

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 685 (Solache)

As Amended August 21, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

This bill revises eligibility requirements for grants under the California Small Business Technical Assistance Program (SB-TAP) and establishes uniform performance, reporting, and outcome-measurement standards for grant recipients. It authorizes multiple technical assistance centers operating under the same funding authority to apply as a network with a single fiscal agent, requires the Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA) to monitor grant recipients and report aggregate program outcomes to the Legislature, and ensures that publicly funded technical assistance is available to all eligible small businesses, regardless of membership or affiliation.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Delete appropriation and related provisions.
- 2) Delete urgency clause.
- 3) Requires OSBA to establish standardized performance metrics, reporting requirements, and outcome measures for all grant recipients participating in SB-TAP.
- 4) Requires OSBA to monitor grant recipients throughout the grant performance period to ensure compliance with SB-TAP requirements.
- 5) Allows multiple small-business technical assistance centers to apply as a network through a single fiscal agent when their active contracts fall under the same funding authority.
- 6) Requires a chamber of commerce, membership organization, or other organization receiving funding under this section to ensure that all eligible small businesses within its geographic or service area can access publicly funded technical assistance, regardless of membership status.

COMMENTS

GO-Biz assists thousands of California businesses, approximately 95 percent of which are small businesses, with business formation, permitting, expansion, relocation, and regulatory matters. Through the Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA), GO-Biz also provides resources, technical assistance, financing support, and procurement guidance through the California Business Portal, Permit Assistance Unit, and CalGOLD.

The California Small Business Technical Assistance Program (SB-TAP) is administered by OSBA to expand the capacity of small business technical assistance centers. Through grant agreements with these centers, SB-TAP supports free or low-cost one-on-one consulting and training for small businesses and entrepreneurs, including businesses in underserved, rural, low-wealth, and disaster-impacted communities.

OSBA also administers the Capital Infusion Program (CIP), which provides technical assistance to help small businesses become capital-ready, develop financing packages, identify funding

opportunities, and access loans, investments, and other sources of financing. SB-TAP and CIP collectively support business formation, growth, access to capital, recovery, and resilience.

This bill establishes uniform eligibility, performance, reporting, and outcome-measurement standards for organizations receiving SB-TAP grants. It also authorizes multiple technical assistance centers operating under the same funding authority to apply as a network through a single fiscal agent, potentially streamlining grant administration.

The bill further requires OSBA to monitor grant recipients during the grant performance period and report its findings, actions, and aggregate program outcomes to the Legislature. Grant recipients must make publicly funded technical assistance available to all eligible small businesses within their service areas, regardless of membership or affiliation. These provisions create a more consistent framework for administering and evaluating SB-TAP and CIP and provide the Legislature with information to assess the reach and effectiveness of state-funded assistance.

According to the Author

"As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Economic Development, Growth, and Household Impact, and as someone who has spent much of my life working hand-in-hand with small businesses, I am deeply concerned about the urgent need to mitigate economic hardships and strengthen our small business resiliency infrastructure. Small businesses are the state's largest employers. As witnessed with Los Angeles wildfires, disruptions to small businesses spark devastating economic consequences for our entire state. The Capital Infusion Program and Small Business Technical Assistance Program provide essential wraparound technical assistance that offer proven strategies in supporting regional economic recovery, resilience, and innovation. With the increased frequency of natural disasters and economic pressures outside of our control, California must prioritize greater resources for small business resilience and innovation."

Arguments in Support

Those in support argue, AB 685 provides a practical, forward-looking investment in California's small businesses by strengthening the Small Business Technical Assistance Program (TAP) and Capital Infusion Program (CIP). These proven resources help entrepreneurs access capital, navigate regulations, grow their businesses, and create jobs.

Small businesses, particularly those owned by women, veterans, immigrants, and historically underserved entrepreneurs, continue to face barriers to growth. Without targeted support, communities may see more business closures, job losses, and reduced local economic activity.

This bill will strengthen California's small business ecosystem, promote economic resilience and innovation, and ensure more entrepreneurs have the tools they need to succeed. This is an investment in California's businesses, communities, and future.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the fiscal impact of incorporating the new eligibility parameters into OSBA's grant-award determination process for the current TAP and CIP program year is unknown.

VOTES:**ASM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH, AND HOUSEHOLD IMPACT: 8-0-0**

YES: Solache, Castillo, Bonta, Patel, Petrie-Norris, Soria, Stefani, Wallis

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Stefani, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Bauer-Kahan, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0-7

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Flora, Papan, Celeste Rodriguez, Ta, Tangipa, Ward

UPDATED

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