



April 3, 2023

The Honorable Bryan Hughes
Chairman, Committee on State Affairs
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

RE: Small Business Majority Support for Senate Bill 1281

Dear Chairman Hughes and Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee:

As a representative of the 3.1 million small businesses in Texas, Small Business Majority writes to express our support for SB 1281, legislation that would end the OmniBase program in Texas. This program enforces debt-based license holds on individuals with overdue fines and fees, which impacts small businesses and their employees and their ability to seek employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Small Business Majority is a national small business organization that empowers America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and inclusive economy. We engage our network of more than 85,000 small businesses and 1,500 business and other partner organizations to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth.

Currently, small business owners are facing an acute labor shortage, with an estimated [62.2%](#) labor force participation (down from 63.3% in February 2020). In order for their businesses to succeed, they must be able to attract and hire workers to fill open positions. However, as a result of the OmniBase program, more than [450,000 people](#) in the state no longer have a valid license, meaning they are unable to legally drive to and from their place of employment, and are ineligible to be hired for any job that involves driving. In a state where more than [95% of the workforce](#) drives to work, this program has significantly impacted the labor force.

Ending the OmniBase Program would remove barriers to work for people who cannot legally drive simply because they are unable to afford their court fines and fees. In turn, small businesses across the state would have access to more eligible employees, allowing those businesses to grow and ensure the state's economy continues thriving. We urge you to support SB 1281.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash
Public Policy Director
Small Business Majority