

Women's Business Centers At-a-Glance

Over **100**
centers across the U.S. and its
territories

Services offered in
38 different
languages

Serves clients who are
**economically and socially
disadvantaged**

Client Demographics



145,415
clients assisted

7 years
average business age

- 15%** start-ups
- 28%** 1 to 4 years
- 31%** 5 to 10 years
- 26%** 11+ years



\$229,771
average revenue of
in-business clients

Outcomes of Recent WBC Clients

Job and Revenue Growth



\$658,000,000
total revenue growth



23,471 total
new jobs



9% average
employment growth rate

Capital and Business Starts



12% obtained new financing
totaling an estimated
\$429,000,000



37% of pre-ventures
started their business



17,435 new
businesses



2018 POLICY PRIORITIES

Women's Business Centers (WBCs) serve more than 145,000 entrepreneurs each year, providing training and one-on-one counseling nationwide. To serve the growing demand for services, the WBC program expanded from only four centers 30 years ago to more than 100 organizations operating more than 150 training locations today. The program, however, needs modernization, decreased regulatory burden, and additional resources.

Modernize the Women's Business Center Program

In 2017, the House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation (H.R. 1680) that would bring the WBC program into the 21st century. The Senate too should pass legislation bringing key changes to WBCs nationwide:

- Re-authorize the program to include an accreditation process that ensures the integrity of the program and participating organizations;
- Increase individual grant level to allow established and effective centers to leverage additional resources for greater impact, and facilitate an expansion of services to serve more constituencies including rural communities;
- Provide financial flexibility for WBCs to raise additional funds from the private and philanthropic sectors; and allow for improved Small Business Administration (SBA) collaboration with WBCs and their association, AWBC.

Ease Reporting Burden on Centers

SBA reporting requirements for WBCs have spiraled well beyond their original intent, turning dedicated non-profit counselors into fulltime bookkeepers and pencil pushers. Congress and the Administration should review current requirements and immediately eliminate duplicative and unnecessary reporting.

In 2017, AWBC submitted a partial list of WBC requirements to SBA as part of their efforts to reduce regulatory burdens. Examining and streamlining that list is a first step to allowing WBC staff to serve entrepreneurs instead of addressing government bureaucracy.

Increase Funding for Women's Business Centers

The ability to serve more entrepreneurs every year—ultimately generating jobs and supporting the economy—is directly related to the resources WBCs can access. Given the proven impact of the program, maintaining current funding of the program is warranted. As such, AWBC requests an \$18 million appropriation for the WBC program in Fiscal Year 2019.

In addition, AWBC requests \$5 million be appropriated for technical assistance grants for WBCs in federally declared disaster areas to provide support to get women-owned businesses back on their feet.

About AWBC: The AWBC (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.