



May 17, 2023

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman
Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cardin:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce applauds your leadership in sponsoring S. 609, the “NEW START Act of 2023,” which is designed to remove barriers to self-employment for formerly incarcerated Americans.

The Chamber launched our Equality of Opportunity Initiative (EOI) three years ago to develop solutions that help close race-based opportunity gaps. Prior convictions make reentry into society and the economy disproportionately challenging for Black Americans, and that is why one priority of EOI is focused on employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals. The Chamber also believes we should make it easier for formerly incarcerated men and women to benefit from business ownership. Removing barriers to self-employment can help formerly incarcerated individuals provide for themselves and their families and reduce recidivism.

Your commitment to reauthorizing the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) this Congress provides an opportunity to examine how S. 609 can be part of updating SBA’s programs and services in a way to benefit America’s small business community. While the Chamber’s top priority for SBA Reauthorization is to modernize the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) that guarantees small business input in the development of federal regulations, we also support the inclusion of the NEW START Act in SBA reauthorization and welcome the opportunity to work with you to build support.

Sincerely,

Neil Bradley
Executive Vice President, Chief Policy Officer,
And Head of Strategic Advocacy
U.S. Chamber of Commerce