

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5078

To amend the Small Business Act to provide re-entry entrepreneurship counseling and training services for incarcerated individuals, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 13, 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself and Mr. CHABOT) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to provide re-entry entrepreneurship counseling and training services for incarcerated individuals, 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 “Prison to Proprietor-
5 ship Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. RE-ENTRY ENTREPRENEURSHIP COUNSELING AND**
7 **TRAINING FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.**

8 The Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) is
9 amended—

1 (1) by redesignating section 49 as section 50;

2 and

3 (2) by inserting after section 48 the following

4 new section:

5 **“SEC. 49. RE-ENTRY ENTREPRENEURSHIP COUNSELING**

6 **AND TRAINING FOR INCARCERATED INDIVID-**

7 **UALS.**

8 “(a) SERVICES REQUIRED.—The Administrator, in
9 coordination with the Director of the Bureau of Prisons,
10 shall require women’s business centers and small business
11 development centers identified under the plan described in
12 subsection (b) to provide entrepreneurship counseling and
13 training services to covered individuals.

14 “(b) PLAN.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in con-
16 sultation with an association formed to pursue mat-
17 ters of common concern to women’s business centers
18 and an association of small business development
19 centers formed pursuant to section 21(a)(3)(A),
20 shall develop a plan, which shall be updated annu-
21 ally, to match women’s business centers and small
22 business development centers with covered individ-
23 uals in Federal prisons who are eligible to receive
24 services under this section.

1 “(2) MATCHING.—In determining matches
2 under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall
3 prioritize matching the women’s business center or
4 small business development center in closest prox-
5 imity to the applicable Federal prison to provide
6 such services.

7 “(3) ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES.—If the
8 women’s business center or small business develop-
9 ment center identified under the plan in paragraph
10 (1) is unable to provide such services to covered in-
11 dividuals in such Federal prison, another women’s
12 business center or small business development cen-
13 ter, an association of women’s business centers, or
14 an association of small business development centers
15 shall provide such services in accordance with the re-
16 quirements of this section.

17 “(c) GOALS.—The goal of the services provided under
18 this section is to provide covered individuals with the fol-
19 lowing:

20 “(1) Assistance and in-depth training on how to
21 start or expand a small business concern.

22 “(2) Tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to
23 identify a business opportunity, including how to—

24 “(A) draft a resume, business plan, and
25 transition plan;

1 “(B) identify sources of capital; and

2 “(C) connect with local resources for small
3 business concerns.

4 “(d) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—The services
5 provided under this section shall include—

6 “(1) a presentation providing exposure to the
7 opportunities involved in self-employment and own-
8 ership of a small business concern;

9 “(2) a self-study course manual focused on the
10 basic skills of entrepreneurship, financial literacy,
11 the language of business, and the considerations and
12 life skills relevant to self-employment and ownership
13 of a small business concern;

14 “(3) five two-day sessions of in-depth classroom
15 instruction introducing the foundations of self-em-
16 ployment and ownership of small business concerns,
17 including guided discussions to explore personal en-
18 trepreneurial development interests;

19 “(4) in-depth training delivered through one-on-
20 one mentorship, including individual support in the
21 development of a business plan, entrepreneurial
22 skills, and strategies for starting up a small business
23 concern; and

24 “(5) upon completion of the counseling and
25 training, a presentation of a certificate.

1 “(e) PRIORITY.—The Administrator shall, to the ex-
2 tent practicable, ensure that women’s business centers and
3 small business development centers prioritize providing en-
4 trepreneurship counseling and training services to covered
5 individuals who will be released from Federal custody not
6 later than 18 months after the date on which such a cov-
7 ered individual begins to receive such services.

8 “(f) CONTINUATION OF SERVICES.—A covered indi-
9 vidual receiving services under this section may continue
10 to receive such services after release from Federal custody.

11 “(g) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying out this sec-
12 tion, the Administrator may award a grant to an associa-
13 tion formed to pursue matters of common concern to wom-
14 en’s business centers or small business development cen-
15 ters to coordinate the services described under this section,
16 including to develop curriculum, train mentors and in-
17 structors, and establish public-private partnerships to sup-
18 port covered individuals and identify opportunities to ac-
19 cess capital.

20 “(h) CURRICULUM.—The Administration shall print
21 and make available to women’s business centers, small
22 business development centers, an association of women’s
23 business centers, or an association of small business devel-
24 opment centers any curriculum or course materials devel-
25 oped pursuant to this section.

1 “(i) SURVEY.—Each women’s business center or
2 small business development center that provided services
3 under this section shall survey covered individuals who re-
4 ceived such services to assess the satisfaction of such cov-
5 ered individuals with such services.

6 “(j) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
7 of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter,
8 the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small
9 Business of the House of Representatives and the Com-
10 mittee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the
11 Senate a report on the performance and effectiveness of
12 the services provided under this section, which may be in-
13 cluded as part of another report submitted to such com-
14 mittees by the Administrator, and which shall include—

15 “(1) the number of covered individuals coun-
16 seled or trained under this section;

17 “(2) the number of hours of counseling pro-
18 vided by each women’s business center and each
19 small business development center under this sec-
20 tion;

21 “(3) the number of certificates presented under
22 subsection (d)(5);

23 “(4) the demographics of covered individuals
24 who received services, including age, gender, race,
25 and ethnicity;

1 “(5) the level of understanding of business con-
2 cepts of covered individuals upon completion of the
3 counseling and training described under this section;

4 “(6) a summary and analysis of surveys con-
5 ducted under subsection (i); and

6 “(7) any additional information the Adminis-
7 trator may require.

8 “(k) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this sec-
9 tion, the term ‘covered individual’ means an individual in-
10 carcerated in a Federal prison that the Director of the
11 Bureau of Prisons has designated as a minimum, low, or
12 medium security prison.

13 “(l) FUNDING.—Subject to the availability of appro-
14 priations, the Administrator shall reimburse women’s
15 business centers, small business development centers, an
16 association of women’s business centers, or an association
17 of small business development centers for the costs relat-
18 ing to the services provided under the section.”.

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