

HEIDI HEITKAMP

UNITED STATES SENATOR *for* NORTH DAKOTA



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Heitkamp, Duckworth Introduce Bill to Support Women Entrepreneurs

Number of Women-Owned Businesses has Increased by 45 Percent from 2007 to 2016; Bill Would Help Support & Encourage More Women-Owned Small Businesses

In April, Senators Urged President to Reestablish Federal Agency to Support Growth of Women-Owned Businesses

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MANDAN, N.D – U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, both members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship, introduced legislation to reauthorize the Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise to better coordinate federal resources to help grow women-owned businesses.

There are currently an estimated 11.6 million women-owned businesses operating in the United States, and the number of women-owned businesses grew by [45 percent between 2007 and 2016](#). Building on this growth, Heitkamp and Duckworth's bill would revive a federal agency that has a proven history of boosting women-owned businesses. As a result, their bill could help support and encourage more women-owned businesses.

North Dakota continues to rank as one of the top states for women starting and growing their business according to the [2017 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report](#). North Dakota now has over 20,000 women-owned businesses and [ranks number one in terms of employment vitality](#) which is the employment growth rate of women-owned businesses and the average number of employees working at women-owned businesses. Further, North Dakota [ranks fourth](#) in the nation in terms of the number of new women-owned businesses as well as their growth in employment and revenues.

- In April 2018, Heitkamp held a [roundtable discussion in Jamestown](#) with local women business leaders to discuss collaborative strategies to encourage support for women entrepreneurs in North Dakota.
- In April 2018, [Heitkamp sent a letter](#) to the president urging the reestablishment of the Interagency Committee for Women's Business Enterprise, [click here](#) to read the letter.
- In August 2017, [Heitkamp joined Kari Warberg Block](#) to host a women's small business roundtable in Bismarck to discuss policies that would support women entrepreneurs grow their businesses.
- In March 2017, Heitkamp reintroduced her bipartisan [Supporting America's Innovators Act](#) with U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) to help encourage investments in small businesses and startups in smaller communities.
- In May 2016, Heitkamp introduced her [Startup Entrepreneur Empowerment Delivery \(SEED\) Act](#). The SEED Act would expand access to early stage funding for startups in rural states and small cities – which many startups say is their biggest challenge.
- In February 2016, Heitkamp announced her support for family-friendly policies like the [FAMILY Act](#) that would give working families and entrepreneur's flexibility by creating a federal paid family and medical leave policy.
- In July 2015, Heitkamp brought [then-U.S. Small Business Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet](#) to North Dakota in to meet with North Dakota successful women-owned small businesses, and to hold the first U.S. Senate Committee on Small Businesses [field hearing in Fargo](#) on how to better support startups in rural areas.
- In December 2014, Heitkamp recommended [Kari Warberg Block](#) for a position on the National Women's Business Council (NWBC) that she served on for three years.

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