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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. \_\_\_\_\_

To support the establishment of small business development centers internationally and promote international commerce, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CASTRO of Texas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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## A BILL

To support the establishment of small business development centers internationally and promote international commerce, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Global Small Business  
5       Network Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Small businesses empower citizens of a  
2           country, strengthen communities, provide employ-  
3           ment to millions, and form the backbone of the  
4           United States economy.

5           (2) Small business concerns across the United  
6           States have benefitted from access to technical as-  
7           sistance, regulatory guidance, and educational pro-  
8           grams through small business development centers  
9           (referred to in this Act as “SBDC”) in the United  
10          States.

11          (3) The SBDC model has successfully been  
12          adopted in Central America, South America, and the  
13          Caribbean, through assistance from the Small Busi-  
14          ness Network of the Americas’ initiative funded  
15          through the Department of State.

16          (4) The Small Business Network of the Amer-  
17          icas’ initiative is a highly effective program that  
18          works with host governments in the Americas to es-  
19          tablish small business development centers, primarily  
20          funded by the host governments.

21          (5) SBDC networks outside the United States  
22          serve as important conduits of commerce with the  
23          United States, providing important information,  
24          tools, and regulatory guidance to small businesses  
25          interested in trading with the United States.

1           (6) The establishment of SBDCs in other parts  
2           of the world promotes opportunities for small busi-  
3           nesses to thrive and engage with the United States  
4           economy.

5 **SEC. 3. GLOBAL AND REGIONAL NETWORKS.**

6           (a) GLOBAL SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK.—

7           (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State,  
8           in consultation with the Administrator of the United  
9           States Agency for International Development and  
10          the Administrator of the Small Business Administra-  
11          tion, is authorized to establish and administer a  
12          Global Small Business Network program.

13          (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Global  
14          Small Business Network program is to—

15                (A) enhance the ability of small business  
16                concerns in the United States that are affiliated  
17                with a small business development center to ex-  
18                port to foreign markets and take part in inter-  
19                national commerce; and

20                (B) facilitate partners for small business  
21                concerns in the United States and resilient  
22                business environments in foreign countries  
23                through the development of small business de-  
24                velopment centers in foreign countries.

1           (3) AFFILIATION.—The Secretary of State shall  
2 determine if a small business development center in  
3 a foreign country may affiliate with and participate  
4 in the Global Small Business Network program.

5           (4) COORDINATION.—The Secretary of State  
6 may coordinate with a national or local government  
7 of a foreign country that agrees to assist with devel-  
8 oping small business development centers in such  
9 country pursuant to a grant awarded under sub-  
10 section (c).

11           (5) DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS.—The Secretary  
12 of State shall leverage existing programs adminis-  
13 tered by the Department of State, the United States  
14 Agency for International Development, and other  
15 United States Government agencies for the purposes  
16 of the Global Small Business Network program.

17 (b) REGIONAL NETWORKS.—

18           (1) SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK OF THE AMER-  
19 ICAS.—The Secretary of State may establish a Small  
20 Business Network of the Americas for purposes of  
21 allowing national and local governments of a foreign  
22 country located in Western Hemisphere to partici-  
23 pate in the Global Small Business Network program.

24           (2) ASEAN SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK.—The  
25 Secretary of State may establish an ASEAN Small

1 Business Network for purposes of allowing national  
2 and local governments of a foreign country that is  
3 a member state of the Association of Southeast  
4 Asian Nations to participate in the Global Small  
5 Business Network program.

6 (c) GRANTS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State may  
8 make grants to any qualified entity that submits an  
9 application in such form, and satisfying such re-  
10 quirements, as the Secretary may require.

11 (2) TYPES OF GRANTS.—A qualified entity may  
12 receive a grant for one or both of the following pur-  
13 poses:

14 (A) To assist national and local govern-  
15 ments of a foreign country to develop a small  
16 business development center, or multiple cen-  
17 ters, in such country, regardless of whether  
18 such country participates in a regional network  
19 described in subsection (b).

20 (B) To promote economic connectivity be-  
21 tween small business concerns in the United  
22 States and economies covered by the Global  
23 Small Business Network, including through an  
24 internet platform to—

1 (i) enhance the ability of small busi-  
2 ness concerns in the United States to take  
3 part in international commerce; and

4 (ii) facilitate the growth of small busi-  
5 nesses in foreign countries through the de-  
6 velopment of small business development  
7 centers in foreign countries.

8 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
9 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State  
10 \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026,  
11 in addition to amounts otherwise available for economic  
12 activities and foreign assistance, to carry out this section.  
13 With respect to each such fiscal year, the Secretary is au-  
14 thorized to use—

15 (1) up to \$1,000,000 of such amount to estab-  
16 lish and operate the Small Business Network of the  
17 Americas; and

18 (2) up to \$1,000,000 of such amount to estab-  
19 lish and operate the ASEAN Small Business Net-  
20 work.

21 (e) REPORT.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year  
23 after the date of enactment of this Act and every  
24 two years thereafter for a period of four years, the  
25 Secretary of State, in consultation with the Adminis-

1       trator of the United States Agency for International  
2       Development and the Administrator of the Small  
3       Business Administration, shall submit to the Com-  
4       mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-  
5       resentatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of  
6       the Senate, the Committee on Small Business of the  
7       House of Representatives, and the Committee on  
8       Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate  
9       a report on the status of the Global Small Business  
10      Network program.

11           (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by para-  
12      graph (1) shall include the following:

13           (A) An assessment of support provided to  
14      small business concerns in the United States  
15      that have utilized programs through the Global  
16      Small Business Network, including information  
17      on the number of businesses supported, the geo-  
18      graphic location of such businesses, the number  
19      of jobs supported, and the amount of economic  
20      activity generated.

21           (B) A description of methods and strate-  
22      gies to develop small business development cen-  
23      ters in foreign countries for the two years after  
24      the date of such report.

1           (C) A list, and the current status, of all  
2           operating small business development centers in  
3           foreign countries that are affiliated with the  
4           Global Small Business Network program.

5           (D) A list, and the current status, of all  
6           new small business development centers in for-  
7           eign countries set up through the Global Small  
8           Business Network program in the two years be-  
9           fore the date of the report, even if no longer af-  
10          filiated with the Global Small Business Network  
11          program.

12          (E) A description of the estimated  
13          timelines for national and local governments of  
14          a foreign country participating in the Small  
15          Business Network of the Americas and the  
16          ASEAN Small Business Network to—

17               (i) complete the creation of a small  
18               business development center in such coun-  
19               try; and

20               (ii) establish connections between such  
21               a small business development center with  
22               small business development centers in the  
23               United States.



1 (F) A description of international commer-  
2 cial activity resulting from participation in the  
3 Global Small Business Network program.

4 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) QUALIFIED ENTITY.—The term “qualified  
6 entity” means an entity that is—

7 (A) an institution of higher education (as  
8 such term is defined in section 102 of the High-  
9 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)),  
10 except that such term does not include institu-  
11 tions described in section 102(a)(1)(c) of such  
12 Act;

13 (B) a consortium of two or more institu-  
14 tions of higher education described in subpara-  
15 graph (A); or

16 (C) a nonprofit entity with experience in  
17 operating or working with small business devel-  
18 opment centers in the United States.

19 (2) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—The term  
20 “small business concern” has the meaning given the  
21 term under section 3(a) of the Small Business Act  
22 (15 U.S.C. 632(a)).

23 (3) SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CEN-  
24 TER.—The term “small business development cen-  
25 ter”—

1 (A) with respect to a center located in the  
2 United States—

3 (i) has the meaning given such term  
4 in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15  
5 U.S.C. 632); and

6 (ii) includes a women’s business cen-  
7 ter, as such term is used under section 29  
8 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.  
9 656); and

10 (B) with respect to a center located in a  
11 foreign country, means an entity that—

12 (i) provides small business-oriented  
13 employment or natural resources develop-  
14 ment programs;

15 (ii) promotes studies, research, and  
16 counseling concerning the managing, fi-  
17 nancing, and operation of small businesses;

18 (iii) provides management and tech-  
19 nical assistance regarding small business  
20 participation in international markets and  
21 international commerce, including with the  
22 United States;

23 (iv) provides delivery or distribution of  
24 services and information described in this  
25 subparagraph; or

1                   (v) provides access to business ana-  
2                   lysts who can refer a small business to  
3                   available experts.