

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 22

BY SENATORS CARTER, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, BOUIE, CATHEY, CLOUD, CONNICK, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, FOIL, HARRIS, HEWITT, JACKSON, LUNEAU, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, SMITH, TARVER AND WOMACK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to extend certifications for an 8(a) business by one additional year if the business was certified by January 1, 2020.

WHEREAS, the 8(a) Business Development Program (program) is a business assistance program that exists to level the playing field for small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged people or entities; and

WHEREAS, the program offers a broad scope of assistance to businesses that are at least fifty-one percent owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals whose personal net worth is two hundred fifty thousand dollars or less, and who own four million dollars or less in assets; and

WHEREAS, the 8(a) program is an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society and helps thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs to gain a foothold in government contracting; and

WHEREAS, beginning as early as March 11, 2020, many states declared a public health emergency as a result of the imminent threat posed by the outbreak of a respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus known commonly as COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control suggested aggressive measures for limiting the possible interaction of the public with individuals who are exposed to or test positive for the virus; and

WHEREAS, the response by many states to the contagion of COVID-19 required a large scale disruption of the state economies as many businesses were closed in order to protect the public health and to prevent a spike in demand for health care services that would have overwhelmed the capacity of the health care system to provide services; and

WHEREAS, a participant in the certified 8(a) Business Development Program receives a program term of nine years from the date of the Small Business Administration's approval letter certifying admission to the program, including four years in the developmental stage and five years in the transitional stage; and

WHEREAS, efforts to slow or disrupt the spread of COVID-19 has resulted in the temporary closure of many 8(a) certified businesses; and

WHEREAS, temporary closures of 8(a) certified businesses may have prevented these businesses from reaching the program goal of maintaining a balance between their commercial and government business, and this may result in poor performance reviews, incomplete business planning, and unfair evaluations due to the unforeseen and unavoidable consequences of COVID-19.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to extend certifications for 8(a) businesses for one additional year beyond the requisite nine-year term, thereby allowing those 8(a) certified businesses that are in the first four years of certification to remain in the developmental stage an additional year if the business was certified before January 1, 2020, and similarly, the 8(a) certified businesses currently in the five-year transitional stage would be extended by one additional year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES