

February 9, 2023



The Honorable Dick Durbin  
United States Senate  
120 Constitution Avenue, NE, Room 711  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Durbin,

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Ramiro A. Cavazos  
President & CEO

On behalf of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC), we write to ask for your support for the continued funding for the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Community Navigator Pilot Program (CNPP).

The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) is the nation's largest Latino Business Advocacy organization and works to actively promote the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses. The USHCC exists to support these businesses that contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy each year. We operate through a network of more than 260 local chambers and business associations throughout the nation and have partnerships with more than 200 major global corporations.

Earlier this week, we sent a letter with a coalition that collectively represents all Tier 1 Community Navigator Pilot Program partners and hundreds of local business development organizations to the leadership of both Subcommittees on Financial Services and General Government. In this letter, we ask for their support for **no less than \$30 million for the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Community Navigator Pilot Program (CNPP) under the FY 2024 Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Appropriations bill.**

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, creating jobs and driving economic growth in communities across the country. However, many small business owners, particularly those from historically underserved rural and urban communities, face significant barriers to accessing the resources and support they need to start and grow their businesses. The CNPP is a critical and necessary tool for addressing these longstanding gaps by creating a pipeline of consistency in services that serves as the foundation for entrepreneurial success for hard-to-serve populations and areas that are often beyond the reach of traditional resource centers. Most organizations participating in the CNPP are serving distinct segments of the population that, if not for this program, would be unable to access business support. Through intentional ecosystem building, the competitively funded CNPP program bridges community-based efforts to SBA programs through an effective continuum of services, enhancing access to technical assistance and capital for businesses, industries, and communities historically disconnected from the SBA.

For many years, the SBA has lacked the resources necessary to effectively reach into communities that face distinct challenges – linguistic, geographical, cultural, financial, and technical – to entrepreneurship. As a result, traditional SBA resources are often unable to fully serve and connect with those most in need, such as very small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs. The gap in access hits low-income, rural, native, and communities of color particularly hard and undermines business and local economic growth. By leveraging the capacity-building and technical expertise of intermediary nonprofit partners with deep connections to small businesses and the organizations that serve them, the CNPP is investing in a longer-term strategy to educate and empower all hard-working entrepreneurs.

Thank you for your service and partnership in supporting our Hispanic and minority-owned businesses across the country. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Santiago Salas-Oliva, Manager of Government and International Affairs of the USHCC at [Soliva@ushcc.com](mailto:Soliva@ushcc.com). We commend you for your leadership and look forward to a positive outcome on this important matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ramiro Cavazos'.

Ramiro A. Cavazos

President and CEO  
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce