



April 26, 2019

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business
& Entrepreneurship
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business
& Entrepreneurship
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: NEW START Act of 2019

Dear Chairman Rubio and Ranking Member Cardin:

On behalf of Small Business Majority, we wish to express our support for the NEW START Act of 2019 (S. 1077), introduced by Ranking Member Cardin, which creates a reentry program within the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to award grants to organizations, or partnerships between organizations, to provide business counseling and entrepreneurial development training to returning citizens.

One of the primary drivers of high recidivism rates is the inability for returning citizens to find a job – up to 60 percent of ex-offenders remain unemployed one year after their release. Entrepreneurial development programs for formerly incarcerated individuals report dramatically lower rates of recidivism, and self-employment can provide economic stability for those who are otherwise locked out of the labor market.

Returning citizens are often eager to contribute to their communities and to achieve financial independence. Supporting entrepreneurial development programs for formerly incarcerated individuals will help those shut out of the labor market create their own jobs by starting small businesses, which will benefit our economy overall.

When returning citizens come home after paying their debt to society, it is our job to equip them with the tools they need to rebuild their lives, including opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. In turn, these citizens will then be able to launch businesses that not only provide them with income, but also generate economic prosperity community-wide. Small Business Majority calls on Congress to pass the NEW START Act, which will give returning citizens another tool in their reentry toolkit and promote entrepreneurship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Arensmeyer".

John Arensmeyer
CEO and Founder