

October 23, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
US Senate  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
US Speaker of the House  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
US Senate  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democrat Leader  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
US Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
US House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Ranking Member  
US Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
US House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Leader Schumer and Speaker Johnson,

As Congressional leaders came together in September to reach an agreement to fund the government through December 20th, we, the undersigned organizations write to urge lawmakers to use the coming weeks to work together, in good faith, to fully fund the government through the next fiscal year, and avoid falling back on another continuing resolution (CR).

Collectively, our organizations represent the voices of millions of small business owners who stand to lose the most as Congress increasingly relies on CRs to fund the government, which fuels economic uncertainty and risks unnecessary government shutdowns.

Small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy, [accounting for 99%](#) of all U.S. firms and creating nearly half of all private sector jobs. Every day, millions of business owners work to innovate, grow, and create opportunity in their communities. However, government shutdowns introduce dangerous economic uncertainty, leading to widespread hardship and disruption for business owners across the country. A [recent survey](#) revealed that 70% of small business owners are deeply concerned about the negative impact a shutdown would have on their operations, with near-unanimous agreement on the importance of Congress preventing such crises. Unlike larger corporations, small businesses lack the financial cushion to absorb the fallout of a shutdown, and for many, this instability could threaten their survival.

Small businesses engaged in federal contracting face particularly severe consequences. During a shutdown, contractors may be asked to continue working, but government employees responsible for approvals or contract renewals may not be available. Access to federal facilities can also be restricted, making it impossible for contractors to complete their work. This disruption undermines the stability that business owners depend on to make informed decisions, whether it's hiring new employees or securing financing. Ultimately, shutdowns create an environment where small businesses are forced into difficult, last-minute choices that could have long-lasting impacts on their growth and stability.

The ripple effects of a government shutdown extend far beyond federal contractors. Small businesses across the country—outside the Washington, D.C., bubble—are affected by the broader economic uncertainty. Many business owners perceive these annual budget battles as dysfunction that threatens consumer confidence. When consumer confidence falters, retailers may delay or reduce purchases from small business suppliers. Shutdowns also stall critical business growth, whether by delaying government approval for product labeling or obstructing access to federal loans and certifications. These roadblocks put unnecessary pressure on entrepreneurs who are working hard to contribute to our national economy.

The undersigned organizations call on Congress to rise above partisanship and adopt a long-term budget that ends the damaging cycle of government shutdowns and stopgap funding measures. Small businesses [generate roughly 44%](#) of U.S. economic activity and are the country's top job creators—yet the costs of shutdowns jeopardize their ability to thrive. Our organizations stand united in urging Congress to protect this crucial sector by passing a fully-funded budget.

Now is the time to build on the momentum of [record new business creation](#), secure economic stability, and ensure that America's small businesses continue to fuel growth, innovation, and prosperity.

We appreciate your consideration and stand ready to be a resource as Congress works toward resolving government funding issues and preventing future shutdowns.

Sincerely,

Angela Dingle  
President and CEO  
Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP)

Jen Earle  
CEO  
National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)

Karen Kerrigen  
President and CEO  
Small Business Entrepreneurship Council

Gil Pontes  
Executive Director

NextGen Chamber of Commerce

Chiling Tong

President and CEO

National Asian Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (National ACE)

Ron Busby

President and CEO

US Black Chambers, Inc (USBC)

Ramiro Cavazos

President and CEO

US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC)

Justin Nelson

Co-Founder and President

National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)

Keith Hall

President and CEO

National Association of the Self Employed (NASE)