

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

April 1, 2021

Ms. Isabel Guzman
SBA Administrator
Small Business Administration
409 3rd St., SW
Washington, DC 20416

Ms. Janet Yellen
Secretary of Treasury
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Administrator Guzman and Secretary Yellen,

Small businesses are an essential part of our economy and our community, and as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, they are essential in rebuilding the economy. Small businesses employ half of all workers and drive innovation. Unfortunately, in today's economic crisis, small businesses are still struggling, and many have had to close their doors permanently. Among those who have been disproportionately affected are Minority-owned small businesses. We respectfully request that you prioritize relief for these businesses and ensure equitable language resources so these small businesses can access important relief programs.

As you are aware, the American Rescue Plan Act provided critical support for the hardest-hit small businesses, especially those owned by entrepreneurs from under-served communities with additional funds for Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Advance, expanded PPP eligibility, additional funding for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, a newly established Restaurant Revitalization Fund, and more. However, if these programs are truly going to reach struggling Minority-owned businesses, then we must ensure that language proficiency does not serve as a barrier to obtain or distribute vital information from the Federal government. As the Small Business Administration and the Treasury Department interface with businesses across the country and engage in outreach efforts to ensure that these relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act are made available, we urge you to make this process accessible to all the Minority business owners who don't speak English as their first language – including for those who speak Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Tagalog and other AAPI languages.

While we are grateful that both your agencies' websites provide a Google Translate tool on your respective home pages, it unfortunately does not generate a translation for all of the content that businesses need to access programs, such as the additional documents attached, webinars, training videos, and other helpful resources. Additionally, since Google Translate relies on machine learning it is not as reliable for non-romantic languages. We understand that your

agencies are working hard to implement updated guidance and new programs as quickly as is possible, but we are concerned that many struggling AAPI business owners may miss out on this critical assistance and relief if they don't understand the guidance because English is not their dominant language and documents are not being reliably translated. Documents, materials, and resources for small business programs funded by the American Rescue Plan Act must be made available in Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Tagalog and other languages spoken by the AAPI community, so those restaurant and small business owners who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic can access these funds in the first place.

Breaking down these barriers will not only increase accessibility of the relief, but it will also be an important component to the equitable distribution of the funds.

We look forward to hearing from you and working together on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marilyn Strickland', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Kim', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andy Kim
Member of Congress