



Representative Ann Kirkpatrick
Arizona's First Congressional District

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Contact:

Joe Katz, (202) 225-2315

Kyle McNally, (520) 437-9478

House Passes Rep. Kirkpatrick Bill to Increase Assistance, Opportunities for Native American Small Business Owners

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As part of her work to make sure that the economic recovery reaches Indian Country, Representative Ann Kirkpatrick today pushed through her bill to make more resources available to Native American entrepreneurs. The Native American Business Development Enhancement Act, which will expand Small Business Administration (SBA) efforts to assist small businesses owned by Native Americans, passed the House of Representatives with a bipartisan 343-55 majority earlier this afternoon.

Rep. Kirkpatrick's legislation sets up a new Office of Native American Affairs within the SBA. This office will launch and manage programs to offer Native American small business owners the training they need to succeed in a tough economy. Like all entrepreneurs, they can benefit from more guidance on how to access start-up funds and capital, put together a well-designed business plan and put that plan into practice. The bill makes sure they can get that assistance through initiatives that take their unique circumstances into account.

“Even when times were good, many Native American entrepreneurs had to deal with serious obstacles to their success,” said Rep. Kirkpatrick. **“By getting the tools it takes to run a business, they will be better able to realize their full business potential and get folks back to work.”**

“Small businesses are the engine of our economy, and they can be a driving force for recovery and development in Indian Country,” continued Rep. Kirkpatrick.

The bill also makes Native entrepreneurs eligible for new grants aimed at supporting small businesses start-ups and existing small businesses that are looking to expand. The Congresswoman has made creating jobs and getting our economy back on track her top priorities, and these grants will make progress towards those priorities in tribal communities.

“I grew up in the White Mountains, and my father ran the general store near a tribal community. I have seen firsthand the challenges that Native American small business owners face, and I have seen how determined they are to thrive despite the roadblocks in their way,” said Rep Kirkpatrick. **“This legislation will help these hard-working folks achieve their goals and grow our economy.”**

The Native American Business Development Enhancement Act had previously passed the House as part of a larger package.

The passage of her bill marks another victory for Rep. Kirkpatrick in her work as a Member of the Small Business Committee. A leader in advocating for small businesses in this tough economy, she previously pushed through a bill aimed at freeing up investment dollars for small businesses as part of the Small Business Financing and Investment Act. She is also co-sponsoring the bipartisan Small Business Formation and Job Creation Act, which will cut taxes on small business start-ups to make it easier for them to succeed.

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