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Congressional Challenge: How to be a Champion for Entrepreneurs

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Look, we get it: there are a hundred different fires to put out every day on Capitol Hill. But while lawmakers focus on the policy fight of the day, a committee hearing tomorrow, or an event over the weekend, critical issues fall through the cracks. **We can't let that keep happening when it comes to supporting entrepreneurs and small business owners.**

Small businesses have been in survival mode for years. One crisis bled into the next—supply chains snapped, prices soared, workers disappeared. The strain on American entrepreneurs has reshaped local economies and put the promise of the middle class at risk. Yet in Washington, lawmakers often focused elsewhere, partisanship hardened into paralysis, and small businesses were too often left without real, lasting champions.

This must change. **Now is the time for more Members of Congress to publicly and repeatedly stand up for entrepreneurs.** This is the moment where leadership matters.

That's where the *Opportunity Builder Challenge* comes in. **We're challenging Members of Congress to publicly back small business ownership as a proven path to prosperity repeatedly over the next year.** We must put entrepreneurship back at the center of our country's economic agenda—elevating the voices of Main Street, championing policies that help businesses start and survive, and making sure growth reaches every community.

To be a champion, lawmakers can do a variety of different things:

1. **Convene** roundtables, field hearings, and hold state/district events that elevate entrepreneurs—particularly those from underserved and disadvantaged communities.
2. **Champion** practical, targeted solutions that expand access to affordable capital, open doors to public and private markets, and strengthen technical assistance.
3. **Amplify** the data, stories, and solutions that demonstrate business ownership as a proven pathway to wealth-building, job creation, and community stability.

I'm interested. What's next?

Interested in elevating your support for entrepreneurs? Here are some specific ideas on how you can start showcasing your commitment:

Convene

Goal: Use your office to bring small business owners, support organizations, and government agencies together in structured forums that surface needs, spread practical knowledge, and build relationships.

Actionable Ideas:

- Government contracting bootcamp with Small Business Development Centers and the General Services Administration
- Sector-specific Main Street roundtables
- Success and ownership transition clinic
- “Startup in a Day” Resource Fair
- Small business crawls in order to meet businessowners throughout a community
- Field hearings focused on entrepreneurship issues

Champion

Goal: Use your congressional powers—legislation, amendments, appropriations, oversight, and caucuses—to prioritize small business needs and secure concrete policy wins.

Actionable Ideas:

- Appropriations and authorization advocacy
- Lead or co-sponsor key legislation
- Use hearings or letters to push agencies for better implementation of small business priorities
- Join caucuses and working groups related to small business and economic opportunity

Amplify

Goal: Elevate the experiences, data, and best practices of small business owners to shape public narratives and policy debates at every level.

Actionable Ideas:

- One-minute floor speech during Small Business Month
- Op-ed outlining small business issues
- Social media series spotlighting constituent stories
- Bi-annual “State of the District” reporting on small business trends and needs

Need assistance turning some of these ideas into action? We’re here to help. Want more ideas? We can help there too.

The key is that we cannot keep ignoring the needs of entrepreneurs and small business owners in this country. Entrepreneurship has long been one of our nation’s most powerful

engines of opportunity. The *Opportunity Builder Challenge* is a chance for lawmakers to champion small business vitality as a core component of economic opportunity in every community—urban, suburban, and rural alike—redefining the nation’s economic narrative around fairness, mobility, and shared prosperity.
