



July 1, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Majority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the dozens of national, state and local organizations that have united to advocate for underserved and rural communities, Page 30 Coalition endorses the *Minority Business Resiliency Act of 2020*. This vital piece of legislation will support expansion of Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs) and bolster the country's economy.

Preceding the arrival of the Coronavirus pandemic, MBEs consisted of 30 percent of the country's 28.6 million small businesses¹, contributed nearly \$1.5 trillion in annual gross receipts and employed over 7.2 million Americans.² Despite these significant figures, MBEs stand disproportionately disadvantaged as evidenced by challenges with access to capital and collateral, lower credit scores, and less access to technical assistance services.³

For the past 40 years, Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) at the Department of Commerce has been a significant proprietor in reducing such challenges while growing the number of MBEs. Through a national network of business centers, MBDA provides entrepreneurs with technical assistance and access to capital, contract, and new market opportunities to generate new jobs and form new businesses.

Despite MBDA's progress, the pandemic's economic downturn has amplified the disadvantages among underserved and minority small business owners – particularly within Women, People of Color, and Tribal markets. MBEs overwhelmingly are concentrated in industries that remain susceptible to economic disruption, such as personal and laundry services, and retail.⁴ As the nation experiences a resurgence of Coronavirus cases, these fragile markets face near-fatal consequences.⁵

¹ <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/advocacy/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Small-Business-2018.pdf>

² <https://www.mbda.gov/page/infographic-impact-minority-businesses-us-economy>

³ <https://content.benetrends.com/blog/exploring-challenges-and-opportunities-for-minority-business-owners-in-2019>

⁴ <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/social-sector/our-insights/covid-19s-effect-on-minority-owned-small-businesses-in-the-united-states#>

⁵ <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-money/2020/06/29/coronavirus-resurgence-threatens-recovery-788857>

We urge lawmakers to pass the *Minority Business Resiliency Act of 2020* as it will strengthen and establish the MBDA into federal statute. This critical proposal, introduced by Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), would increase MBDA's fiscal year 2020 budget to further safeguard MBEs from the devastating inequities brought on by the health crisis, promote a diverse entrepreneurial pipeline with the creation of new programs at historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions, and establish a process for the Minority Business Development Center Program to expand its regional coverage.

During this time of economic emergency, Page 30 Coalition believes now is the time for Congress to pass equitable and targeted legislation that will benefit underserved and rural markets and encourage underserved and rural markets enterprise formation. We support *Minority Business Resiliency Act of 2020* as it slated to add to congressional prioritization by creating additional entrepreneurial opportunities for communities mentioned on Page 30 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.⁶

We commend your work on ensuring that all small businesses receive the resources necessary to withstand the current economic downturn. We urge you to reach out directly to Jamon Phenix, at jamon@page30coalition.org, with any questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Page 30 Coalition

⁶ <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/20059055/final-final-cares-act.pdf>