

**Opening Statement of Chairman Trent Kelly**  
**House Committee on Small Business:**  
**Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations**  
**Hearing: “Community Support: Entrepreneurial Development and Beyond”**  
**April 12, 2018**

**AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY**

Good morning. I call today’s Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations hearing to order. I would like to thank everyone for joining us.

The importance of small businesses in supporting the United States economy cannot be overstated. With 29.6 million small businesses employing 47.8 percent of the workforce, small business success is essential to the economic well-being of both individual communities throughout the country as well as our nation overall. While there are many factors that contribute to the success of a small business, one factor that is often overlooked is the community-small business relationship. This relationship is complex and reciprocal, requiring effort and support from both the community and the small business to achieve mutual success.

Today’s hearing will focus on understanding the community-small business relationship, the resources currently available to foster this important relationship, and areas for resource expansion in the future. When we are talking about the community-small business relationship, all sources of community are important. Some of the most business centric communities are found within the Small Business Administration, or SBA’s, Entrepreneurial Development programs. My home state of Mississippi is fortunate to have a Women’s Business Center, a Veterans Business Outreach Center, and multiple SCORE chapters and Small Business Development Centers. These entrepreneurial development communities, along with many others, have been integral to the success of Mississippi’s 252,000 small businesses.

Why are these and other communities so important? Statistically, a small business owner who is involved in a community has the support of a community, and is significantly more likely to receive patronage, promotion, assistance, and advice from that community. Many small business owners rely on communities, such as the SBA’s Entrepreneurial Development programs, to offer them the knowledge and resources they need to be successful. Conversely, many communities rely on the success of small business to survive and thrive. A successful small business provides 3.7 times more direct local economic benefit than a large non-local business. Clearly, understanding and fostering this relationship is vital to not only the small businesses and communities involved, but to the economic well-being of our nation.

Our witnesses today will speak to their experiences regarding the community-small business relationship, both in terms of the communities found in the SBA’s Entrepreneurial Development programs as well as those found elsewhere. I look forward to hearing their stories and their advice on what Congress can do better to provide small businesses and communities with the resources they need to succeed.

I now yield to Ranking Member, Ms. Adams, for her opening statement.

