

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8534

To amend the Small Business Act to establish an Office of Territorial Affairs,
and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 27, 2026

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

A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to establish an Office
of Territorial 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 “Small Business Terri-
5 tories Support Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS OF THE SMALL**
7 **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.**

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

10 (1) redesignating section 49 as section 50; and

1 (2) inserting after section 48 the following new
2 section:

3 **“SEC. 49. OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS.**

4 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
5 Administration an Office of Territorial Affairs (hereafter
6 in this section referred to as the ‘Office’), which shall es-
7 tablish a working relationship with small business con-
8 cerns in the United States territories by targeting pro-
9 grams of the Administration relating to entrepreneurial
10 development, contracting, disaster assistance, and capital
11 access.

12 “(b) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall be admin-
14 istered by an Assistant Administrator who shall be
15 an employee in the competitive service.

16 “(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Assistant Admin-
17 istrator shall have—

18 “(A) knowledge of the governmental af-
19 fairs, socioeconomic conditions, and political re-
20 lationships of the territories; and

21 “(B) experience providing tailored small
22 business development assistance to small busi-
23 ness concerns located in the territories.

24 “(3) DUTIES.—The Assistant Administrator
25 shall—

1 “(A) formulate policies, and promote poli-
2 cies and existing programs, to better address
3 entrepreneurial development, capital access, dis-
4 aster assistance, and contracting needs of small
5 business concerns located in the territories;

6 “(B) serve as a liaison between small busi-
7 ness concerns located in the territories and the
8 Administration, resource partners, lenders, Fed-
9 eral and State agencies, and other interested
10 persons;

11 “(C) periodically review and assess pro-
12 grams administered by and services from the
13 Administration that are available to small busi-
14 ness concerns located in the territories to en-
15 sure that—

16 “(i) the services offered under a lend-
17 ing program, entrepreneurial development
18 program, or disaster assistance program
19 administered by the Administration are
20 adequate to address the challenges such
21 small business concerns face; and

22 “(ii) such small business concerns
23 have adequate access to contracting oppor-
24 tunities with the Federal Government and

1 procurement programs administered by the
2 Administration; and

3 “(D) host webinars and outreach events in
4 the territories. as appropriate, including invit-
5 ing representatives from district offices of the
6 Administration, resource partners, Federal and
7 State agencies, and other interested people to
8 participate in such webinars and outreach
9 events.

10 “(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the
11 date of the enactment of this section and annually there-
12 after, the Assistant Administrator shall submit to the
13 Committee of Small Business of the House of Representa-
14 tives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepre-
15 neurship of the Senate a report on the activities of the
16 Office during the one year period preceding the date of
17 submission of the report, including—

18 “(1) operational details of the activities of the
19 Office;

20 “(2) a summary of the activities conducted by
21 the Office;

22 “(3) the total number of small business con-
23 cerns assisted by the Office, disaggregated by the
24 type of assistance provided by the Office and by ter-
25 ritory;

1 “(4) to the extent practicable, the total number
2 of new businesses established as a result of assist-
3 ance from the Office, disaggregated by territory; and

4 “(5) recommendations to help improve assist-
5 ance provided by the Administration in serving the
6 needs of small business concerns located in the terri-
7 tories.

8 “(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 “(1) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term
10 ‘Assistant Administrator’ means the Assistant Ad-
11 ministrator of the Office of Territorial Affairs ap-
12 pointed under subsection (b).

13 “(2) RESOURCE PARTNER.—The term ‘resource
14 partner’ means—

15 “(A) a small business development center;

16 “(B) a women’s business center described
17 in section 29;

18 “(C) a chapter of the Service Corps of Re-
19 tired Executives authorized by section 8(b)(1);
20 and

21 “(D) a Veteran Business Outreach Center
22 described in section 32.

23 “(3) TERRITORIES.—The term ‘territories’
24 means Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, United

- 1 States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the
- 2 Northern Mariana Islands.”.

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