strategic planning;
4 “(iii) market and client needs assess-
5 ment; and
6 “(iv) metrics and measurements of
7 performance and results.”.

8 **SEC. 4. WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.**

9 (a) WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER FINANCIAL ASSIST-
10 ANCE.—Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
11 656) is amended—

12 (1) in subsection (a)—

13 (A) by striking paragraph (4);

14 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and
15 (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

16 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
17 following:

18 “(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means—

19 “(A) a private nonprofit organization;

20 “(B) a State, regional, or local economic
21 development organization;

22 “(C) a development, credit, or finance cor-
23 poration chartered by a State;

1 “(D) a junior or community college, as de-
2 fined in section 312(f) of the Higher Education
3 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(f)); or

4 “(E) any combination of entities listed in
5 subparagraphs (A) through (D);” and

6 (D) by adding at the end the following:

7 “(5) the term ‘women’s business center’ means
8 a project conducted by an eligible entity under this
9 section.”;

10 (2) in subsection (b)—

11 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2),
12 and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), re-
13 spectively, and adjusting the margins accord-
14 ingly;

15 (B) by striking “The Administration” and
16 all that follows through “5-year projects” and
17 inserting the following:

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administration may
19 provide financial assistance to an eligible entity to
20 conduct a project under this section”;

21 (C) by striking “The projects shall” and
22 inserting the following:

23 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—The project shall be de-
24 signed to provide training and counseling that meets

1 the needs of women, especially socially or economi-
 2 cally disadvantaged women, and shall”; and

3 (D) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(3) AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
 6 subparagraph (B), the amount of financial as-
 7 sistance provided under this subsection to an el-
 8 igible entity per project year shall be not more
 9 than \$250,000.

10 “(B) ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL ASSIST-
 11 ANCE.—

12 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
 13 may award financial assistance under this
 14 subsection to an eligible entity in an
 15 amount that is more than \$250,000 in a
 16 given project year if the Administrator de-
 17 termines that the eligible entity—

18 “(I) obtained more than
 19 \$250,000 in non-Federal contribu-
 20 tions for that project year in accord-
 21 ance with subsection (c);

22 “(II) is in good standing with the
 23 women’s business center program;

1 “(III) has met performance goals
2 for the previous project year, if appli-
3 cable; and

4 “(IV) proposes a new project to
5 be carried out with the additional fi-
6 nancial assistance in accordance with
7 this section.

8 “(ii) LIMITATIONS.—The Adminis-
9 trator may only award additional financial
10 assistance under clause (i)—

11 “(I) from unobligated amounts
12 made available to the Administration
13 to carry out this section; and

14 “(II) if, in a given fiscal year, the
15 aggregate amount of additional finan-
16 cial assistance provided to eligible en-
17 tities under clause (i) is not more
18 than 1 percent of the amount appro-
19 priated to the Administration to carry
20 out this section for that fiscal year.

21 “(4) CONSULTATION WITH ORGANIZATIONS
22 REPRESENTING WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS.—The
23 Administrator shall seek advice, input, and rec-
24 ommendations for policy changes from any organiza-

1 tion representing a majority of women’s business
2 centers to develop—

3 “(A) the training program for women’s
4 business centers under subsection (g)(4)(C);
5 and

6 “(B) recommendations to improve the poli-
7 cies and procedures for governing the general
8 operations and administration of the women’s
9 business center program, including grant pro-
10 gram improvements under subsection (g)(4).”;

11 (3) in subsection (c)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1) by striking “the re-
13 cipient organization” and inserting “an eligible
14 entity”;

15 (B) in paragraph (3), in the second sen-
16 tence, by striking “a recipient organization”
17 and inserting “an eligible entity”;

18 (C) in paragraph (4)—

19 (i) by striking “recipient of assist-
20 ance” and inserting “eligible entity”;

21 (ii) by striking “during any project, it
22 shall not be eligible thereafter” and insert-
23 ing “during any project for 2 consecutive
24 years, the eligible entity shall not be eligi-
25 ble at any time after that 2-year period”;

1 (iii) by striking “such organization”
2 and inserting “the eligible entity”; and

3 (iv) by striking “recipient” and insert-
4 ing “eligible entity”; and

5 (D) by adding at end the following:

6 “(5) SEPARATION OF PROJECT AND FUNDS.—

7 An eligible entity shall—

8 “(A) carry out a project under this section
9 separately from other projects, if any, of the eli-
10 gible entity; and

11 “(B) separately maintain and account for
12 any financial assistance under this section.”;

13 (4) in subsection (e)—

14 (A) by striking “applicant organization”
15 and inserting “eligible entity”;

16 (B) by striking “a recipient organization”
17 and inserting “an eligible entity”; and

18 (C) by striking “site”;

19 (5) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the
20 following:

21 “(f) APPLICATIONS AND CRITERIA FOR INITIAL FI-
22 NANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

23 “(1) APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity desir-
24 ing financial assistance under subsection (b) shall

1 submit to the Administrator an application that con-
2 tains—

3 “(A) a certification that the eligible enti-
4 ty—

5 “(i) has designated an executive direc-
6 tor or program manager, who may be com-
7 pensated using financial assistance under
8 subsection (b) or other sources, to manage
9 the center;

10 “(ii) as a condition of receiving finan-
11 cial assistance under subsection (b),
12 agrees—

13 “(I) to receive a site visit at the
14 discretion of the Administrator as
15 part of the final selection process;

16 “(II) to undergo an annual pro-
17 grammatic and financial examination;
18 and

19 “(III) to remedy any problems
20 identified pursuant to the site visit or
21 examination under subclause (I) or
22 (II); and

23 “(iii) meets the accounting and re-
24 porting requirements established by the

1 Director of the Office of Management and
2 Budget;

3 “(B) information demonstrating that the
4 eligible entity has the ability and resources to
5 meet the needs of the market to be served by
6 the women’s business center for which financial
7 assistance under subsection (b) is sought, in-
8 cluding the ability to obtain the non-Federal
9 contribution required under subsection (c);

10 “(C) information relating to the assistance
11 to be provided by the women’s business center
12 for which financial assistance under subsection
13 (b) is sought in the area in which the women’s
14 business center is located;

15 “(D) information demonstrating the expe-
16 rience and effectiveness of the eligible entity
17 in—

18 “(i) conducting financial, manage-
19 ment, and marketing assistance programs,
20 as described in subsection (b)(2), which
21 are designed to teach or upgrade the busi-
22 ness skills of women who are business own-
23 ers or potential business owners;

1 “(ii) providing training and services to
2 a representative number of women who are
3 socially or economically disadvantaged; and

4 “(iii) working with resource partners
5 of the Administration and other entities,
6 such as universities; and

7 “(E) a 5-year plan that describes the abil-
8 ity of the women’s business center for which fi-
9 nancial assistance is sought—

10 “(i) to serve women who are business
11 owners or potential business owners by
12 conducting training and counseling activi-
13 ties; and

14 “(ii) to provide training and services
15 to a representative number of women who
16 are socially or economically disadvantaged.

17 “(2) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS
18 FOR INITIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
20 shall—

21 “(i) review each application submitted
22 under paragraph (1), based on the infor-
23 mation described in such paragraph and
24 the criteria set forth under subparagraph
25 (B) of this paragraph; and

1 “(ii) to the extent practicable, as part
2 of the final selection process, conduct a
3 site visit to each women’s business center
4 for which financial assistance under sub-
5 section (b) is sought.

6 “(B) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

7 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
8 shall evaluate applicants for financial as-
9 sistance under subsection (b) in accordance
10 with selection criteria that are—

11 “(I) established before the date
12 on which applicants are required to
13 submit the applications;

14 “(II) stated in terms of relative
15 importance; and

16 “(III) publicly available and stat-
17 ed in each solicitation for applications
18 for financial assistance under sub-
19 section (b) made by the Adminis-
20 trator.

21 “(ii) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The se-
22 lection criteria for financial assistance
23 under subsection (b) shall include—

24 “(I) the experience of the appli-
25 cant in conducting programs or ongo-

1 ing efforts designed to teach or en-
2 hance the business skills of women
3 who are business owners or potential
4 business owners;

5 “(II) the ability of the applicant
6 to begin a project within a minimum
7 amount of time, as established under
8 the program announcement or by reg-
9 ulation;

10 “(III) the ability of the applicant
11 to provide training and services to a
12 representative number of women who
13 are socially or economically disadvan-
14 tagged;

15 “(IV) the ability of the applicant
16 to successfully complete participation
17 in the training program developed
18 under subsection (g)(4)(C);

19 “(V) the ability of the applicant
20 to successfully acquire accreditation
21 under the accreditation program de-
22 veloped under subsection (g)(6);

23 “(VI) whether the women’s busi-
24 ness center proposed by the applicant

1 will be sustainable for more than a 5-
2 year period; and

3 “(VII) the location for the wom-
4 en’s business center proposed by the
5 applicant, including whether the appli-
6 cant is located in an area in which—

7 “(aa) women are under-
8 served; or

9 “(bb) significant groups of
10 women are underserved due to
11 language or other social, cultural,
12 and economic barriers.

13 “(C) PROXIMITY.—If the principal place of
14 business of an applicant for financial assistance
15 under subsection (b) is located less than 50
16 miles from the principal place of business of a
17 women’s business center that received funds
18 under this section on or before the date of the
19 application, the applicant shall not be eligible
20 for the financial assistance, unless the appli-
21 cant—

22 “(i) submits a detailed written jus-
23 tification of the need for an additional cen-
24 ter in the area in which the applicant is lo-
25 cated, including information demonstrating

1 that the applicant is not providing services
2 that are redundant or duplicative of those
3 provided by that existing or current wom-
4 en’s business center;

5 “(ii) submits a detailed plan for how
6 the applicant plans to reach clients outside
7 of the geographic area in which the exist-
8 ing or current women’s business center is
9 located; and

10 “(iii) demonstrates that the applicant
11 has a pre-existing presence in other parts
12 of the geographic area in which the exist-
13 ing or current women’s business center is
14 located.

15 “(D) RECORD RETENTION.—

16 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
17 shall maintain a copy of each application
18 submitted under this subsection for not
19 less than 5 years.

20 “(ii) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—The
21 Administrator shall take steps to reduce,
22 to the maximum extent practicable, the pa-
23 perwork burden associated with carrying
24 out clause (i).”; and

25 (6) in subsection (m)—

1 (A) by striking paragraph (3) and insert-
2 ing the following:

3 “(3) APPLICATION AND APPROVAL FOR RE-
4 NEWAL GRANTS.—

5 “(A) SOLICITATION OF APPLICATIONS.—

6 The Administrator shall solicit applications and
7 award grants under this subsection for the first
8 fiscal year beginning after the date of enact-
9 ment of the Women’s Small Business Owner-
10 ship Act of 2015, and every third fiscal year
11 thereafter.

12 “(B) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—Each
13 eligible entity desiring a grant under this sub-
14 section shall submit to the Administrator an ap-
15 plication that contains—

16 “(i) a certification that the appli-
17 cant—

18 “(I) is an eligible entity;

19 “(II) has designated an executive
20 director or program manager to man-
21 age the women’s business center oper-
22 ated by the applicant; and

23 “(III) as a condition of receiving
24 a grant under this subsection,
25 agrees—

1 “(aa) to receive a site visit
2 as part of the final selection
3 process, at the discretion of the
4 Administrator; and

5 “(bb) to remedy any prob-
6 lem identified pursuant to the
7 site visit under item (aa);

8 “(ii) information demonstrating that
9 the applicant has the ability and resources
10 to meet the needs of the market to be
11 served by the women’s business center for
12 which a grant under this subsection is
13 sought, including the ability to obtain the
14 non-Federal contribution required under
15 paragraph (4)(C);

16 “(iii) information relating to assist-
17 ance to be provided by the women’s busi-
18 ness center in the area served by the wom-
19 en’s business center for which a grant
20 under this subsection is sought;

21 “(iv) information demonstrating that
22 the applicant is not providing services re-
23 dundant or duplicative of those provided by
24 a women’s business center receiving funds
25 under this subsection that is located less

1 than 50 miles from the principal place of
2 business of the applicant;

3 “(v) information demonstrating that
4 the applicant has worked with resource
5 partners of the Administration and other
6 entities;

7 “(vi) a 3-year plan that describes the
8 services provided by the women’s business
9 center for which a grant under this sub-
10 section is sought—

11 “(I) to serve women who are
12 business owners or potential business
13 owners by conducting training and
14 counseling activities; and

15 “(II) to provide training and
16 services to a representative number of
17 women who are socially or economi-
18 cally disadvantaged; and

19 “(vii) any additional information that
20 the Administrator may reasonably require.

21 “(C) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICA-
22 TIONS FOR GRANTS.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Adminis-
24 trator—

1 “(I) shall review each application
2 submitted under subparagraph (B),
3 based on the information described in
4 such subparagraph and the criteria
5 set forth under clause (ii) of this sub-
6 paragraph; and

7 “(II) as part of the final selection
8 process, may, at the discretion of the
9 Administrator, conduct a site visit to
10 each women’s business center for
11 which a grant under this subsection is
12 sought, in particular to evaluate the
13 women’s business center using the se-
14 lection criteria described in clause
15 (ii)(II).

16 “(ii) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

17 “(I) IN GENERAL.—The Admin-
18 istrator shall evaluate applicants for
19 grants under this subsection in ac-
20 cordance with selection criteria that
21 are—

22 “(aa) established before the
23 date on which applicants are re-
24 quired to submit the applications;

1 “(bb) stated in terms of rel-
2 ative importance; and

3 “(cc) publicly available and
4 stated in each solicitation for ap-
5 plications for grants under this
6 subsection made by the Adminis-
7 trator.

8 “(II) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The
9 selection criteria for a grant under
10 this subsection shall include—

11 “(aa) the total number of
12 entrepreneurs served by the ap-
13 plicant;

14 “(bb) the total number of
15 new startup companies assisted
16 by the applicant;

17 “(cc) the percentage of cli-
18 ents of the applicant that are so-
19 cially or economically disadvan-
20 taged;

21 “(dd) the percentage of indi-
22 viduals in the community served
23 by the applicant who are socially
24 or economically disadvantaged;

1 “(ee) the successful partici-
2 pation of the applicant in the
3 training program developed
4 under subsection (g)(4)(C);

5 “(ff) the successful accredi-
6 tation of the applicant under the
7 accreditation program developed
8 under subsection (g)(6); and

9 “(gg) any additional criteria
10 that the Administrator may rea-
11 sonably require.

12 “(iii) CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED
13 FUNDING.—In determining whether to
14 make a grant under this subsection, the
15 Administrator—

16 “(I) shall consider the results of
17 the most recent evaluation of the
18 women’s business center for which a
19 grant under this subsection is sought,
20 and, to a lesser extent, previous eval-
21 uations; and

22 “(II) may withhold a grant under
23 this subsection, if the Administrator
24 determines that the applicant has
25 failed to provide the information re-

1 quired to be provided under this para-
2 graph, or the information provided by
3 the applicant is inadequate.

4 “(D) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 60
5 days after the date of each deadline to submit
6 applications, the Administrator shall approve or
7 deny any application under this paragraph and
8 notify the applicant for each such application of
9 the approval or denial.

10 “(E) RECORD RETENTION.—

11 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
12 shall maintain a copy of each application
13 submitted under this paragraph for not
14 less than 5 years.

15 “(ii) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—The
16 Administrator shall take steps to reduce,
17 to the maximum extent practicable, the pa-
18 perwork burden associated with carrying
19 out clause (i).”; and

20 (B) by striking paragraph (5) and insert-
21 ing the following:

22 “(5) AWARD TO PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS.—There
23 shall be no limitation on the number of times the
24 Administrator may award a grant to an applicant
25 under this subsection.”.

1 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—
2 Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is
3 amended—

4 (1) in subsection (h)(2), by striking “to award
5 a contract (as a sustainability grant) under sub-
6 section (l) or”;

7 (2) in subsection (j)(1), by striking “The Ad-
8 ministration” and inserting “Not later than Novem-
9 ber 1 of each year, the Administrator”;

10 (3) in subsection (k)—

11 (A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (4);

12 (B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as
13 paragraph (4);

14 (C) by inserting before paragraph (2) the
15 following:

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
17 appropriated to the Administration to carry out this
18 section, to remain available until expended,
19 \$21,750,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through
20 2020.”;

21 (D) in paragraph (2), by striking subpara-
22 graph (B) and inserting the following:

23 “(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Of the amount made
24 available under this subsection for a fiscal year,
25 the following amounts shall be available for se-

1 lection panel costs, costs associated with devel-
 2 oping and maintaining a training program,
 3 costs associated with maintaining an accredita-
 4 tion program, post-award conference costs, and
 5 costs related to monitoring and oversight:

6 “(i) For fiscal year 2016, 2.65 per-
 7 cent.

8 “(ii) For each of fiscal years 2017
 9 through 2020, 2.5 percent.”; and

10 (E) by inserting after paragraph (2) the
 11 following:

12 “(3) CONTINUING GRANT AND COOPERATIVE
 13 AGREEMENT AUTHORITY.—

14 “(A) PROMPT DISBURSEMENT.—Upon re-
 15 ceiving funds to carry out this section for a fis-
 16 cal year, the Administrator shall, to the extent
 17 practicable, promptly reimburse funds to any
 18 women’s business center awarded financial as-
 19 sistance under this section if the center meets
 20 the eligibility requirements under this section.

21 “(B) SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.—If
 22 the Administrator has entered into a grant or
 23 cooperative agreement with a women’s business
 24 center under this section, the Administrator
 25 may not suspend or terminate the grant or co-

1 operative agreement, unless the Adminis-
2 trator—

3 “(i) provides the women’s business
4 center with written notification setting
5 forth the reasons for that action; and

6 “(ii) affords the women’s business
7 center an opportunity for a hearing, ap-
8 peal, or other administrative proceeding
9 under chapter 5 of title 5, United States
10 Code.”;

11 (4) in subsection (m)—

12 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “sub-
13 section (b) or (l)” and inserting “this sub-
14 section or subsection (b)”;

15 (B) in paragraph (4)(D), by striking “or
16 subsection (l)”;

17 (5) by redesignating subsections (m), (n), and
18 (o), as amended by this Act, as subsections (l), (m),
19 and (n), respectively.

20 (c) EFFECT ON EXISTING GRANTS.—

21 (1) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A nonprofit or-
22 ganization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of
23 the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in
24 effect on the day before the date of enactment of
25 this Act, shall continue to receive the grant under

1 the terms and conditions in effect for the grant on
2 the day before the date of enactment of this Act, ex-
3 cept that the nonprofit organization may not apply
4 for a renewal of the grant under section 29(m)(5) of
5 the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)(5)), as
6 in effect on the day before the date of enactment of
7 this Act.

8 (2) LENGTH OF RENEWAL GRANT.—The Ad-
9 ministrator may award a grant under section 29(l)
10 of the Small Business Act, as so redesignated by
11 subsection (a)(5) of this section, to a nonprofit orga-
12 nization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the
13 Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect
14 on the day before the date of enactment of this Act,
15 for the period—

16 (A) beginning on the day after the last day
17 of the grant agreement under such section
18 29(m); and

19 (B) ending at the end of the third fiscal
20 year beginning after the date of enactment of
21 this Act.

1 **SEC. 5. MATCHING REQUIREMENTS UNDER WOMEN'S BUSI-**
2 **NESS CENTER PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 29(c) of the Small Busi-
4 ness Act (15 U.S.C. 656(c)), as amended by section 4 of
5 this Act, is amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “As a condi-
7 tion” and inserting “Subject to paragraph (6), as a
8 condition”; and

9 (2) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by a re-
12 cipient organization, and in accordance with
13 this paragraph, the Administrator may waive,
14 in whole or in part, the requirement to obtain
15 non-Federal funds under this subsection for
16 counseling and training activities of the recipi-
17 ent organization carried out using financial as-
18 sistance under this section for a fiscal year. The
19 Administrator may not waive the requirement
20 for a recipient organization to obtain non-Fed-
21 eral funds under this paragraph for more than
22 a total of 2 consecutive fiscal years.

23 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining
24 whether to waive the requirement to obtain
25 non-Federal funds under this paragraph, the
26 Administrator shall consider—

1 “(i) the economic conditions affecting
2 the recipient organization;

3 “(ii) the impact a waiver under this
4 clause would have on the credibility of the
5 women’s business center program under
6 this section;

7 “(iii) the demonstrated ability of the
8 recipient organization to raise non-Federal
9 funds; and

10 “(iv) the performance of the recipient
11 organization.

12 “(C) LIMITATION.—The Administrator
13 may not waive the requirement to obtain non-
14 Federal funds under this paragraph if granting
15 the waiver would undermine the credibility of
16 the women’s business center program under
17 this section.

18 “(7) SOLICITATION.—Notwithstanding any
19 other provision of law, a recipient organization
20 may—

21 “(A) solicit cash and in-kind contributions
22 from private individuals and entities to be used
23 to carry out the activities of the recipient orga-
24 nization under the project conducted under this
25 section; and

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

5 “(8) EXCESS NON-FEDERAL DOLLARS.—The
6 amount of non-Federal dollars obtained by an eligi-
7 ble entity that is above the amount that is required
8 to be obtained by the eligible entity under this sub-
9 section and is not used as matching funds for pur-
10 poses of implementing the women’s business center
11 program under this section shall not be subject to
12 the requirements of part 200 of title 2, Code of Fed-
13 eral Regulations, or any successor thereto.”.

14 (b) REGULATIONS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

16 (A) except as provided in paragraph (2),
17 and not later than 1 year after the date of en-
18 actment of this Act, publish in the Federal Reg-
19 ister proposed regulations by the Administrator
20 to carry out the amendments made to section
21 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656)
22 by this Act; and

23 (B) accept public comments on such pro-
24 posed regulations for not less than 60 days.

1 (2) EXISTING PROPOSED REGULATIONS.—Para-
2 graph (1)(A) shall not apply to the extent proposed
3 regulations by the Administrator have been pub-
4 lished on the date of enactment of this Act that are
5 sufficient to carry out the amendments made to sec-
6 tion 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656)
7 by this Act.

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