

I rise in support of the Small Business Jobs and Credit Act.

I regularly meet with Central New Jersey small business leaders and hear the difficulty they have finding the loans and credit needed to expand and hire more employees. The Small Business Jobs and Credit Act will help small businesses on Main Street to create jobs through a new \$30 billion Small Business Lending Fund for small- and medium-sized community banks. In order to participate in this program, these banks will have to turn around and provide the credit that small businesses need to grow. The \$30 billion fund, could leverage up to \$300 billion in lending. These small- and medium-sized banks are staples in communities across the country and critical sources of capital to help small businesses get off the ground, but the financial crisis on Wall Street and subsequent recession diminished these banks' ability to lend.

The bill also will support a State Small Business Credit Initiative, which will provide \$2 billion in funding for new or existing state lending programs. These programs already exist in about 30 states, including my home state of New Jersey, and use small amounts of public dollars to generate substantial private financing. By supporting existing expertise in states around the country and using an easy-to-replicate model, this program will be able to quickly increase small business lending and create jobs. In addition, this bill will improve access to credit by increasing Small Business Administration loan limits and lowering costs for small business to access SBA loans.

But this bill does not merely expand access to credit--it contains billions of dollars in tax relief for small businesses. It will spur investment by giving a 100 percent exclusion from capital gains taxes on small business investment and by allowing businesses to write off immediately 50 percent of the cost of new equipment. It also will increase the tax deduction for business start-up expenditures. By allowing entrepreneurs to recover more start-up expenses, small business owners can focus more growing their businesses.

It is unfortunate that this bill was held up by partisan obstructionists, because this is something that could help small businesses now. The small business owners I talk with in New Jersey are not concerned about political gamesmanship--they're concerned about lack of credit and tight lending standards. Passage of this legislation is long overdue and I urge my colleagues to support it and support our nation's small business leaders.