



ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN'S
BUSINESS
CENTERS

October 24, 2023

The Honorable Joni Ernst
Ranking Member
Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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Durham, NC

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Kim Shelton
Fullerton, CA

Dear Ranking Member Ernst:

On behalf of the Association of Women's Business Centers (AWBC), I write in full support of the *SCORE Act of 2023*, legislation that would modernize and enhance the Small Business Administration's (SBA) SCORE program. The AWBC is the leading voice for women's entrepreneurship – it works to secure economic justice and opportunities for women by supporting and sustaining a national network of over 100 Women's Business Centers (WBCs).

For several decades, the SCORE program has provided invaluable mentoring, counseling, and educational resources to countless aspiring and existing small business owners. With women-owned businesses now representing an integral and growing part of the American economy the program has taken on even greater importance, particularly when it comes to helping overcome longstanding obstacles faced by the women-owned business community.

As effective as the SCORE program has been, AWBC recognizes the need for commonsense improvements to the program that enable it to adapt to this changing landscape. The *SCORE Act of 2023* does just that by focusing specifically on enhancements that support women business owners, such as creating a new program that better matches women entrepreneurs with volunteer coaches that specifically fit their needs. The bill would also implement a certification process to ensure the knowledge and expertise of volunteer coaches aligns with the modern business environment; put in place performance standards and other oversight tools; and reauthorize the program for a four-year period.

Through these simple changes, Congress can build on the successful legacy of the SCORE program and unlock its full potential. The Association of Women's Business Centers therefore urges you to support this important legislation, and we welcome the opportunity to help advance it.

Sincerely,

Corinne Goble
CEO
Association of Women's Business Centers