H. R. 6133

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 2020

Ms. FINKENAUER (for herself and Mr. SPANO) 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 2020”.

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 Admin-
istrator shall—

‘‘(I) publish information on how
to apply for a grant under this sub-
section, 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), but in any case
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 10 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.”.

(c) 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) and the survey described in paragraph (7); and

“(VII) a description of lessons learned by grant recipients under this subsection that may apply to other as-
sistance provided by the Administra-
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3 tion.”; and
4 (2) by adding at the end the following new
5 clause:
6 “(iii) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—An-
7 nually, the Associate Administrator shall
8 collect data on eligible small business con-
9 cerns assisted by the program on the fol-
10 lowing performance metrics:
11 ““(I) Total number of such con-
12 cerns, disaggregated by socially and
13 economically disadvantaged small
14 business concerns, small business con-
15 cerns owned and controlled by women,
16 and rural small business concerns.
17 ““(II) Total dollar amount of ex-
18 port sales by eligible small business
19 concerns assisted by the program.
20 ““(III) Number of such concerns
21 that have not previously participated
22 in an activity described in paragraph
23 (2).
24 ““(IV) Number of such concerns
25 that have previously participated in
26 the program.
“(V) Number of such concerns that, because of participation in the program, have accessed a new market.

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

“(VII) 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) 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 2021 through 2024”.

(e) 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 applica-
tion process to remove duplicative requirements and
create a more transparent process;

(3) the process developed to share best prac-
tices 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 Expans-
sion 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 re-
cipients in a timely manner.