

Next STEP Act of 2013

Introduced by Rep. Rick Larsen (WA-02) and Congressman David G. Reichert (WA-08)

The Next STEP Act of 2013 would permanently authorize the State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program.

The Facts:

- **What is the STEP program?**
 - The STEP program is a pilot program that was authorized under the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010.
 - The program's objectives are to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting, and to increase the value of exports for those small businesses that are currently exporting.
 - STEP services are managed and provided at the local level by state government organizations. The program is managed at the national level by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of International Trade.
(SBA: <http://www.sba.gov/about-officescontent/1/2889/resources/14315>)

- All 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories qualify to apply for STEP grant awards.

- **What does the permanent reauthorization bill do?**
 - The bill permanently authorizes the STEP program.
 - The bill also requires the SBA Associate Administrator to change reporting requirements under the program. These new requirements include:
 - Document and maintain all analyses, evaluations, and rationale used to award grants.
 - Ensure that the goals of the recipients of those grants are consistent with the program and hold them accountable for adhering to the reporting requirements.
 - Perform reviews of quarterly reports submitted by recipients.
 - Help recipients meet the necessary goals required under the Act.
 - Under the Next STEP Act, the federal share of the cost of an export program carried out under a grant would not be more than 75 percent for states that do not have a high export volume and 65 percent for states that do have a high export volume.

- To date, the program has provided export assistance to 387 businesses in Washington state, resulting in an aggregate increase of \$29.3 million actual and \$203 million forecasted export sales, representing actual and expected state tax revenues of more than \$9 million and supporting more than 1,200 jobs (Washington State Department of Commerce Legislative Brief on the STEP program).

- Participation and results from these and other STEP activities are on target to generate a return on investment to the state's economy of more than \$75 for every \$1 invested through the STEP program (Washington State Department of Commerce Legislative Brief on the STEP program).

For more information, contact Terra Sabag of Congressman Larsen's office at terra.sabag@mail.house.gov or Natalie Kamphaus of Congressman Reichert's office at natalie.kamphaus@mail.house.gov.

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