

# Women Veterans Business Coalition

THE POLICY VOICE FOR WOMEN VETERAN OWNED BUSINESSES



## POLICY PRIORITIES

1

### **Increase incentives for prime contractors and the Federal Government to award more contracts to women veteran-owned small businesses.**

*The federal government has a goal of awarding 3% of all contract dollars to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB). Year over year, the government has exceeded that goal – in FY19, 4.39% (\$22B) went to SDVOSBs. However, women veteran businesses are not receiving contract awards at the same level as their male counterparts and additional incentives need to be created to make this happen.*

2

### **Change the restrictive re-marriage eligibility requirement for Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) beneficiaries.**

*SBP is a unique benefit plan available for retiring military members. If the retiring member pays premiums until their death, the beneficiary receives 55% of the retiree's military pension as an annuity. However, if the widow or former spouse remarries before age 55, they are ineligible for the benefit. Punishing surviving spouses for remarrying is an outdated policy.*

3

### **Allow veterans to use GI bill benefits to start a business.**

*Many service members choose to serve their country after they have already obtained a degree from a higher education institution. According to the National Women's Business Council, women veteran entrepreneurs grew from 4% of all veteran-owned business to 15.2%, reflecting nearly 400,000 new businesses over just a five year period. However, continued growth for women-owned businesses in general is stagnated by a continual lack of inequities related to access to capital. Allowing the GI bill benefits to support starting a business, in addition to educational benefits, would provide much needed capital to veterans utilizing federal entrepreneurship counseling programs.*

The WVBC provides advocacy in Congress and federal agencies for policies that will empower women veteran businesses.