

Calendar No. 37

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION**S. 1093**

To amend the Small Business Act to enhance the Office of Rural Affairs,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24, 2025

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

APRIL 1 (legislative day, MARCH 31), 2025

Reported by Ms. ERNST, without amendment

A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to enhance the Office
of Rural Affairs, 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 “Coordinated Support
5 for Rural Small Businesses Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. OFFICE OF RURAL AFFAIRS OF THE SMALL BUSI-**
 2 **NESS ADMINISTRATION.**

3 Section 26 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 653)
 4 is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “ESTABLISH-
 6 MENT.—” before “There”;

7 (2) by amending subsection (b) to read as fol-
 8 lows:

9 “(b) APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT ADMINIS-
 10 TRATOR.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall be admin-
 12 istered by an Assistant Administrator, who shall—

13 “(A) be appointed by the Administrator;
 14 and

15 “(B) serve as a noncareer appointee, as de-
 16 fined in section 3132(a)(7) of title 5, United
 17 States Code.

18 “(2) QUALIFICATION.—The position of Assist-
 19 ant Administrator shall be a Senior Executive Serv-
 20 ice position under section 3132(a)(2) of title 5,
 21 United States Code.”;

22 (3) in subsection (c)—

23 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
 24 by inserting “DUTIES.—” before “The Office”;

1 (B) in paragraph (1), by striking “small
2 business concerns located in rural areas” and
3 inserting “rural small business concerns”;

4 (C) in paragraph (3), by striking “con-
5 cerning the” and all that follows through the
6 semicolon at the end and inserting the fol-
7 lowing: “on the policies and programs of the
8 Administration and of other Federal depart-
9 ments and agencies for assisting rural small
10 business concerns;”;

11 (D) in paragraph (4), by striking “; and”
12 and inserting a semicolon;

13 (E) in paragraph (5)—

14 (i) by striking “the United States
15 Tourism and Travel Administration” and
16 inserting “the National Travel and Tour-
17 ism Office of the Department of Com-
18 merce”;

19 (ii) by striking “small businesses in
20 rural areas” and inserting “rural small
21 business concerns”; and

22 (iii) by striking the period at the end
23 and inserting “; and”; and

24 (F) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(6) host outreach events for rural small busi-
2 ness concerns as described in subsection (d).”; and

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

4 “(d) OUTREACH.—The Assistant Administrator
5 shall—

6 “(1) host outreach events in various regions of
7 the United States for rural small business concerns;
8 and

9 “(2) invite representatives from district offices
10 of the Administration, resource partners, Federal
11 and State agencies, and other interested persons to
12 participate in such outreach events.

13 “(e) INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.—The Assistant
14 Administrator shall coordinate with the Department to—

15 “(1) conduct outreach regarding programs of
16 the Administration and the Department and to im-
17 prove awareness and utilization of the existing pro-
18 grams and services of each agency; and

19 “(2) convene interagency working groups to ad-
20 dress issues including—

21 “(A) capital access and investment in rural
22 areas of the United States, which may in-
23 clude—

24 “(i) identifying areas of overlap be-
25 tween the business loan programs of the

1 Administration and the Department of Ag-
2 riculture, including where intermediaries
3 may be able to participate in programs at
4 both agencies;

5 “(ii) assessing opportunities for co-
6 ordination between the Administration and
7 the Department on programs for rural
8 communities of each agency through the
9 district offices of the Administration, rela-
10 tionships with rural lenders, resource part-
11 ners of the Administration, and joint out-
12 reach and marketing efforts;

13 “(iii) improving information sharing
14 and discussion of best practices between
15 the Administration and the Department;

16 “(iv) examining coordination between
17 the small business investment company
18 program under part A of title III of the
19 Small Business Investment Act of 1958
20 (15 U.S.C. 681 et seq.) and related pro-
21 grams at the Department, including the
22 Rural Business Investment Program of the
23 Department;

24 “(v) examining opportunities for co-
25 ordination between the disaster assistance

1 programs of the Administration and the
2 Department; and

3 “(vi) addressing barriers and exam-
4 ining opportunities for cooperatives to par-
5 ticipate in programs and access resources
6 of the Administration that are similar to
7 the financing programs of the Department
8 that serve cooperatives; and

9 “(B) assisting rural small business con-
10 cerns, which may include—

11 “(i) identifying overlap and frag-
12 mentation among the rural markets identi-
13 fied by the Department and rural census
14 tracts identified by the Administration;

15 “(ii) exploring opportunities to sup-
16 port innovation in rural areas;

17 “(iii) coordinating effective support
18 initiatives that benefit Native Americans;
19 and

20 “(iv) collaborating on technical assist-
21 ance, especially with respect to exportation
22 and procurement.

23 “(f) UPDATES.—Not later than 7 days after any
24 change to or new issuance of a memorandum of under-
25 standing between the Administration and the Department,

1 the Administration shall notify the appropriate congres-
2 sional committees.

3 “(g) REPORT.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
5 after the date of the enactment of this subsection,
6 and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall sub-
7 mit to the appropriate congressional committees and
8 make publicly available on a website of the Adminis-
9 tration a report on the activities of the Office during
10 the 1-year period immediately preceding the date of
11 submission of the report.

12 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each report required under
13 paragraph (1) shall include the following:

14 “(A) The operational details of the Office,
15 including the name of the Assistant Adminis-
16 trator, the budget of the Office, and the num-
17 ber of full-time employees employed by or de-
18 tailed to the Office.

19 “(B) A summary of the activities con-
20 ducted under subsection (c).

21 “(C) The number of outreach events con-
22 ducted by the Administration to promote poli-
23 cies and programs described in paragraph (3)
24 of subsection (c) and to provide information de-
25 scribed in paragraph (4) of such subsection.

1 “(D) An analysis of the lending programs
2 of the Administration in serving the needs of
3 rural small business concerns.

4 “(E) A summary of activities conducted
5 under subsection (e), including—

6 “(i) the status of any memorandum of
7 understanding between the Administration
8 and the Department of Agriculture to fur-
9 ther the goals of improving service deliv-
10 ery, advice, and assistance for rural small
11 business concerns;

12 “(ii) a summary of outreach efforts
13 under subsection (e)(1);

14 “(iii) a summary of working groups
15 created under subsection (e)(2), including
16 any areas of overlap identified in capital
17 access programs under subparagraph (A)
18 of such subsection; and

19 “(iv) efforts to assist rural small busi-
20 ness concerns under subsection (e)(2)(B).

21 “(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 “(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
23 TEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional com-
24 mittees’ means—

1 “(A) the Committees on Small Business
2 and Entrepreneurship and the Committee on
3 Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Sen-
4 ate; and

5 “(B) the Committee on Small Business
6 and the Committee on Agriculture of the House
7 of Representatives.

8 “(2) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term
9 ‘Assistant Administrator’ means the Assistant Ad-
10 ministrators of the Office of Rural Affairs appointed
11 under subsection (b).

12 “(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term ‘Department’
13 means the Department of Agriculture.”.

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