

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 408

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 22, 2021

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs

AN ACT

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish
a mentor-protégé 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Department of Home-
3 land Security Mentor-Protégé Program Act of 2021”.

4 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY MENTOR-
5 PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the
7 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.)
8 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

9 **“SEC. 890B. MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM.**

10 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
11 Department a mentor-protégé program (in this section re-
12 ferred to as the ‘Program’) under which a mentor firm
13 enters into an agreement with a protégé firm for the pur-
14 pose of assisting the protégé firm to compete for prime
15 contracts and subcontracts of the Department.

16 “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary shall establish cri-
17 teria for mentor firms and protégé firms to be eligible to
18 participate in the Program, including a requirement that
19 a firm is not included on any list maintained by the Fed-
20 eral Government of contractors that have been suspended
21 or debarred.

22 “(c) PROGRAM APPLICATION AND APPROVAL.—

23 “(1) APPLICATION.—The Secretary, acting
24 through the Office of Small and Disadvantaged
25 Business Utilization of the Department, shall estab-
26 lish a process for submission of an application joint-

1 ly by a mentor firm and the protégé firm selected by
2 the mentor firm. The application shall include each
3 of the following:

4 “(A) A description of the assistance to be
5 provided by the mentor firm, including, to the
6 extent available, the number and a brief de-
7 scription of each anticipated subcontract to be
8 awarded to the protégé firm.

9 “(B) A schedule with milestones for
10 achieving the assistance to be provided over the
11 period of participation in the Program.

12 “(C) An estimate of the costs to be in-
13 curred by the mentor firm for providing assist-
14 ance under the Program.

15 “(D) Attestations that Program partici-
16 pants will submit to the Secretary reports at
17 times specified by the Secretary to assist the
18 Secretary in evaluating the protégé firm’s devel-
19 opmental progress.

20 “(E) Attestations that Program partici-
21 pants will inform the Secretary in the event of
22 a change in eligibility or voluntary withdrawal
23 from the Program.

24 “(2) APPROVAL.—Not later than 60 days after
25 receipt of an application pursuant to paragraph (1),

1 the head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged
2 Business Utilization shall notify applicants of ap-
3 proval or, in the case of disapproval, the process for
4 resubmitting an application for reconsideration.

5 “(3) RESCISSION.—The head of the Office of
6 Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization may
7 rescind the approval of an application under this
8 subsection if it determines that such action is in the
9 best interest of the Department.

10 “(d) PROGRAM DURATION.—A mentor firm and
11 protégé firm approved under subsection (c) shall enter into
12 an agreement to participate in the Program for a period
13 of not less than 36 months.

14 “(e) PROGRAM BENEFITS.—A mentor firm and
15 protégé firm that enter into an agreement under sub-
16 section (d) may receive the following Program benefits:

17 “(1) With respect to an award of a contract
18 that requires a subcontracting plan, a mentor firm
19 may receive evaluation credit for participating in the
20 Program.

21 “(2) With respect to an award of a contract
22 that requires a subcontracting plan, a mentor firm
23 may receive credit for a protégé firm performing as
24 a first tier subcontractor or a subcontractor at any

1 tier in an amount equal to the total dollar value of
2 any subcontracts awarded to such protégé firm.

3 “(3) A protégé firm may receive technical, man-
4 agerial, financial, or any other mutually agreed upon
5 benefit from a mentor firm, including a subcontract
6 award.

7 “(f) REPORTING.—Not later than one year after the
8 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
9 the head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Busi-
10 ness Utilization shall submit to the Committee on Home-
11 land Security and Governmental Affairs and the Com-
12 mittee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the
13 Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security and the
14 Committee on Small Business of the House of Representa-
15 tives a report that—

16 “(1) identifies each agreement between a men-
17 tor firm and a protégé firm entered into under this
18 section, including the number of protégé firm par-
19 ticipants that are—

20 “(A) small business concerns;

21 “(B) small business concerns owned and
22 controlled by veterans;

23 “(C) small business concerns owned and
24 controlled by service-disabled veterans;

1 “(D) qualified HUBZone small business
2 concerns;

3 “(E) small business concerns owned and
4 controlled by socially and economically dis-
5 advantaged individuals;

6 “(F) small business concerns owned and
7 controlled by women;

8 “(G) historically Black colleges and univer-
9 sities; and

10 “(H) minority institutions of higher edu-
11 cation;

12 “(2) describes the type of assistance provided
13 by mentor firms to protégé firms;

14 “(3) identifies contracts within the Department
15 in which a mentor firm serving as the prime con-
16 tractor provided subcontracts to a protégé firm
17 under the Program; and

18 “(4) assesses the degree to which there has
19 been—

20 “(A) an increase in the technical capabili-
21 ties of protégé firms; and

22 “(B) an increase in the quantity and esti-
23 mated value of prime contract and subcontract
24 awards to protégé firms for the period covered
25 by the report.

1 “(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
2 tion may be construed to limit, diminish, impair, or other-
3 wise affect the authority of the Department to participate
4 in any program carried out by or requiring approval of
5 the Small Business Administration or adopt or follow any
6 regulation or policy that the Administrator of the Small
7 Business Administration may promulgate, except that, to
8 the extent that any provision of this section (including
9 subsection (h)) conflicts with any other provision of law,
10 regulation, or policy, this section shall control.

11 “(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 “(1) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNI-
13 VERSITY.—The term ‘historically Black college or
14 university’ means any of the historically Black col-
15 leges and universities referred to in section 2323 of
16 title 10, United States Code, as in effect on March
17 1, 2018.

18 “(2) MENTOR FIRM.—The term ‘mentor firm’
19 means a for-profit business concern that is not a
20 small business concern that—

21 “(A) has the ability to assist and commits
22 to assisting a protégé to compete for Federal
23 prime contracts and subcontracts; and

24 “(B) satisfies any other requirements im-
25 posed by the Secretary.

1 “(3) MINORITY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDU-
2 CATION.—The term ‘minority institution of higher
3 education’ means an institution of higher education
4 with a student body that reflects the composition
5 specified in section 312(b) of the Higher Education
6 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(b)).

7 “(4) PROTÉGÉ FIRM.—The term ‘protégé firm’
8 means a small business concern, a historically Black
9 college or university, or a minority institution of
10 higher education that—

11 “(A) is eligible to enter into a prime con-
12 tract or subcontract with the Department; and

13 “(B) satisfies any other requirements im-
14 posed by the Secretary.

15 “(5) SMALL BUSINESS ACT DEFINITIONS.—The
16 terms ‘small business concern’, ‘small business con-
17 cern owned and controlled by veterans’, ‘small busi-
18 ness concern owned and controlled by service-dis-
19 abled veterans’, ‘qualified HUBZone small business
20 concern’, ‘and small business concern owned and
21 controlled by women’ have the meanings given such
22 terms, respectively, under section 3 of the Small
23 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632). The term ‘small busi-
24 ness concern owned and controlled by socially and
25 economically disadvantaged individuals’ has the

