

**OPENING STATEMENT
AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY**



**Opening Statement of
Chairman Steve Chabot
Committee on Small Business
Hearing: *Inspiring Entrepreneurs: Learning from the Experts*
May 11, 2016**

Good morning. I call this Committee hearing to order. Last week, our country recognized National Small Business Week, a time when small businesses and entrepreneurs are celebrated for the tremendous impact they have on every community in America. Setting aside a week to highlight the importance of small businesses serves as a reminder as to how crucial they are to our national prosperity and economic security. Here at the Small Business Committee, we are reminded of this every day.

It is often said that when small businesses succeed, America succeeds. At the very heart of small business— what allows them to succeed— are the people; the men and women of this country who set out with an idea and the desire to turn that idea into a reality. It is this enduring spirit of American innovation that continues to breathe life into our economy and create the jobs no government program can.

Today, the Committee is excited to have before it what truly is an expert panel. Our witnesses today are prominent and passionate voices in the small business community. Each of our witnesses have taken the lessons learned from building their own businesses, and provide guidance to small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. The difference between a good idea and a good business is execution, and who do America's small businesses turn to for help developing and executing a business plan? They turn to JJ Ramberg, to Ramon Ray, to Susan Solovic, and to Melinda Emerson. And so today, so do we.

Through their work, our witnesses have helped inspire and shape countless small businesses. They have their fingers on the small business pulse, and can offer unique perspectives as to the challenges small business owners face. This Committee eager to hear more about the great work our witnesses are doing to help small businesses, and grow the conversation of small business success stories. I'd like to thank all the witnesses for coming today, and I look forward to your testimony. I will now yield to Ranking Member Velázquez for her opening remarks.