



H.R. 2992 – The SBA Trade Programs Act of 2007

Floor Situation

H.R. 2992 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative John Hall (D-NY) on July 11, 2007. The bill was ordered to be reported, as amended, from the Committee on Small Business, by voice vote, on July 19, 2007.

H.R. 2992 is expected to be considered on the floor on September 4, 2007.

Background

SBA Office of International Trade

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA) the mission of the SBA Office of International Trade is to “enhance the ability of small businesses to compete in the global marketplace; facilitate access to capital to support international trade; ensure that the interests of small business are considered and reflected in trade negotiations; and support and contribute to the U.S. Government's international agenda.”

SBA Export Assistance Centers

According to the SBA, U.S. Export Assistance Centers are located in major metropolitan areas throughout the United States, and are designed to be “one-stop shops” to provide small- or medium-sized business with local export assistance.

Summary

Developing Small Business Trade Policies

The bill requires the Director of the Small Business Administration (SBA), Office of International Trade (OIT) to develop trade policies and recommendations that support small businesses in domestic and foreign markets. The Director is required to work with the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to implement the SBA policies and present both USTR and the OECD with the SBA’s trade recommendations.

Annual Small Business Trade Strategy

The SBA Office of OIT is required to develop and submit to Congress, annual strategies and recommendations to increase small business: exports, competitiveness in the global economy, protection from unfair trade practices, and representation in United States trade policy.

Small Business Export Tracking System

The SBA Office of OIT is required to develop a tracking system to track: small business exports and the degree to which small businesses use Federal trade promotion resources.

Trade Remedy and Dispute Assistance Initiative

The SBA Office of OIT is required to design and implement a program that provides technical assistance, counseling services, and reference materials to assist small businesses in navigating the trade dispute and remedy process.

Patent Assistance and Intellectual Property Protections Initiative

The SBA Office of OIT is required to design and implement a program to help small businesses that are taking legal action to secure their rights to domestic patents, including copyright and trademark rights in foreign countries.

Hiring More Finance Specialists and Staff at the Export Assistance Centers

Hiring More Trade Finance Specialists

The bill authorizes such sums as are necessary for the the SBA's Director of the OIT to hire at least six more trade finance specialists at the Export Assistance Centers (EACs) within one year of enactment of this bill. Once the additional specialists are hired, the director is required to maintain or to increase the number of finance specialists at the EACs in the future.

Filling Vacant Positions

The OIT is required to fill all finance positions that have been vacant since 2003 within three months of enactment of this bill.

National Study on Regional Volume of Exports and Staffing Recommendations

Within one year of enactment of this bill, the OIT is required to conduct a national study to compare the rate of exports from each State and region of the EACs, and identify gaps in the supply of staff in high volume areas. The OIT is then required to request the additional staff that are needed to fill the gaps.

Cost

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, implementing H.R. 2992 would cost \$2 million in 2008 and \$19 million over the 2008-2012 period ([CBO Cost Estimate on H.R. 2292](#)).

Staff Contact

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