

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4405

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. HAGEDORN) 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 Improvements Act of 2019”.

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, so long as the orga-
15 nization certifies that grant funds received
16 under this section will not be commingled with
17 other funds;

18 “(C) an institution of higher education (as
19 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education
20 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), unless such in-
21 stitution is currently receiving a grant under
22 section 21;

23 “(D) a development, credit, or finance cor-
24 poration chartered by a State, so long as the
25 corporation certifies that grant funds received

1 under this section will not be commingled with
2 other funds; or

3 “(E) any combination of entities listed in
4 subparagraphs (A) through (D).

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

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

18 “(5) WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIA-
19 TION.—The term ‘Women’s Business Center Asso-
20 ciation’ means a membership organization formed by
21 women’s business centers to pursue matters of com-
22 mon concern.

23 “(b) AUTHORITY.—

24 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a
25 Women’s Business Center Program under which the

1 Administrator may provide a grant to any eligible
2 entity to operate one or more women’s business cen-
3 ters for the benefit of small business concerns owned
4 and controlled by women.

5 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—The women’s business
6 centers shall be designed to provide counseling and
7 training that meets the needs of the small business
8 concerns owned and controlled by women, especially
9 socially or economically disadvantaged women, and
10 shall provide—

11 “(A) financial assistance, including train-
12 ing and counseling in how to apply for and se-
13 cure business credit and investment capital,
14 preparing and presenting financial statements,
15 and managing cash flow and other financial op-
16 erations of a small business concern;

17 “(B) management assistance, including
18 training and counseling in how to plan, orga-
19 nize, staff, direct, and control each major activ-
20 ity and function of a small business concern;
21 and

22 “(C) marketing assistance, including train-
23 ing and counseling in identifying and seg-
24 menting domestic and international market op-
25 portunities, preparing and executing marketing

1 plans, developing pricing strategies, locating
2 contract opportunities, negotiating contracts,
3 and utilizing varying public relations and adver-
4 tising techniques.

5 “(3) TYPES OF GRANTS.—

6 “(A) INITIAL GRANT.—The amount of an
7 initial grant, which shall be for a 5-year term,
8 provided under this subsection to an eligible en-
9 tity shall be not more than \$300,000 annually
10 (as such amount is annually adjusted by the
11 Administrator to reflect the change in infla-
12 tion).

13 “(B) CONTINUATION GRANTS.—The Ad-
14 ministrator may award a continuation grant,
15 which shall be for a 5-year term, of not more
16 than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is an-
17 nually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect
18 the change in inflation) to an eligible entity
19 that received an initial grant under subpara-
20 graph (A). There shall be no limitation on the
21 number of continuation grants an eligible entity
22 may receive under this section.

23 “(c) APPLICATION.—

24 “(1) INITIAL GRANTS AND CONTINUATION
25 GRANTS.—To receive an initial grant or continuation

1 grant under this section, an eligible entity shall sub-
2 mit an application to the Administrator in such
3 form, in such manner, and containing such informa-
4 tion as the Administrator may require, including—

5 “(A) a certification that the eligible enti-
6 ty—

7 “(i) has designated an executive direc-
8 tor or program manager, who may be com-
9 pensated using grant funds awarded under
10 this section or other sources, to manage
11 the women’s business center for which a
12 grant under subsection (b) is sought; and

13 “(ii) meets accounting and reporting
14 requirements established by the Director of
15 the Office of Management and Budget;

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

19 “(i) providing counseling and training
20 described under subsection (b)(2);

21 “(ii) providing training and services to
22 a representative number of women who are
23 socially or economically disadvantaged; and

1 “(iii) working with resource partners
2 of the Administration and other entities;
3 and

4 “(C) a 5-year plan that—

5 “(i) includes information relating to
6 the assistance to be provided by the wom-
7 en’s business center in the area in which
8 the women’s business center is located;

9 “(ii) describes the ability of the eligi-
10 ble entity to meet the needs of the market
11 to be served by the women’s business cen-
12 ter, including the ability to obtain the
13 matching funds required under subsection
14 (e); and

15 “(iii) describes the ability of the eligi-
16 ble entity to provide counseling and train-
17 ing described under subsection (b)(2), in-
18 cluding to a representative number of
19 women who are socially or economically
20 disadvantaged.

21 “(2) RECORD RETENTION.—

22 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
23 shall maintain a copy of each application sub-
24 mitted under this subsection for not less than
25 5 years.

1 “(B) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—The Ad-
2 ministrators shall take steps to reduce, to the
3 maximum extent practicable, the paperwork
4 burden associated with carrying out subpara-
5 graph (A).

6 “(d) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

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

9 “(A) the experience of the applicant in pro-
10 viding entrepreneurial training;

11 “(B) the amount of time needed for the
12 applicant to commence operation of a women’s
13 business center;

14 “(C) in consultation with a Women’s Busi-
15 ness Center Association, the capacity of the ap-
16 plicant to meet the accreditation standards es-
17 tablished under subsection (k)(4) in a timely
18 manner;

19 “(D) the ability of the applicant to sustain
20 operations, including the applicant’s ability to
21 obtain sufficient non-Federal funds, for a 5-
22 year period;

23 “(E) the proposed location of a women’s
24 business center to be operated by the applicant
25 and the location’s proximity to Veteran Busi-

1 ness Outreach Centers and to recipients of
2 grants under section 8(b)(1) or 21;

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

6 “(G) the advice and counsel of a Women’s
7 Business Center Association to determine areas
8 with unmet needs and the likelihood that the
9 recipient will become accredited.

10 “(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

11 “(A) RULEMAKING.—The Administrator
12 shall issue regulations to specify the criteria for
13 review and selection of applicants under this
14 subsection.

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

24 “(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
25 in this paragraph may be construed as prohib-

1 iting the Administrator from modifying the reg-
2 ulations issued pursuant to subparagraph (A)
3 (after providing an opportunity for notice and
4 comment) as such regulations apply to an op-
5 portunity to be awarded a grant under this sec-
6 tion that the Administrator has not yet publicly
7 announced pursuant to subsection (l)(1).

8 “(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—

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

13 “(A) in the first and second year of the
14 term of an initial grant, if applicable, 1 non-
15 Federal dollar for each 2 Federal dollars; and

16 “(B) in each subsequent year of the term
17 of an initial grant, if applicable, or for the term
18 of a continuation grant, 1 non-Federal dollar
19 for each Federal dollar.

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

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

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

6 “(B) use amounts made available by the
7 Administrator under this section for the cost of
8 such solicitation and management of the con-
9 tributions received.

10 “(4) DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.—The Admin-
11 istrator may disburse an amount not greater than
12 25 percent of the total amount of a grant awarded
13 to an eligible entity before such eligible entity ob-
14 tains the non-Federal matching funds described
15 under paragraph (1).

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

1 mination, of whether the Administrator believes that
2 the eligible entity will be able to obtain the requisite
3 funding under paragraph (1) for such continuation
4 grant.

5 “(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by an
7 eligible entity, and in accordance with this para-
8 graph, the Administrator may waive, in whole
9 or in part, the requirement to obtain non-Fed-
10 eral matching funds for a grant awarded under
11 this section for the eligible entity for a one-year
12 term of the grant. The Administrator may not
13 issue such a waiver for more than a total of 2
14 consecutive one-year terms.

15 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining
16 whether to issue a waiver under this paragraph,
17 the Administrator shall consider—

18 “(i) the economic conditions affecting
19 the eligible entity;

20 “(ii) the demonstrated ability of the
21 eligible entity to raise non-Federal funds;
22 and

23 “(iii) the performance of the eligible
24 entity under the initial grant.

1 “(C) LIMITATION.—The Administrator
2 may not issue a waiver under this paragraph if
3 the Administrator determines that granting the
4 waiver would undermine the credibility of the
5 Women’s Business Center Program.

6 “(7) EXCESS NON-FEDERAL DOLLARS.—The
7 amount of non-Federal dollars obtained by an eligi-
8 ble entity that is above the amount that is required
9 to be obtained by the eligible entity under this sub-
10 section shall not be subject to the requirements of
11 part 200 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, or
12 any successor thereto, if such amount of non-Fed-
13 eral dollars—

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

17 “(B) was not obtained using funds from
18 the Women’s Business Center Program.

19 “(8) CARRYOVER.—Excess non-Federal dollars
20 described in paragraph (7) may be used to satisfy
21 the matching funds requirement under paragraph
22 (1) for the subsequent one-year grant term, if appli-
23 cable, except that such amounts shall be subject to
24 the requirements of part 200 of title 2, Code of Fed-
25 eral Regulations, or any successor thereto.

1 “(f) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—

2 “(1) SEPARATION OF FUNDS.—An eligible enti-
3 ty shall—

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

7 “(B) separately maintain and account for
8 any grants received under this section.

9 “(2) EXAMINATION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

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

17 “(B) ANNUAL REVIEW.—An employee of
18 the Administration shall—

19 “(i) conduct an annual programmatic
20 and financial examination of each eligible
21 entity, as described in subsection (g); and

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

24 “(3) REMEDIATION OF PROBLEMS.—

1 “(A) PLAN OF ACTION.—If an examination
2 of an eligible entity conducted under paragraph
3 (2)(B) identifies any problems, the eligible enti-
4 ty shall, within 45 calendar days of receiving a
5 copy of the results of such examination, provide
6 the Assistant Administrator with a plan of ac-
7 tion, including specific milestones, for cor-
8 recting such problems.

9 “(B) PLAN OF ACTION REVIEW BY THE AS-
10 SISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The Assistant Ad-
11 ministrator shall review each plan of action sub-
12 mitted under subparagraph (A) within 30 cal-
13 endar days of receiving such plan. If the Assist-
14 ant Administrator determines that such plan—

15 “(i) will bring the eligible entity into
16 compliance with all the terms of the grant
17 agreement, the Assistant Administrator
18 shall approve such plan; or

19 “(ii) is inadequate to remedy the
20 problems identified in the annual examina-
21 tion to which the plan of action relates, the
22 Assistant Administrator shall set forth
23 such reasons in writing and provide such
24 determination to the eligible entity within
25 15 calendar days of such determination.

1 “(C) AMENDMENT TO PLAN OF ACTION.—
2 An eligible entity receiving a determination
3 under subparagraph (B)(ii) shall have 30 cal-
4 endar days from the receipt of the determina-
5 tion to amend the plan of action to satisfy the
6 problems identified by the Assistant Adminis-
7 trator and resubmit such plan to the Assistant
8 Administrator.

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

16 “(E) APPEAL OF ASSISTANT ADMINIS-
17 TRATOR DETERMINATION.—

18 “(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Assistant
19 Administrator rejects an amended plan
20 under subparagraph (D), the eligible entity
21 shall have the opportunity to appeal such
22 decision to the Administrator, who may
23 delegate such appeal to an appropriate of-
24 ficer of the Administration.

1 “(ii) OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPLA-
2 NATION.—Any appeal described under
3 clause (i) shall provide an opportunity for
4 the eligible entity to provide, in writing, an
5 explanation of why the eligible entity’s
6 amended plan remedies the problems iden-
7 tified in the annual examination conducted
8 under paragraph (2)(B).

9 “(iii) NOTICE OF DETERMINATION.—
10 The Administrator shall provide to the eli-
11 gible entity a determination of the appeal,
12 in writing, not later than 15 calendar days
13 after the eligible entity files an appeal
14 under this subparagraph.

15 “(iv) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO ACT.—
16 If the Administrator fails to act on an ap-
17 peal made under this subparagraph within
18 the 15-day period specified under clause
19 (iii), the eligible entity’s amended plan of
20 action submitted under subparagraph (C)
21 shall be deemed to be approved.

22 “(4) TERMINATION OF GRANT.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
24 shall terminate a grant to an eligible entity

1 under this section if the eligible entity fails to
2 comply with—

3 “(i) a plan of action approved by the
4 Assistant Administrator under paragraph
5 (3)(B)(i); or

6 “(ii) an amended plan of action ap-
7 proved by the Assistant Administrator
8 under paragraph (3)(D) or approved on
9 appeal under paragraph (3)(E).

10 “(B) APPEAL OF TERMINATION.—An eligi-
11 ble entity shall have the opportunity to chal-
12 lenge the termination of a grant under subpara-
13 graph (A) on the record and after an oppor-
14 tunity for a hearing.

15 “(C) FINAL AGENCY ACTION.—A deter-
16 mination made pursuant to subparagraph (B)
17 shall be considered final agency action for the
18 purposes of chapter 7 of title 5, United States
19 Code.

20 “(5) CONSULTATION WITH MAJORITY WOMEN’S
21 BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIATION.—If a majority of
22 women’s business centers that are operating pursu-
23 ant to agreements with the Administration are mem-
24 bers of an individual Women’s Business Center As-
25 sociation, the Administrator shall—

1 “(A) recognize the existence and activities
2 of such Association; and

3 “(B) consult with the Association on, and
4 negotiate with the Association in the develop-
5 ment of documents with respect to—

6 “(i) announcing the annual scope of
7 activities pursuant to this section;

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

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

18 “(g) PROGRAM EXAMINATION.—

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

20 “(A) develop and implement an annual
21 programmatic and financial examination of
22 each eligible entity receiving a grant under this
23 section, under which each such eligible entity
24 shall provide to the Administration—

1 “(i) an itemized cost breakdown of ac-
2 tual expenditures for costs incurred during
3 the preceding year; and

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

15 “(B) analyze the results of each such ex-
16 amination and, based on that analysis, make a
17 determination regarding the programmatic and
18 financial viability of each women’s business cen-
19 ter operated by the eligible entity.

20 “(2) CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING.—
21 In determining whether to award a continuation
22 grant to an eligible entity, the Administrator—

23 “(A) shall consider the results of the most
24 recent examination of the eligible entity under
25 paragraph (1);

1 “(B) shall determine if—

2 “(i) the eligible entity has failed to
3 provide, or provided inadequate, informa-
4 tion under paragraph (1)(A); or

5 “(ii) the eligible entity has failed to
6 provide any information required to be pro-
7 vided by the women’s business center for
8 purposes of the management report under
9 subsection (m)(1), or the information pro-
10 vided by the center is inadequate; and

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

13 “(h) NOTICE AND COMMENT REQUIRED.—The Ad-
14 ministrator may only make a change to the standards by
15 which an eligible entity obtains or maintains grants under
16 this section, the standards for accreditation, or any other
17 requirement for the operation of a women’s business cen-
18 ter if the Administrator first provides notice and the op-
19 portunity for public comment, as set forth in section
20 553(b) of title 5, United States Code, without regard to
21 any exceptions provided for under such section.

22 “(i) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—

23 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—An eligible entity that
24 receives a grant under this section may enter into a
25 contract with a Federal department or agency to

1 provide specific assistance to small business concerns
2 owned and controlled by women and other under-
3 served small business concerns, if performance of
4 such a contract does not hinder the ability of the eli-
5 gible entity to carry out the terms of a grant re-
6 ceived under this section.

7 “(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The authority of the
8 Administrator to enter into contracts shall be in ef-
9 fect for each fiscal year only to the extent and in the
10 amounts as are provided in advance in appropria-
11 tions Acts. After the Administrator has entered into
12 a contract, either as a grant or a cooperative agree-
13 ment, with any applicant under this section, the Ad-
14 ministrator shall not suspend, terminate, or fail to
15 renew or extend any such contract unless the Ad-
16 ministrator provides the applicant with written noti-
17 fication setting forth the reasons therefore and af-
18 fords the applicant an opportunity for a hearing, ap-
19 peal, or other administrative proceeding under chap-
20 ter 5 of title 5, United States Code.

21 “(j) PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A women’s business center
23 may not disclose the name, address, or telephone
24 number of any individual or small business concern
25 receiving assistance under this section without the

1 consent of such individual or small business concern,
2 unless—

3 “(A) the Administrator orders such disclo-
4 sure after the Administrator is ordered to make
5 such a disclosure by a court in any civil or
6 criminal enforcement action initiated by a Fed-
7 eral or State agency; or

8 “(B) the Administrator considers such a
9 disclosure to be necessary for the purpose of
10 conducting a financial audit of a women’s busi-
11 ness center, except that such a disclosure shall
12 be limited to the information necessary for such
13 audit.

14 “(2) ADMINISTRATION USE OF INFORMATION.—
15 This subsection shall not—

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

18 “(B) prevent the Administration from
19 using information about individuals who use
20 women’s business centers to conduct surveys of
21 such individuals.

22 “(3) REGULATIONS.—The Administrator shall
23 issue regulations to establish standards for disclo-
24 sures for purposes of a financial audit described
25 under paragraph (1)(B).

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

2 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established
3 within the Administration an Office of Women’s
4 Business Ownership, which shall be responsible for
5 the administration of the Administration’s programs
6 for the development of women’s business enterprises
7 (as defined in section 408 of the Women’s Business
8 Ownership Act of 1988). The Office of Women’s
9 Business Ownership shall be administered by an As-
10 sistant Administrator, who shall be appointed by the
11 Administrator.

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

14 “(A) QUALIFICATION.—The position of As-
15 sistant Administrator shall be a Senior Execu-
16 tive Service position under section 3132(a)(2)
17 of title 5, United States Code. The Assistant
18 Administrator shall serve as a noncareer ap-
19 pointee (as defined in section 3132(a)(7) of
20 that title).

21 “(B) DUTIES.—The Assistant Adminis-
22 trator shall administer the programs and serv-
23 ices of the Office of Women’s Business Owner-
24 ship and perform the following functions:

1 “(i) Recommend the annual adminis-
2 trative and program budgets of the Office
3 and eligible entities receiving a grant
4 under the Women’s Business Center Pro-
5 gram.

6 “(ii) Review the annual budgets sub-
7 mitted by each eligible entity receiving a
8 grant under the Women’s Business Center
9 Program.

10 “(iii) Collaborate with other Federal
11 departments and agencies, State and local
12 governments, not-for-profit organizations,
13 and for-profit organizations to maximize
14 utilization of taxpayer dollars and reduce
15 (or eliminate) any duplication among the
16 programs overseen by the Office of Wom-
17 en’s Business Ownership and those of
18 other entities that provide similar services
19 to women entrepreneurs.

20 “(iv) Maintain a clearinghouse to pro-
21 vide for the dissemination and exchange of
22 information between women’s business cen-
23 ters.

24 “(v) Serve as the vice chairperson of
25 the Interagency Committee on Women’s

1 Business Enterprise and as the liaison for
2 the National Women’s Business Council.

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

9 “(A) fostering participation of women en-
10 trepreneurs in the economy by overseeing a net-
11 work of women’s business centers throughout
12 States and territories;

13 “(B) creating public-private partnerships
14 to support women entrepreneurs and conduct
15 outreach and education to small business con-
16 cerns owned and controlled by women; and

17 “(C) working with other programs of the
18 Administrator to—

19 “(i) ensure women are well-rep-
20 resented in those programs and being
21 served by those programs; and

22 “(ii) identify gaps where participation
23 by women in those programs could be in-
24 creased.

25 “(4) ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.—

1 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than
2 270 days after the date of enactment of this
3 paragraph, the Administrator shall publish
4 standards for a program to accredit eligible en-
5 tities that receive a grant under this section.

6 “(B) PUBLIC COMMENT; TRANSITION.—
7 Before publishing the standards under subpara-
8 graph (A), the Administrator—

9 “(i) shall provide a period of not less
10 than 60 days for public comment on such
11 standards; and

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

15 “(C) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The Ad-
16 ministrator may provide financial support, by
17 contract or otherwise, to a Women’s Business
18 Center Association to provide assistance in es-
19 tablishing the standards required under sub-
20 paragraph (A) or for carrying out an accredita-
21 tion program pursuant to such standards.

22 “(5) CONTINUATION GRANT CONSIDER-
23 ATIONS.—

24 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining wheth-
25 er to award a continuation grant under this sec-

1 tion, the Administrator shall consider the re-
2 sults of the annual programmatic and financial
3 examination conducted under subsection (g)
4 and the accreditation program.

5 “(B) ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENT.—
6 After the end of the 2-year period beginning on
7 the date of enactment of this subsection, the
8 Administration may not award a continuation
9 grant under this section unless the applicable
10 eligible entity has been approved under the ac-
11 creditation program conducted pursuant to this
12 subsection, except that the Assistant Adminis-
13 trator for the Office of Women’s Business Own-
14 ership may waive such accreditation require-
15 ment, in the discretion of the Assistant Admin-
16 istrator, upon a showing that the eligible entity
17 is making a good faith effort to obtain accredi-
18 tation.

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

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

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

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

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

16 “(m) ANNUAL MANAGEMENT REPORT.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall
18 prepare and submit to the Committee on Small
19 Business of the House of Representatives and the
20 Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
21 of the Senate an annual report on the effectiveness
22 of women’s business centers operated through a
23 grant awarded under this section.

24 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under
25 paragraph (1) shall include—

1 “(A) information concerning, with respect
2 to each women’s business center established
3 pursuant to a grant awarded under this section,
4 the most recent analysis of the annual pro-
5 grammatic and financial examination of the ap-
6 plicable eligible entity, as required under sub-
7 section (g)(1)(B), and the subsequent deter-
8 mination made by the Administration under
9 that subsection;

10 “(B) the number of persons advised and
11 trained through the Women’s Business Center
12 Program;

13 “(C) the total number of hours of advising
14 and training through the Program;

15 “(D) the demographics of Program partici-
16 pants to include gender, race, and age of each
17 such participant;

18 “(E) the number of Program participants
19 who are veterans;

20 “(F) the number of new businesses started
21 by participants in the Program;

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

1 “(H) the amount of capital secured by par-
2 ticipants in the Program, including through
3 loans and equity investment;

4 “(I) the number of participants in the Pro-
5 gram receiving financial assistance, including
6 the type and dollar amount, under the loan pro-
7 grams of the Administration;

8 “(J) an estimate of gross receipts, includ-
9 ing to the extent practicable a description of
10 any change in revenue of small business con-
11 cerns assisted through the Program;

12 “(K) to the maximum extent practicable,
13 increases or decreases in revenues for the as-
14 sisted small business concerns;

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

17 “(M) the results of satisfaction surveys of
18 participants, including a summary of any com-
19 ments received from such participants; and

20 “(N) any recommendations by the Admin-
21 istrator to improve the delivery of services by
22 women’s business centers.

23 “(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
25 appropriated to the Administration to carry out this

1 section, to remain available until expended,
2 \$31,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through
3 2023.

4 “(2) USE OF AMOUNTS.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
6 subparagraph (B), amounts made available
7 under this subsection for fiscal year 2020, and
8 each fiscal year thereafter, may only be used for
9 grant awards and may not be used for costs in-
10 curred by the Administration in connection with
11 the management and administration of the pro-
12 gram under this section.

13 “(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Of the amount made
14 available under this subsection for a fiscal year,
15 the following amounts shall be available for
16 costs incurred by the Administration in connec-
17 tion with the management and administration
18 of the program under this section:

19 “(i) For the first fiscal year beginning
20 after the date of the enactment of this sub-
21 paragraph, 2.65 percent.

22 “(ii) For the second fiscal year begin-
23 ning after the date of the enactment of
24 this subparagraph and each fiscal year

1 thereafter through fiscal year 2023, 2.5
2 percent.

3 “(3) EXPEDITED ACQUISITION.—Notwith-
4 standing any other provision of law, the Adminis-
5 trator may use such expedited acquisition methods
6 as the Administrator determines to be appropriate to
7 carry out this section, except that the Administrator
8 shall ensure that all small business sources are pro-
9 vided a reasonable opportunity to submit proposals.

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

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

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

1 29(m)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
2 656(m)(5)), as in effect on the day before the date of en-
3 actment of this Act.

4 (b) LENGTH OF CONTINUATION GRANT.—The Ad-
5 ministrator of the Small Business Administration may
6 award a grant under section 29 of the Small Business Act,
7 as amended by this Act, to a nonprofit organization receiv-
8 ing a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business
9 Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before
10 the date of enactment of this Act, for the period—

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

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

15 **SEC. 4. REGULATIONS.**

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

○