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### **Record Funding of Women Entrepreneurs in 2019 Spending Bills**

**Washington, D.C.** – The Association of Women’s Business Centers (AWBC) commends House and Senate Appropriators for prioritizing women entrepreneurs in their Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) funding bills. The House Appropriations Committee approved a record \$18.4 million for the Women’s Business Center (WBC) program following an amendment from Representative Chellie Pingree (D-ME) for an additional \$400,000, capable of funding two additional centers for women business owners. The Senate Committee funded the program at \$18 million.

WBCs provide women with the training, counseling, mentorship, and access to capital needed to build and expand their small businesses. Full funding of the program ensures that each center has the resources necessary to serve women business owners in their community.

The AWBC is the national advocate for the network of 100+ women’s business centers across America. In response to the Committees passage of the spending bills, the AWBC Interim President & CEO, Bonnie Nawara, released the following statement:

“Full funding of the WBC Program guarantees the continued growth of women-owned businesses across America. The WBC program has proven a sound investment of taxpayer dollars, with every \$1 dollar of federal money invested returning \$46 to the economy,” said Bonnie Nawara. “We are thankful for the Appropriations committees’ leadership in both chambers in recognizing the important role that WBCs play in fueling women’s entrepreneurial drive, and especially to Representative Pingree for ensuring additional funding for the program.”

The FY19 spending bills will be considered by the House and Senate this Fall. The government’s continued financial support of the WBC program allows centers to assist women entrepreneurs in starting businesses that create jobs and help fuel the economy.

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***About AWBC:** The AWBC ([www.awbc.org](http://www.awbc.org)) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1998 to support the national network of Women’s Business Centers (WBCs) with programming and advocacy. Each year, our members leverage WBC grants to operate more than 150 locations throughout the United States. WBCs have more than 25 years of success in providing business training, counseling, mentoring, and access to capital to women entrepreneurs. The WBC program is a public-private partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration.*