

jobs in the State of Maine, and that means helping small businesses succeed.

Thousands of small businesses in my State have launched or grown with help from small business development centers, or, as you heard them referred to, SBDCs.

Just last year, SBDCs served over 1,500 small businesses in my State, helped to start 136 new businesses, and worked to protect or create more than 800 jobs. Here are just a few of the small businesses that I have heard from directly in my district about this program:

SBDCs helped The Maine Meal in Skowhegan purchase a building in order to launch their new business;

The Milk House in Monmouth received the accounting and tax advice that they needed to help grow their business from an SBDC adviser, an important farming and dairy industry right there;

SBDCs helped Lost Valley Ski Area in Auburn, just across the river from my hometown, to develop a business plan so that they could secure the financing they needed to acquire and continue the Lost Valley Ski Area, which is very important to our community, particularly during the winter months.

I have visited each of these businesses and seen their work firsthand. These are just a few of the thousands of SBDC success stories in the State of Maine.

Given that small business development centers are the largest resource partner to SBA, it is particularly important for Congress to keep the program up to date and performing at a high level for small businesses throughout the country.

In Maine, the State's lead SBDC runs 11 outreach locations in my congressional district alone, in partnership with regional economic development entities, enabling small businesses in Maine's rural communities to access valuable assistance.

While the centers have had many successes, we have also learned lessons about ways to improve the programs in the year since it was last reauthorized. That is why I am excited to lead this bill, alongside Vice Ranking Member RADEWAGEN, to reauthorize the program. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank her for her support of the bill. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

The Small Business Development Centers Improvement Act of 2019 will make a number of positive changes to improve oversight, better enable SBDCs to partner with other organizations, bolster the center accreditation process, and improve the voice of SBDCs in setting the program's direction.

I am particularly glad that the bill will help broaden rural small business access to this assistance by clarifying that centers are allowed to market and advertise their services. Rural access to SBA resources is key for States like

Maine and many rural communities all over the country.

Finally, the bill will reauthorize appropriations at the level of \$175 million for fiscal years 2020 through 2023, reaffirming Congress' commitment to the program.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank the chairwoman and the ranking member and, in particular, their staffs for forging a bipartisan path forward on the reauthorization of this program.

I would also like to thank Vice Ranking Member RADEWAGEN for coleading this bill with me, as well as Mr. HAGEDORN, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. FITZPATRICK for joining me as cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill to keep the SBDC program up to date for the good of America's small businesses.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. We have no further Members to speak on the bill, and I will be very brief.

The SBDC program positively affects hundreds of thousands of entrepreneurs each year and offers a significant return on investment for American taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, bipartisan bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

America's 30 million small businesses account for more than 56 million jobs and create two out of three private-sector jobs in the United States. The SBA offers a wide range of free or low-cost counseling and training services through its entrepreneurial ecosystem to help entrepreneurs launch and grow their businesses.

H.R. 4406 makes a number of improvements to the SBDC program. It will enable more collaboration between the centers and SBA, improve the ability of this committee to oversee its performance, while also clarifying other rules, such as confidentiality requirements.

Most importantly, this legislation is a much-needed reauthorization of the program for 4 years at greater authorization levels.

It is time for Congress to prove its commitment to entrepreneurs all over the country by strengthening one of the greatest resources, the SBA SBDC program. It is a commonsense move and one supported by the Association of Small Business Development Centers.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the ranking member for his support, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4406, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4405) to amend the Small Business Act to improve the women's business center program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4405

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 29. WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Assistant Administrator' means the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Women's Business Ownership established under subsection (k).

"(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means—

"(A) an organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code;

"(B) a State, regional, or local economic development organization, so long as the organization certifies that grant funds received under this section will not be commingled with other funds;

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

"(D) a development, credit, or finance corporation chartered by a State, so long as the corporation certifies that grant funds received under this section will not be commingled with other funds; or

"(E) any combination of entities listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

"(3) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.—The term 'small business concern owned and controlled by women' has the meaning given under section 3(n).

"(4) WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER.—The term 'women's business center' means the location at which counseling and training on the management, operations (including manufacturing, services, and retail), access to capital, international trade, Government procurement opportunities, and any other matter that is needed to start, maintain, or expand a small business concern owned and controlled by women.

"(5) WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIATION.—The term 'Women's Business Center Association' means a membership organization formed by women's business centers to pursue matters of common concern.

“(b) AUTHORITY.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Women’s Business Center Program under which the Administrator may provide a grant to any eligible entity to operate one or more women’s business centers for the benefit of small business concerns owned and controlled by women.

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

“(A) financial assistance, including training and counseling in how to apply for and secure business credit and investment capital, preparing and presenting financial statements, and managing cash flow and other financial operations of a small business concern;

“(B) management assistance, including training and counseling in how to plan, organize, staff, direct, and control each major activity and function of a small business concern; and

“(C) marketing assistance, including training and counseling in identifying and segmenting domestic and international market opportunities, preparing and executing marketing plans, developing pricing strategies, locating contract opportunities, negotiating contracts, and utilizing varying public relations and advertising techniques.

“(3) TYPES OF GRANTS.—

“(A) INITIAL GRANT.—The amount of an initial grant, which shall be for a 5-year term, provided under this subsection to an eligible entity shall be not more than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is annually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect the change in inflation).

“(B) CONTINUATION GRANTS.—The Administrator may award a continuation grant, which shall be for a 5-year term, of not more than \$300,000 annually (as such amount is annually adjusted by the Administrator to reflect the change in inflation) to an eligible entity that received an initial grant under subparagraph (A). There shall be no limitation on the number of continuation grants an eligible entity may receive under this section.

“(c) APPLICATION.—

“(1) INITIAL GRANTS AND CONTINUATION GRANTS.—To receive an initial grant or continuation grant under this section, an eligible entity shall submit an application to the Administrator in such form, in such manner, and containing such information as the Administrator may require, including—

“(A) a certification that the eligible entity—

“(i) has designated an executive director or program manager, who may be compensated using grant funds awarded under this section or other sources, to manage the women’s business center for which a grant under subsection (b) is sought; and

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

“(B) information demonstrating the experience and effectiveness of the eligible entity in—

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

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

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

“(C) a 5-year plan that—

“(i) includes information relating to the assistance to be provided by the women’s business center in the area in which the women’s business center is located;

“(ii) describes the ability of the eligible entity to meet the needs of the market to be served by the women’s business center, including the ability to obtain the matching funds required under subsection (e); and

“(iii) describes the ability of the eligible entity to provide counseling and training described under subsection (b)(2), including to a representative number of women who are socially or economically disadvantaged.

“(2) RECORD RETENTION.—

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

“(B) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—The Administrator shall take steps to reduce, to the maximum extent practicable, the paperwork burden associated with carrying out subparagraph (A).

“(d) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

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

“(A) the experience of the applicant in providing entrepreneurial training;

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

“(C) in consultation with a Women’s Business Center Association, the capacity of the applicant to meet the accreditation standards established under subsection (k)(4) in a timely manner;

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

“(E) the proposed location of a women’s business center to be operated by the applicant and the location’s proximity to Veteran Business Outreach Centers and to recipients of grants under section 8(b)(1) or 21;

“(F) the population density of the area to be served by the women’s business center operated by the applicant; and

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

“(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

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

“(B) MODIFICATIONS PROHIBITED AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT.—With respect to a public announcement of any opportunity to be awarded a grant under this section made by the Administrator pursuant to subsection (l)(1), the Administrator may not modify regulations issued pursuant to subparagraph (A) with respect to such opportunity unless required to do so by an Act of Congress or an order of a Federal court.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph may be construed as prohibiting the Administrator from modifying the regulations issued pursuant to subparagraph (A) (after providing an opportunity for notice and comment) as such regulations apply to an opportunity to be awarded a grant under this section that the Administrator has not yet publicly announced pursuant to subsection (l)(1).

“(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

“(B) use amounts made available by the Administrator under this section for the cost of such solicitation and management of the contributions received.

“(4) DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.—The Administrator may disburse an amount not greater than 25 percent of the total amount of a grant awarded to an eligible entity before such eligible entity obtains the non-Federal matching funds described under paragraph (1).

“(5) FAILURE TO OBTAIN MATCHING FUNDS.—If an eligible entity fails to obtain the required matching funds described under paragraph (1), the eligible entity may not be eligible to receive advance disbursements pursuant to paragraph (4) during the remainder of the term, if applicable, of an initial grant awarded under this section. Before approving such eligible entity for a continuation grant under this section, the Administrator shall make a written determination, including the reasons for such determination, of whether the Administrator believes that the eligible entity will be able to obtain the requisite funding under paragraph (1) for such continuation grant.

“(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by an eligible entity, and in accordance with this paragraph, the Administrator may waive, in whole or in part, the requirement to obtain non-Federal matching funds for a grant awarded under this section for the eligible entity for a one-year term of the grant. The Administrator may not issue such a waiver for more than a total of 2 consecutive one-year terms.

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

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

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

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

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

“(7) EXCESS NON-FEDERAL DOLLARS.—The amount of non-Federal dollars obtained by an eligible entity that is above the amount that is required to be obtained by the eligible entity under this subsection shall not be subject to the requirements of part 200 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto, if such amount of non-Federal dollars—

“(A) is not used as matching funds for purposes of implementing the Women’s Business Center Program; and

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

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

“(f) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) SEPARATION OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall—

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

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

“(2) EXAMINATION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

“(A) REQUIRED SITE VISIT.—Before receiving an initial grant under this section, each applicant shall have a site visit by an employee of the Administration, in order to ensure that the applicant has sufficient resources to provide the services for which the grant is being provided.

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

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

“(ii) provide the results of such examination to the eligible entity.

“(3) REMEDIATION OF PROBLEMS.—

“(A) PLAN OF ACTION.—If an examination of an eligible entity conducted under paragraph (2)(B) identifies any problems, the eligible entity shall, within 45 calendar days of receiving a copy of the results of such examination, provide the Assistant Administrator with a plan of action, including specific milestones, for correcting such problems.

“(B) PLAN OF ACTION REVIEW BY THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The Assistant Administrator shall review each plan of action submitted under subparagraph (A) within 30 calendar days of receiving such plan. If the Assistant Administrator determines that such plan—

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

“(ii) is inadequate to remedy the problems identified in the annual examination to which the plan of action relates, the Assistant Administrator shall set forth such reasons in writing and provide such determination to the eligible entity within 15 calendar days of such determination.

“(C) AMENDMENT TO PLAN OF ACTION.—An eligible entity receiving a determination under subparagraph (B)(ii) shall have 30 calendar days from the receipt of the determination to amend the plan of action to satisfy the problems identified by the Assistant Administrator and resubmit such plan to the Assistant Administrator.

“(D) AMENDED PLAN REVIEW BY THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—Within 15 calendar days of the receipt of an amended plan of action under subparagraph (C), the Assistant Administrator shall either approve or reject such plan and provide such approval or rejection in writing to the eligible entity.

“(E) APPEAL OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Assistant Administrator rejects an amended plan under subparagraph (D), the eligible entity shall have the opportunity to appeal such decision to the Administrator, who may delegate such appeal to an appropriate officer of the Administration.

“(ii) OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPLANATION.—Any appeal described under clause (i) shall provide an opportunity for the eligible entity to provide, in writing, an explanation of why the eligible entity’s amended plan remedies the problems identified in the annual examination conducted under paragraph (2)(B).

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

“(iv) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO ACT.—If the Administrator fails to act on an appeal made

under this subparagraph within the 15-day period specified under clause (ii), the eligible entity’s amended plan of action submitted under subparagraph (C) shall be deemed to be approved.

“(4) TERMINATION OF GRANT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall terminate a grant to an eligible entity under this section if the eligible entity fails to comply with—

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

“(ii) an amended plan of action approved by the Assistant Administrator under paragraph (3)(D) or approved on appeal under paragraph (3)(E).

“(B) APPEAL OF TERMINATION.—An eligible entity shall have the opportunity to challenge the termination of a grant under subparagraph (A) on the record and after an opportunity for a hearing.

“(C) FINAL AGENCY ACTION.—A determination made pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall be considered final agency action for the purposes of chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code.

“(5) CONSULTATION WITH MAJORITY WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER ASSOCIATION.—If a majority of women’s business centers that are operating pursuant to agreements with the Administration are members of an individual Women’s Business Center Association, the Administrator shall—

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

“(B) consult with the Association on, and negotiate with the Association in the development of documents with respect to—

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

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

“(iii) governing the general operations and administration of women’s business centers, specifically including the development of regulations and a uniform negotiated cooperative agreement for use on an annual basis when entering into individual negotiated agreements with women’s business centers.

“(g) PROGRAM EXAMINATION.—

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

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

“(i) an itemized cost breakdown of actual expenditures for costs incurred during the preceding year; and

“(ii) documentation regarding the amount of matching assistance from non-Federal sources obtained and expended by the eligible entity during the preceding year in order to meet the requirements of subsection (e) and, with respect to any in-kind contributions described in subsection (e)(2) that were used to satisfy the requirements of subsection (e), verification of the existence and valuation of those contributions; and

“(B) analyze the results of each such examination and, based on that analysis, make a determination regarding the programmatic and financial viability of each women’s business center operated by the eligible entity.

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

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

“(B) shall determine if—

“(i) the eligible entity has failed to provide, or provided inadequate, information under paragraph (1)(A); or

“(ii) the eligible entity has failed to provide any information required to be provided by the women’s business center for purposes of the management report under subsection (m)(1), or the information provided by the center is inadequate; and

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

“(h) NOTICE AND COMMENT REQUIRED.—The Administrator may only make a change to the standards by which an eligible entity obtains or maintains grants under this section, the standards for accreditation, or any other requirement for the operation of a women’s business center if the Administrator first provides notice and the opportunity for public comment, as set forth in section 553(b) of title 5, United States Code, without regard to any exceptions provided for under such section.

“(i) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—

“(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section may enter into a contract with a Federal department or agency to provide specific assistance to small business concerns owned and controlled by women and other underserved small business concerns, if performance of such a contract does not hinder the ability of the eligible entity to carry out the terms of a grant received under this section.

“(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The authority of the Administrator to enter into contracts shall be in effect for each fiscal year only to the extent and in the amounts as are provided in advance in appropriations Acts. After the Administrator has entered into a contract, either as a grant or a cooperative agreement, with any applicant under this section, the Administrator shall not suspend, terminate, or fail to renew or extend any such contract unless the Administrator provides the applicant with written notification setting forth the reasons therefore and affords the applicant an opportunity for a hearing, appeal, or other administrative proceeding under chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code.

“(j) PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—

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

“(A) the Administrator orders such disclosure after the Administrator is ordered to make such a disclosure by a court in any civil or criminal enforcement action initiated by a Federal or State agency; or

“(B) the Administrator considers such a disclosure to be necessary for the purpose of conducting a financial audit of a women’s business center, except that such a disclosure shall be limited to the information necessary for such audit.

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

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

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

“(3) REGULATIONS.—The Administrator shall issue regulations to establish standards for disclosures for purposes of a financial audit described under paragraph (1)(B).

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

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Administration an Office of Women’s Business Ownership, which shall be responsible for the administration of the Administration’s programs for the development of women’s business enterprises (as defined in section 408 of the Women’s Business Ownership Act of 1988). The Office of Women’s Business Ownership shall be administered by

an Assistant Administrator, who shall be appointed by the Administrator.

“(2) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE OFFICE OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.—

“(A) QUALIFICATION.—The position of Assistant Administrator shall be a Senior Executive Service position under section 3132(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code. The Assistant Administrator shall serve as a noncareer appointee (as defined in section 3132(a)(7) of that title).

“(B) DUTIES.—The Assistant Administrator shall administer the programs and services of the Office of Women’s Business Ownership and perform the following functions:

“(i) Recommend the annual administrative and program budgets of the Office and eligible entities receiving a grant under the Women’s Business Center Program.

“(ii) Review the annual budgets submitted by each eligible entity receiving a grant under the Women’s Business Center Program.

“(iii) Collaborate with other Federal departments and agencies, State and local governments, not-for-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations to maximize utilization of taxpayer dollars and reduce (or eliminate) any duplication among the programs overseen by the Office of Women’s Business Ownership and those of other entities that provide similar services to women entrepreneurs.

“(iv) Maintain a clearinghouse to provide for the dissemination and exchange of information between women’s business centers.

“(v) Serve as the vice chairperson of the Interagency Committee on Women’s Business Enterprise and as the liaison for the National Women’s Business Council.

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

“(A) fostering participation of women entrepreneurs in the economy by overseeing a network of women’s business centers throughout States and territories;

“(B) creating public-private partnerships to support women entrepreneurs and conduct outreach and education to small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

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

“(i) ensure women are well-represented in those programs and being served by those programs; and

“(ii) identify gaps where participation by women in those programs could be increased.

“(4) ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Administrator shall publish standards for a program to accredit eligible entities that receive a grant under this section.

“(B) PUBLIC COMMENT; TRANSITION.—Before publishing the standards under subparagraph (A), the Administrator—

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

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

“(C) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The Administrator may provide financial support, by contract or otherwise, to a Women’s Business Center Association to provide assistance in establishing the standards required under subparagraph (A) or for carrying out an accreditation program pursuant to such standards.

“(5) CONTINUATION GRANT CONSIDERATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether to award a continuation grant under this section, the Administrator shall consider the results of the annual programmatic and financial examination conducted under subsection (g) and the accreditation program.

“(B) ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENT.—After the end of the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this subsection, the Administration may not award a continuation grant under this section unless the applicable eligible entity has been approved under the accreditation program conducted pursuant to this subsection, except that the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Women’s Business Ownership may waive such accreditation requirement, in the discretion of the Assistant Administrator, upon a showing that the eligible entity is making a good faith effort to obtain accreditation.

“(6) ANNUAL CONFERENCE.—Each woman’s business center shall participate in annual professional development at an annual conference facilitated by a Women’s Business Center Association.

“(1) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall provide the following:

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

“(2) To any applicant for a grant under this section that failed to obtain such a grant, an opportunity to debrief with the Administrator to review the reasons for the applicant’s failure.

“(3) To an eligible entity that receives an initial grant under this section, if a site visit or review of the eligible entity is carried out by an officer or employee of the Administration (other than the Inspector General), a copy of the site visit report or evaluation, as applicable, within 30 calendar days of the completion of such visit or evaluation.

“(m) ANNUAL MANAGEMENT REPORT.—

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

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

“(A) information concerning, with respect to each women’s business center established pursuant to a grant awarded under this section, the most recent analysis of the annual programmatic and financial examination of the applicable eligible entity, as required under subsection (g)(1)(B), and the subsequent determination made by the Administration under that subsection;

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

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

“(D) the demographics of Program participants to include gender, race, and age of each such participant;

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

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

“(G) to the extent practicable, the number of jobs supported, created or retained with assistance from women’s business centers;

“(H) the amount of capital secured by participants in the Program, including through loans and equity investment;

“(I) the number of participants in the Program receiving financial assistance, including the type and dollar amount, under the loan programs of the Administration;

“(J) an estimate of gross receipts, including to the extent practicable a description of any change in revenue of small business concerns assisted through the Program;

“(K) to the maximum extent practicable, increases or decreases in revenues for the assisted small business concerns;

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

“(M) the results of satisfaction surveys of participants, including a summary of any comments received from such participants; and

“(N) any recommendations by the Administrator to improve the delivery of services by women’s business centers.

“(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administration to carry out this section, to remain available until expended, \$31,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2023.

“(2) USE OF AMOUNTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made available under this subsection for fiscal year 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter, may only be used for grant awards and may not be used for costs incurred by the Administration in connection with the management and administration of the program under this section.

“(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Of the amount made available under this subsection for a fiscal year, the following amounts shall be available for costs incurred by the Administration in connection with the management and administration of the program under this section:

“(i) For the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, 2.65 percent.

“(ii) For the second fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph and each fiscal year thereafter through fiscal year 2023, 2.5 percent.

“(3) EXPEDITED ACQUISITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator may use such expedited acquisition methods as the Administrator determines to be appropriate to carry out this section, except that the Administrator shall ensure that all small business sources are provided a reasonable opportunity to submit proposals.

“(4) ACCREDITATION AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE.—Not less than \$500,000 of the amounts appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) for a fiscal year shall be available for purposes of carrying out subsection (k), of which no less than \$50,000 shall be available to support an annual conference described under subsection (k)(6).”

SEC. 3. EFFECT ON EXISTING GRANTS.

(a) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to receive the grant under the terms and conditions in effect for the grant on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, except that the nonprofit organization may not apply for a continuation of the grant under section 29(m)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)(5)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) LENGTH OF CONTINUATION GRANT.—The Administrator of the Small Business Administration may award a grant under section 29 of the Small Business Act, as amended by this Act, to a nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small

Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, for the period—

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

(2) ending at the end of the third fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of Small Business Administration shall issue such rules as are necessary to carry out section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656), as amended by this Act, and ensure that a period of public comment for such rules is not less than 60 days.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill before us today, H.R. 4405, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act.

Women's Business Centers, or WBCs, are a critical component of SBA's entrepreneurial ecosystem. WBCs were created to assist small businesses primarily owned by women, many of whom are socially and economically disadvantaged.

□ 1545

The WBC program funds more than 100 centers nationwide and offers a full range of counseling and training services for all stages of business development. Many of the WBCs provide multilingual services, maintain evening and weekend hours to accommodate clients who work full time, and allow children to attend training sessions with their mothers.

In fiscal year 2018, the WBC program trained and advised more than 150,000 clients and created nearly 12,000 small businesses. It has also proven to be a great return on investment, just like the SBDCs. For every dollar invested in WBCs, \$46 is returned to the economy. And, with women making up the fastest growing sector of entrepreneurs, it is imperative to invest in modernizing and adequately funding the program.

The Women's Business Centers Improvements Act increases the authorization level to \$31.5 million each year and lifts the cap on individual center grants to \$300,000, allowing more estab-

lished centers to expand their reach to greater numbers of women entrepreneurs, particularly those of whom are socially and economically disadvantaged.

Additionally, this legislation makes key changes to the program, enabling the WBCs to serve more of America's nearly 30 million women-owned small businesses. By eliminating unnecessary reporting requirements and creating a transparent and consultative process between SBA and the Association of Women's Business Centers, the bill guarantees WBCs can meet the growing demand for their services.

I want to thank Representative DAVIDS and Representative HAGEDORN for their diligence in working to get this bill right and ensuring that women entrepreneurs across the country have continued access to vital counseling and training.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4405, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2019. I commend and thank the two lead sponsors of this legislation, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas and Mr. HAGEDORN of Minnesota, for their leadership. This makes key updates to the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership and the Women's Business Center program, or WBC.

The WBC program funds more than 100 nonprofit organizations that provide training, counseling, and technical assistance specifically tailored to meet the needs of women entrepreneurs. Many WBCs offer training at night or in multiple languages to ensure that women entrepreneurs have the tools and support they need when creating or sustaining a business.

Last year, WBCs trained over 114,000 clients and advised over 26,000 individuals. This training and counseling contributed to the creation of more than 17,000 new small businesses in the United States. The Women's Business Center program has a profound impact not only in our local communities, but also on our Nation's economy overall.

H.R. 4405, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2019, builds on H.R. 1680, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2018, which passed the House back in May of 2018.

This bill raises the initial 5-year grant amount and indexes it for inflation. This minor increase provides new and existing women's business centers with the support they need to provide an effective course curriculum to small business clients.

Additionally, H.R. 4405 requires the SBA to establish a WBC accreditation program. This program, similar to the successful Small Business Development Center accreditation program, will ensure programmatic consistency among WBC locations and guarantee that each center is providing women entre-

preneurs with effective training opportunities.

These updates will ensure that the funds supporting the WBC program are used efficiently to foster economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, it is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it. I, again, want to commend the two leaders on this important legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. DAVIDS), sponsor of the bill.

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on H.R. 4405, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act of 2019, which would increase access to vital resources and opportunities for female entrepreneurs in Kansas and across the country.

I thank Ranking Member CHABOT and Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ for their commitment to small businesses in our country.

I thank my fellow Small Business Committee member, Representative HAGEDORN, for cosponsoring and co-leading this bipartisan piece of legislation with me.

This bill helps to strengthen the Women's Business Center program, which funds more than 100 women's business centers, also known as WBCs, across the country and in the district I represent in Kansas.

These centers provide small business owners, many of whom are socially and economically disadvantaged, with critical counseling and training at all stages of their business development.

Many WBCs provide multilingual services, maintain evening and weekend hours to accommodate clients who work full time, and allow children to attend sessions with their mothers.

The value of WBCs cannot be overstated. Women are the fastest growing sector of entrepreneurs in our country. We often forget that up until 1988, women would have a hard time applying for a business loan without a male relative to cosign it.

Now, more than 11.6 million businesses in the United States are owned by women, and more than 5.4 million businesses are majority owned by women of color.

But even though we have made great progress, many unique challenges still exist for women, particularly women of color, to start and grow a business. These include things like limited access to funding resources and the support system needed to get a business off the ground and maintain its success.

I see this firsthand when I am doing a "Sharice's Shift" in my district. It is our outreach program where I work at a local business and spend time with that business owner in my community.

WBCs are critical in addressing a whole range of women's entrepreneurial needs. They provide training, mentoring, business development, and

financing opportunities for 145,000 women entrepreneurs each year.

The Kansas City Women's Business Center, located in Fairway, Kansas—which I proudly represent—serves over 600 clients annually in both Kansas and Missouri through business trainings, workshops, counseling, and access to capital programs.

That is why it is so important to support the WBC program. Despite the tremendous growth of the program since its creation in 1988, its resources have not kept up with the even greater growth of women entrepreneurs.

My bill would authorize funding for the WBC program for 4 years at \$31.5 million. It is currently at \$18 million. This increase ensures the program can reach even more women.

It would also increase the cap on individual center grants to \$300,000 and index for inflation for the first time since the program's creation.

According to a survey conducted by the Association of Women Business Centers, 70 percent of the centers could match at least \$300,000. And it would establish an accreditation program to strengthen WBCs and raise the standards of excellence for training and counseling women entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act and help ensure that we can create a level playing field for female entrepreneurs that sets them up for success.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. HAGEDORN), the principal sponsor on the legislation on the Republican side.

Mr. HAGEDORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member CHABOT for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4405, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Representative DAVIDS, for sponsoring this bill, introducing it, and inviting me to co-author it. I appreciate her leadership on this.

This bipartisan legislation works to support women entrepreneurs nationwide by modernizing and strengthening the Women's Business Centers program. Our bill will increase access to training, counseling, assistance programs, capital, and workforce investment. All these measures are essential to create new businesses, expand enterprises, and grow our United States economy.

Millions of women own small businesses in the United States, and that is a wonderful thing. Entrepreneurship and the Women's Business Center program are essential for empowering women to become business owners. By enhancing these services, we increase the ability to inspire and foster new generations of business leaders.

Small business is the job-producing backbone of our American economy. Whether you are in southern Minnesota, eastern Kansas, or commu-

nities across our Nation, it is critical that we foster an environment of growth where entrepreneurs of all stripes have access to the resources they need to succeed and are not stymied by excessive regulations, taxes, and other antibusiness burdens.

According to the National Association of Women Business Owners, as of 2017, more than 11.6 million firms are owned and operated by women. These firms employ almost 9 million people and generate \$1.7 trillion in revenue.

To keep our economy growing, we must embrace, encourage, and promote emerging enterprises, including those owned by folks who do not fit the traditional mode of business owners to get started.

One of the great success stories that we have in women entrepreneurship is that of Christine Lantinen and her candy company in Minnesota's First District out of Le Center, Minnesota. The company is called Maud Borup.

In May I had the opportunity to tour the 112-year-old wholesale confections company that specializes in gourmet candy, baking kits, food kits, and lots of other things, including gummy bears, the best I have ever enjoyed, to be honest with you.

Maud Borup started as a woman-owned, brick-and-mortar candy shop in St. Paul, even before women had the right to vote. Today, it is a wholesale company, continuing to offer opportunities for women. Ninety-six percent of its more than 100 employees are women.

Christine, an Army veteran, no less, bought the company in 2005 and has expanded the company's employment by 2,000 percent and sales by 2,500 percent. To put that into perspective, sales have gone from \$500,000 all the way to \$20 million in just 10 years. And for good reason. She was named the Small Business Person of the Year in Minnesota for 2019.

She served her country and now she is serving her community by expanding jobs and economic opportunity for folks in southern Minnesota. This is one of the types of success stories that we are trying to emulate and replicate all across the country with our legislation, the Women's Business Centers Improvements Act.

Our legislation will fund more than 100 nonprofit organizations that provide training, counseling, and technical assistance, specifically for women entrepreneurs.

Our bill, as the ranking member said, expands upon the success of H.R. 1680, which was passed by the House in May of 2018, but didn't quite make it into law. Our legislation will make key improvements for the Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership and the Women's Business Center program by raising the initial grant amount to \$300,000 and increasing the authorization level to \$31.5 million for fiscal years 2020 through 2023.

This legislation establishes an accreditation program to strengthen

Women's Business Centers by increasing accountability and raising the standards of excellence for training and counseling of women entrepreneurs and will also create a transparent and consultative process for the selection of new center locations, while also requiring an annual report to ensure transparency and measure the effectiveness of the overall program.

Most importantly, the bill will help facilitate small business creation, provide much-needed reforms that will be a helping hand to women business owners, free aspiring entrepreneurs of undue burdens and barriers to entry, further economic expansion, and help hardworking Americans achieve their dreams.

I am incredibly proud of the bipartisan nature of this bill. I thank, again, Congresswoman DAVIDS for introducing and managing the bill. I am proud to stand with her to champion women-owned enterprises. And a special thanks to the Committee on Small Business, of course our chair, Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ and Ranking Member CHABOT for the bipartisan support that they have offered.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4405.

□ 1600

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I am prepared to close if the gentleman doesn't have any other speakers.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, although a little less than 40 percent of all firms in the United States are women owned, that number has increased by 114 percent over the last 10 years. With women-owned firms growing more than 2.5 times faster than other businesses, it is important to recognize women entrepreneurs as a driving force in today's economy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has nearly 30 million women-owned firms, more than one-third of all firms. Our economy relies heavily on women-owned small businesses, as they generate over \$1.9 trillion in revenues and employ 9.4 million workers.

H.R. 4405 ensures that they have access to the tools they need to succeed.

The good news is, women-owned small businesses are growing two times faster, on average, than all businesses nationwide, and women of color are launching businesses 4.5 times faster than all businesses.

The discouraging news is that half of aspiring women business owners report a lack of available mentors. We must take action to break down the barriers hindering their success. That is why it is imperative for us to pass this legislation today, ensuring access to

mentorship and professional guidance to the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs.

The Women's Business Centers Improvements Act builds on their success by creating uniformity through accreditation for WBCs and increasing maximum grant levels to ensure they have the resources to meet demands for their services.

We all agree that women business owners offer invaluable contributions to our economy. By passing this bill, we are standing with women.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4405.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SCORE FOR SMALL BUSINESS ACT OF 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4407) to amend the Small Business Act to reauthorize the SCORE program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4407

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "SCORE for Small Business Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. SCORE PROGRAM PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS.

Section 8 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1)(B)—

(A) by striking "a Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)" and inserting "the SCORE program described in subsection (c)"; and

(B) by striking "SCORE may" and inserting "the SCORE Association (as defined in subsection (c) may)"; and

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

"(c) SCORE PROGRAM.—

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) SCORE ASSOCIATION.—The term 'SCORE Association' means the Service Corps of Retired Executives Association or any successor or other organization that enters into a cooperative agreement (as described under paragraph (2)) with the Administrator to operate the SCORE program.

"(B) SCORE FOUNDATION.—The term 'SCORE Foundation' means an organization with a mission to support the SCORE Association and volunteers of the SCORE program.

"(C) SCORE PROGRAM.—The term 'SCORE program' means the SCORE program authorized by subsection (b)(1)(B).

"(2) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The Administrator shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the SCORE Association to carry out the SCORE program, which shall include the following requirements:

"(A) ADMINISTRATOR DUTIES.—The Administrator shall—

"(i) conduct an annual financial examination of the SCORE Association to ensure that any costs paid for with Federal funds are allowable, allocable, and reasonable;

"(ii) for contracts entered into by the SCORE Association to provide goods or services for the SCORE program of a value greater than an amount determined by the Administrator, review and approve such contracts;

"(iii) establish a system through which the SCORE Association can provide documentation relating to such contracts; and

"(iv) within 30 days of the receipt of a quarterly report on the achievements of the SCORE program submitted by the SCORE Association, reconcile and differences between such report and the performance results of the SCORE program reported in a management information system of the Office of Entrepreneurial Development.

"(B) SCORE ASSOCIATION DUTIES.—The SCORE Association shall—

"(i) manage nationwide chapters of the SCORE program;

"(ii) develop guidance and provide annual training to employees of the SCORE Association on generating and using program income from the SCORE program;

"(iii) submit documentation to the Administrator verifying such annual training is completed;

"(iv) separate funds donated to the SCORE Association from program income and funds received pursuant to a cooperative agreement; and

"(v) establish requirements for volunteers participating in the SCORE program, including requirements that each such volunteer shall—

"(I) based on the business experience and knowledge of the volunteer—

"(aa) provide personal counseling, mentoring, and coaching on the process of starting, expanding, managing, buying, and selling a business at no cost to individuals who own, or aspire to own, small business concerns; and

"(bb) facilitate free or low-cost education workshops for individuals who own, or aspire to own, small business concerns; and

"(II) as appropriate, use tools, resources, and expertise of other organizations to carry out the SCORE program.

"(C) JOINT DUTIES.—The Administrator, in consultation with the SCORE Association, shall ensure that the SCORE program and each chapter of the SCORE program—

"(i) develop and implement plans and goals to more effectively and efficiently provide services to individuals in rural areas, economically disadvantaged communities, or other traditionally underserved communities, including plans for electronic initiatives, web-based initiatives, chapter expansion, partnerships, and the development of new skills by volunteers participating in the SCORE program; and

"(ii) reinforce an inclusive culture by recruiting diverse volunteers for the chapters of the SCORE program.

"(3) ONLINE COMPONENT.—In carrying out this subsection, the SCORE Association shall make use of online counseling, including by developing and implementing webinars and an electronic mentoring platform to expand access to services provided under this subsection and to further support entrepreneurs.

"(4) ACCOUNTING.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the SCORE Association shall—

"(A) centralize all accounting and finance systems of each chapter of the SCORE program and develop a uniform policy and procedures to manage Federal funds; and

"(B) designate an employee of the SCORE Association to serve as a compliance officer to ensure expenditures of the SCORE program are fully compliant with any law, regulation, or cooperative agreement relating to the SCORE program.

"(5) COMPENSATION.—

"(A) SALARIES.—The salary of an employee of the SCORE Association may not exceed the equivalent of the maximum rate of pay allowable for an individual in the career Senior Executive Service employed at the Small Business Administration.

"(B) PERFORMANCE AWARDS.—The SCORE Association may spend up to 1.5 percent of the aggregate salaries of employees of the SCORE Association on individual performance awards to employees of the SCORE Association, to be disbursed before the last day of the fiscal year, if not later than 60 days before disbursement the SCORE Association submits to the Administrator a report on the number and amount of such awards to be disbursed.

"(C) SCORE FOUNDATION.—A member of the Board of Directors of the SCORE Association or an employee of the SCORE Association may not simultaneously serve on the Board of Directors of, or receive compensation from, the SCORE Foundation without written approval from the Administrator.

"(6) WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS.—The SCORE Association shall—

"(A) annually update all manuals or other documents applicable to employees and volunteers of the SCORE Association or the SCORE program to include requirements relating to reporting procedures and protectors for whistleblowers; and

"(B) conduct an annual training for employees and volunteers of the SCORE Association or the SCORE program on the requirements described in paragraph (1) and emphasize the use of the hotline established by the Office of the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit whistleblower reports.

"(7) PUBLISHED MATERIALS.—The SCORE Association shall ensure all published materials include written acknowledgment of Small Business Administration support of the SCORE program if such materials are paid for in whole or in part by Federal funds.

"(8) PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Neither the Administrator nor the SCORE Association may disclose the name, address, or telephone number of any individual or small business concern receiving assistance from the SCORE Association without the consent of such individual or small business concern, unless—

"(i) the Administrator is ordered to make such a disclosure by a court in any civil or criminal enforcement action initiated by a Federal or State agency; or

"(ii) the Administrator determines such a disclosure to be necessary for the purpose of conducting a financial audit of the SCORE program, in which case disclosure shall be limited to the information necessary for the audit.

"(B) ADMINISTRATOR USE OF INFORMATION.—This paragraph shall not—

"(i) restrict the access of the Administrator to SCORE program activity data; or

"(ii) prevent the Administrator from using SCORE program client information to conduct client surveys.

"(C) STANDARDS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall, after the opportunity for notice and comment, establish standards for—

"(I) disclosures with respect to financial audits under subparagraph (A)(ii); and

"(II) conducting client surveys, including standards for oversight of the surveys and for dissemination and use of client information.