

Reps. Kim, Lamb and Fitzpatrick Introduce Bill to Help Veteran Owned Businesses Rebuild America

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, [Congressman Andy Kim](#) (NJ-03), [Congressman Conor Lamb](#) (PA-17), and [Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick](#) (PA-01) introduced the bipartisan Better Utilizing Infrastructure for Lasting Development (BUILD) Veterans Businesses Act, which would create a new program for veteran owned small businesses to win up to 3 percent of federal-aid highway and public transportation contracts.

“Our veterans have served honorably and are often looking for that next mission; helping to rebuild our infrastructure can be that mission,” said Congressman Kim. “We have so many veteran small business owners who are ready to get to work, and they deserve a fair shot at continuing their efforts to serve the country they love. I’m proud to work with my colleagues, Congressmen Lamb and Fitzpatrick, on this bipartisan project that will help lift up our veteran small business owners and make our communities stronger.”

This bill would help veteran small business owners by ensuring that at least three percent of federal contracts for federal highway and public transportation projects – such as construction, manufacturing, professional services like architecture & engineering, transportation, warehousing and administrative support would go to small businesses owned by veterans.

“So many of our neighbors and friends felt the financial strain caused by the pandemic, including veterans,” said Congressman Lamb. “This bipartisan legislation creates a path forward to good paying job opportunities for veterans as we work to rebuild our infrastructure and invest in our communities.”

The Federal Highway Administration oversees the distribution of more than \$40 billion in annual funding to the states for the construction, maintenance and preservation of our nation’s highways and public transportation systems. According to a [2018 report](#) by the Small Business Administration and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, “veteran entrepreneurship is facing a generational decline, with younger veterans owning businesses at lower rates compared to past generations.” The same report outlines that, “22 to 25 percent of transitioning veterans indicate that they would like to start businesses”, but that “75 percent of the veteran entrepreneur respondents reported encountering challenges as they were starting and growing their business.”

“Given their service to our country, our veterans deserve every opportunity to succeed in their post-military careers,” said Congressman Fitzpatrick. “I am proud to introduce the bipartisan BUILD Veterans Businesses Act to ensure that our veterans can continue to play a critical role in rebuilding America’s infrastructure.”

While veteran small business owners are in need of support, their potential to help our economy recover is sizable. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “veteran business owners accounted for 6.1% (351,237) of all U.S. employer businesses, and employ approximately 4 million workers.”

“We know that when veterans are given a chance to create jobs and opportunities, they succeed,” continued Congressman Kim. “It’s our job to make sure they have every chance to succeed and help build our country in the process.”