



August 12, 2020

Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support - AB 3205 (Salas): Regions Rise Grant Program

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez,

As a representative of the 30 million small businesses in America and the 4 million in California, Small Business Majority writes today in support of AB 3205 (Salas), which creates the Regions Rise Grant Program in the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), a significant tool to promote sustainable and equitable economic rebuilding of regional economies, and with it, our small businesses.

Small Business Majority is a national small business organization with multiple offices throughout California, founded and run by small business owners to ensure America's entrepreneurs are a key part of a thriving and inclusive economy. We actively engage small business owners and policymakers in support of solutions that promote small business growth and drive a strong economy. A key component of our work involves outreach and education to small business owners on a range of small business issues, including healthcare, retirement security, access to responsible capital and more.

Half of California's small businesses are owned by people of color, and by supporting regional economies, we can build more equity and inclusivity into our economy. AB 3205 tackles this directly and lays the groundwork for a fundamentally more inclusive economy with more economic resilience.

Furthermore, the Regions Rise Grant Program would provide the needed incentive and support to institutionalize an inclusive process at the regional level, focused on economic strategies that provide an opportunity for small businesses to prosper.

With the ongoing public health crisis, it is imperative that our regions continue to identify feasible strategies and solutions that address our most pressing challenges and meet the needs of small businesses. As the impact of COVID-19 accelerates an economic downturn, the importance of building sustainable economies resilient to extraordinary hardships is more important than ever.

For the above reasons, we support AB 3205.

Sincerely,

Mark Herbert, Vice President, California
Small Business Majority