



Bill Basics

NAME: The Supporting Disabled Entrepreneurs Act

PURPOSE: The Supporting Disabled Entrepreneurs Act intends to increase self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities by directing the Small Business Administration (SBA) to establish a Coordinator at SBA to serve as a centralized resource of information on best practices to supporting small business owners with disabilities aside from service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSBs).

The Supporting Disabled Entrepreneurs Act

December 2023

The National Council on Disability (NCD) is an independent, nonpartisan federal agency that advises policymakers regarding matters that concern the lives of people with disabilities. NCD provides this advice by conducting objective and comprehensive investigations, research, and analyses to assist Congress in the development of national policies.

Relevant NCD Research

National Disability Employment Policy, From the New Deal to the Real Deal: Joining the Industries of the Future (2018)

<https://www.ncd.gov/publications/2018/new-deal-real-deal>

Empowerment for Americans with Disabilities: Breaking Barriers to Careers and Full Employment (2007)

<https://ncd.gov/publications/2007/Oct2007>

Prior NCD Findings

In prior research, NCD has found that individuals with disabilities who want to become self-employed face not only the obstacles confronting all entrepreneurs, but also unique obstacles such as attitudinal barriers, the possible loss of government-provided cash benefits and health care, and a lack of assistance and support from self-employment and small-business entities.

In 2007, NCD found that individuals with disabilities who choose self-employment as their path to financial independence and self-sufficiency have historically been underserved by both the social service agencies that serve individuals with disabilities and the agencies that serve potential entrepreneurs.

In 2018, NCD found that state agencies and service providers lacked knowledge of how to support disability-owners businesses in the new digital marketplace to acquire business development tools and apps, and to market and manage their sales. NCD predicted that more modern tools would allow disability-owned businesses to expand from incidental in-person sales to an online store with high-volume sales in a very short period of time.

Key Recommendations to Policymakers

In prior reports, NCD has recommended:

1. The Small Business Administration (SBA) should establish a National Resource Center on Self-Employment and Persons with Disabilities. The center should provide training and technical assistance to Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) nationwide to improve their outreach and meaningful and effective support of people with disabilities. The center should also help advance cross-agency collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and One-Stop Career Centers that improves coordination with SBDCs and lenders.
2. The SBA, Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship should collaborate to increase access for people with disabilities to programs supporting entrepreneurs.

Bill Consistency with NCD Advisement:

The Supporting Disabled Entrepreneurs Act seeks to direct the Small Business Administration (SBA) to create a centralized Coordinator within the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights to collect information to facilitate efforts to assist entrepreneurs with disabilities.

The Supporting Disabled Entrepreneurs Act is in line with NCD's past research findings and recommendations to policymakers.