

Strengthen SBA Office of Advocacy

U.S. small businesses need an independent, active and fully funded SBA Office of Advocacy

Problem:

The considerable free rein federal agencies have over how to interpret and enforce laws passed by Congress is too often done in a way that seriously harms America's small businesses. While various regulatory reform initiatives have prohibited the enactment of a range of onerous rules and alleviated some of the federal regulatory burden, those reforms are only as strong as the agency dedicated to their enforcement.

- The total federal regulatory and paperwork burden in the U.S., by recent estimates, has ballooned to nearly \$2 trillion annually and is still growing. Small businesses bear a disproportionately higher percentage of the regulatory burden – 36 percent higher per-employee than large firms, according to the Office of Advocacy.
- The average small-business owner is spending at least \$12,000 every year dealing with regulations, and nearly one-in-three small-business owners spend more than 80 hours each year complying with federal regulations.
- The Office of Advocacy's efforts saved America's small businesses almost \$1.4 billion in foregone regulatory costs in FY 2016.
- In FY 2014, Advocacy hosted 19 roundtables to gather input from small business and their representatives. On many occasions, officials from federal agencies and Congress participated in these roundtables and had direct exchanges with small businesses.

Solution:

Congress must ensure that it allocates the financial resources required for Advocacy, an office devoted solely to serving America's small businesses, to achieve its far-reaching objectives: providing consistent, reliable information about the status and role of small business in the U.S. economy; advocating for small businesses within the federal government's agencies and rulemaking processes; and fostering public awareness of small-business contributions and concerns.

- It is critical that Advocacy is fully staffed with a strong and capable leader at its helm—the Chief Counsel for Advocacy plays an invaluable role in guiding Advocacy's operations and Congress must promptly confirm a nominee once that person is formally nominated.
- Advocacy must be fully funded and afforded appropriate strength within the Administration to ensure that agencies adhere to the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act and the Plain Language Act in determining the true cost of regulations for America's small businesses, as well as ensuring small businesses can understand regulations.
- The Office of Management and Budget and Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs should maintain close contact with the Office of Advocacy and provide strong support in their efforts to ease regulatory burdens.

Learn More:

[Read NSBA's latest updates on Advocacy](#)

[Read NSBA's 2017 Survey on Regulations](#)