



ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN'S
BUSINESS
CENTERS

March 21, 2019

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Chair
Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Special Committee on Aging
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Board of Directors

Amy Bunton
Chair

Pathway WBC, TN

Ann Madsen
Treasurer

The Centre for Women, FL

Bonnie Nawara
Past Chair

GROW, MI

Nicole Liatos

WBC of Northern Ohio

Roberta McCullough

WBC of North Carolina

Gwen Pokalo

*Center for Women &
Enterprise, VT*

Anne Flynn Schlicht

Chattham WBC, PA

Corinne Hodges,
CEO

www.AWBC.org

202.430.4756

1333 H Street NW

Suite 800E

Washington, D.C.

20005

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chair
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs Rubio, Collins and Alexander:

As CEO of the Association of Women's Business Centers (AWBC), which supports the network of over 100 Women's Business Centers (WBCs) around the nation, I write in full support of the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Support (CARES) Act*. During this time of great economic uncertainty, as small businesses collectively struggle at unprecedented rates due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, America's 12.9 million women entrepreneurs are looking to the government for support.

Your bill, the *Keeping Workers Paid and Employed Act*, included in the *CARES Act*, supports the nation's small business owners at a time of great need by expanding uses for the Small Business Administration's 7(a) loans and providing resources to WBCs to provide counseling, training, and other services for small business owners impacted by COVID-19. It further supports the health and economic security of women entrepreneurs by authorizing the SBA to grant resource partner associations, such as AWBC, the funds to establish an online platform for counselors to direct entrepreneurs to available Federal resources. Furthermore, we appreciate that you have solicited and accepted the feedback of thousands of WBCs who are also struggling during these troubling times and have waived the non-Federal match requirement for three months for all WBCs.

As the nation faces a growing crisis and mounting uncertainty, 30 million small businesses face the prospect of shuttering their doors indefinitely. The *CARES Act* helps illuminate a path forward for these businesses, and those they employ, by providing much needed financial support. For the sake of American entrepreneurs everywhere, their families and employees, and on behalf of all WBCs, we fully endorse this bill and thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Corinne Hodges
CEO
Association of Women's Business Centers