



The Honorable Nydia Velázquez
Chairwoman
House Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Velázquez:

On behalf of the National Small Business Association (NSBA), a staunchly nonpartisan small-business advocacy organization with 65,000 members in every state and every industry in the U.S., I salute your leadership for championing the Prison to Proprietorship Act and the Prison to Proprietorship for Formerly Incarcerated Act. Both would provide counseling in the form of mentoring sessions, workshops, and instructional videos designed to help prisoners start a small business.

Entrepreneurship can provide those returning from incarceration with tools to overcome the barriers to employment which too many face upon their release from the prison system. NSBA is pleased to support both the Prison to Proprietorship Act and its complementary bill—the Prison to Proprietorship for Formerly Incarcerated Act—both of which direct the Small Business Administration's (SBA's) resource partners to provide entrepreneurship mentoring and training to federal prisoners, both in prison and post-release. Studies show that many formerly incarcerated individuals are often met with few job prospects and a high risk for recidivism. Providing returning citizens with other opportunities for economic security can be extremely successful in lowering the recidivism rates.

If enacted, the Prison to Proprietorship Act would direct the Small Business Administration (SBA), in coordination with the Bureau of Prisons, to require women's business centers and small-business development centers to also provide entrepreneurship and training services to those incarcerated in minimum, low, and medium security prisons. The Prison to Proprietorship for Formerly Incarcerated Act would direct the SBA, again in coordination with the Bureau of Prisons, to require the Service Corps of Retired Executives, the nation's largest network of volunteer business mentors, to provide entrepreneurship and training services to formerly incarcerated individuals. These measures can make a significant difference by providing returning citizens with a viable, legal option for earning a living. Entrepreneurship can provide a pathway to economic success for formerly incarcerated individuals—during their time in prison and after their release.

Thank you for your leadership on these issues and I look forward to working with you towards the enactment of these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd McCracken", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Todd McCracken
President & CEO