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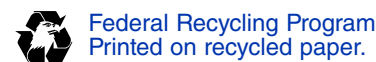
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50M-0811

The Office of Advocacy

The Voice for Small Business in Government

The Office of Advocacy: The voice for small business in government

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES—28 million strong—are the backbone of our nation's economy. They represent more than 99 percent of American companies, create two-thirds of the net new jobs, employ half of the U.S. private work force, and generate half of private gross domestic product. Small businesses produce 13 times more patents per employee than larger firms and employ more than 40 percent of high technology workers. Small business entrepreneurship continues to be a path to economic independence.

The U.S. Congress created the Office of Advocacy in 1976 within the U.S. Small Business Administration to inform policymakers about small business contributions and effectively represent the nation's small businesses within the federal government's rulemaking processes. Advocacy's mission, simply stated, is to give visibility to American small businesses and to encourage policies—especially regulatory policies—that support their start-up, development, and growth.

The Office of Advocacy is led by the Chief Counsel for Advocacy, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The Chief Counsel independently advances the views, concerns, and interests of small business before Congress, the White House, federal regulatory agencies, federal appellate courts as an amicus curiae on regulatory matters, and state policymakers. The office identifies issues of concern through economic research, policy analysis, and outreach to small business owners and representatives. The Chief Counsel's efforts are supported by staff in Washington, D.C., and by Regional Advocates around the nation.

Putting government to work for small business

Are you a small business owner concerned about how a regulatory proposal might affect your business? Or a researcher who needs to know more about the demographics of small business owners, their financing sources, or their innovative prowess? Are you a state policymaker looking for information about the number of small firms in your state or city, and how many jobs they create? The Office of Advocacy is a great source for answers to these kinds of questions.

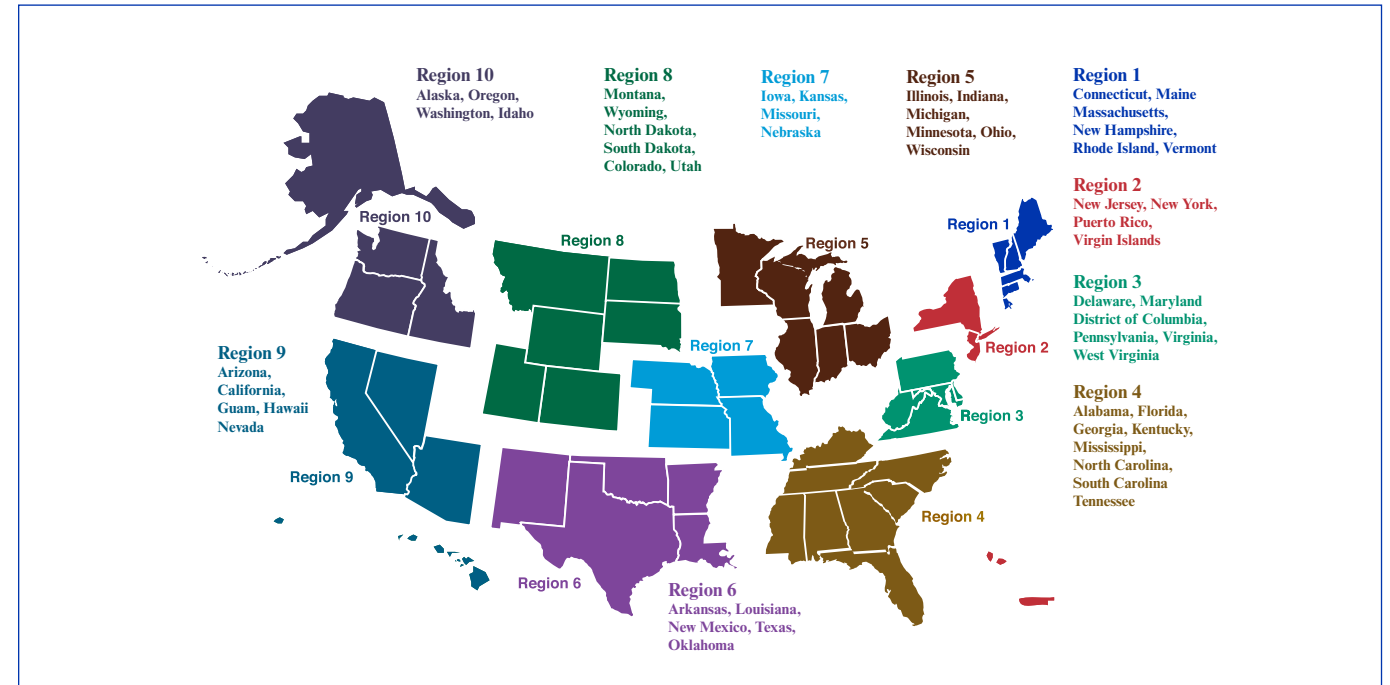
The source for small business research

As the federal office responsible for examining the contributions and challenges of small businesses in the U.S. economy, we are constantly looking for answers to small business questions—those that intrigue researchers, challenge business organizations, enlighten policymakers, and vex small business owners.

The office publishes research reports on such topics as the availability of financing to small firms, the cost of regulations to small firms, the demographics of business ownership, and the dynamics of firm and job creation. Reference materials published annually include small business profiles for each of the 50 states and U.S. territories, quarterly updates of general and lending data, and an FAQ on small business.

All of these and many more research resources are available on the “Research and Statistics” tab of the Office of Advocacy website, www.sba.gov/advocacy.

Advocacy reaches out with information to academics and think-tank researchers, federal and state policymakers, trade associations, the media, and all who have an interest in small firms. We strive to be the government source of information for and about small business. Check our website to find what you need to know about small business.



A Washington advocate on small business regulatory concerns

On the regulatory front, Advocacy's attorneys work within government, educating regulators about their obligation to consider how small entities will be affected by federal regulatory proposals.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) requires federal agencies to determine the impact of their proposed rules on small entities, to consider alternatives (or flexibilities) that minimize small entity impacts while still meeting regulatory goals, and to make their analyses available for public comment.

The Office of Advocacy is charged to help implement these requirements. We work hard to give small firm owners and their representatives opportunities to make their voices heard about rules that affect their interests. Our Regulatory Alerts webpage highlights notices of proposed rulemaking that may significantly affect small entities. It can be reached from our webpage, www.sba.gov/advocacy.

Each year the Office of Advocacy helps small businesses save billions in regulatory costs. And we continue to look for new ways to ease the regulatory burden on small firms.

A national network for small business input

Gathering input from firms around the country is key to the Chief Counsel's ability to effectively represent small business concerns to the rest of the federal government. To accomplish this, Advocates are located in 10 regions nationwide. They work with businesses, stakeholders, and state and local government to provide a direct link to Washington.

Listening to concerns and making connections, the Regional Advocates are there to hear your small business concerns and to help level the playing field for small businesses in your area. Find out more about your Regional Advocate by visiting our website, www.sba.gov/advocacy, and selecting the “Regional Advocates” tab.