117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION  

H. R. 8844  

To reauthorize the State Trade Expansion Program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  

Mr. Evans introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Small Business

A BILL  

To reauthorize the State Trade Expansion Program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

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 “STEP Improvement Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM.  

(a) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 22(l)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(l)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D)—
(A) in clause (i), by inserting “, including a budget plan for use of funds awarded under this subsection” before the period at the end; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) TIMING.—The Associate Administrator shall—

“(I) publish information on how to apply for a grant under this subsection, including specific calculations and other determinations used to award such a grant, not later than March 31 of each year;

“(II) establish a deadline for the submission of applications that is not earlier than 60 days after the date on which the information is published under subclause (I) and that is not later than May 31; and

“(III) announce grant recipients not later than August 31 of each year.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new sub-paragraphs:
“(E) APPLICATION INFORMATION.—The Associate Administrator shall clearly communicate to applicants and grant recipients any information about State Trade Expansion Program, including—

“(i) for each unsuccessful applicant for a grant awarded under this subsection, recommendations to improve a subsequent application for such a grant; and

“(ii) for each successful applicant for such a grant, an explanation for the amount awarded, if different from the amount requested in the application.

“(F) BUDGET PLAN REVISIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A State receiving a grant under this subsection may revise the budget plan of the State submitted under subparagraph (D) after the disbursement of grant funds if—

“(I) the revision complies with allowable uses of grant funds under this subsection; and

“(II) such State submits notification of the revision to the Associate Administrator.
“(ii) EXCEPTION.—If a revision under clause (i) reallocates 10 percent or more of the amounts described in the budget plan of the State submitted under subparagraph (D), the State may not implement the revised budget plan without the approval of the Associate Administrator, unless the Associate Administrator fails to approve or deny the revised plan within 20 days after receipt of such revised plan.”.

(b) SURVEY.—Section 22(l) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(l)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

“(7) SURVEY.—The Associate Administrator shall conduct an annual survey of each State that received a grant under this subsection during the preceding year to solicit feedback on the program and develop best practices for grantees.”.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 22(l)(8)(B) of the Small Business Act, as redesignated by subsection (b), is amended—
(1) in clause (i)—

   (A) in subclause (III), by inserting “, including the total number of eligible small business concerns assisted by the program (disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and rural small business concerns)” before the semicolon at the end;

   (B) in subclause (IV), by striking “and” at the end;

   (C) in subclause (V)—

      (i) by striking “description of best practices” and inserting “detailed description of best practices”; and

      (ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

   (D) by adding at the end the following new subclauses:

      “(VI) an analysis of the performance metrics described in clause (iii), including a determination of whether or not any goals relating to such performance metrics were met, and an
analysis of the survey described in paragraph (7); and

“(VII) a description of lessons learned by grant recipients under this subsection that may apply to other assistance provided by the Administration.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—Annually, the Associate Administrator shall collect data on eligible small business concerns assisted by the program for the following performance metrics:

“(I) Total number of such concerns, disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and rural small business concerns.

“(II) Total dollar amount of export sales by eligible small business concerns assisted by the program.

“(III) Number of such concerns that have not previously participated
in an activity described in paragraph (2).

“(IV) Number of such concerns that, because of participation in the program, have accessed a new market.

“(V) Number of such concerns that, because of participation in the program, have created new jobs.

“(VI) Number of such concerns participating in foreign trade missions or trade show exhibitions, disaggregated by socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and rural small business concerns.”.

(d) EXPANSION OF DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—Section 22(l)(1)(A) of the Small Business Act is amended—

(1) in clause (iii)(II), by adding “and” at the end;

(2) by striking clause (iv); and

(3) by redesignating clause (v) as clause (iv).

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 22(l)(10) of the Small Business Act, as redesignated by
subsection (b), is amended by striking “fiscal years 2016 through 2020” and inserting “fiscal years 2023 through 2026”.

(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Associate Administrator for International Trade of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the State Trade Expansion Program established under section 22(l) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(l)) that includes a description of—

(1) the process developed for review of revised budget plans submitted under section 22(l)(3)(F) of the Small Business Act, as added by this Act;

(2) any changes made to streamline the application process to remove duplicative requirements and create a more transparent process;

(3) the process developed to share best practices by States described in section 22(l)(8)(B)(i)(V) (as redesignated by this Act), particularly for first-time grant recipients under the State Trade Expansion Program or grant recipients that are facing problems using grant funds; and

(4) the process developed to communicate, both verbally and in writing, relevant information about
the State Trade Expansion Program to all grant recipients in a timely manner.