

## Fill Key Vacancies at Small Business Administration

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### Problem:

Despite the small-business community's high demand for support from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), several key leadership positions at the SBA remain vacant. Many of these positions have been open since the COVID-19 pandemic, which has left the majority of small-business owners (67 percent) less than fully confident their business will recover.

- Currently, the SBA is operating without a Deputy Administrator, the position responsible for the day-to-day management of the agency. The absence of a deputy administrator is especially serious given the growth of the SBA's operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 alone, the SBA administered \$970 billion in small business aid. Efforts to confirm nominee Dilawar Syed have been stalled by Senate Republicans since November 2021.
- Additionally, the role of Chief Counsel for the SBA Office of Advocacy has also been vacant since 2017, with no additional attempts to advance a nominee to confirmation since March 2019. This position is one of 10 senior openings within the Office of Advocacy, which serves as the small-business watch-dog when it comes to the federal regulatory process.
- The Office of the National Ombudsman is also operating without an executive. The role was created to provide recourse to small businesses experiencing undue regulation and has been unoccupied since August 2020 without any appointment from the SBA Administrator.

### Solution:

NSBA urges the Senate and the SBA Administrator to swiftly fill all remaining vacant political appointments at the SBA before the end of the calendar year.

- NSBA urges the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship to move quickly and allow hearings on any nominees put forth for SBA appointments. Nominees should be vetted in a transparent setting and then promptly sent to the full Senate floor for a vote.
- The President should move quickly to appoint permanent Chief Counsel for Advocacy. This role is urgently needed as the federal rule-making process continues to ramp-up, potentially creating decades of unfair regulatory burden.
- Likewise, the SBA Administrator must act urgently to appoint a National Ombudsman through whom small businesses can respond to undue federal burdens.