**Advocate for Your Business**

 Joy, and thank you so much for joining us today . >> Hello. Thank you as well. I want to thank you so much for this opportunity and think all of you for listening live today or may listen to this recorded link later on I am grateful for the opportunity and I want to lead by saying how proud I am that a number of NAWBO members reached out to me because they had benefited so much from the SCORE programming and programs in the past. We are really grateful to have this opportunity to strengthen and continue what we consider to be a very valuable partnership with so many people from your side as well. Hopefully you are seeing the screen. Presently, you are saying the NAWBO and the Accra him -- acronym we use it for National Association of Women Business Owners. I want to thank you all for allowing me to be with you today. I am happy to make this is an attractive as you would like. I know that I could talk forever about this and you will get that sense as we move through it . Advocacy is something I have our -- always been passionate about but I am happy that we built in some natural pauses and pull questions to gauge are interested make sure that I am addressing any questions or feedback you may have have but I am also happy to answer questions as we go and have that time at the end of the webinar as well but I am happy to be with you today to give you a brief synopsis of myself. My interest in public policy and public service really began when I was a child, and it bubbled to the top when I was in high school and I took my first political science class. From as long as anybody in my family can remember, I wanted to be a lawyer. Not just any lawyer, but I had this aspiration as a young child of being a constitutional lawyer with this goal or mission and hope in mind that I would one day argued a case in front of the Supreme Court about something super relevant. I think in some way advocacy has been in my blood and people in my world would call issue advocacy has been part of my life. I went to college

 prelaw and I took the tests and fully intended to go to law school. And then I worked on a political campaign in college. I just never made it. One campaign led to another and another, and the opportunities, just fortunate list -- fortunately

 were in front of me and I moved to Washington DC in my senior year of college and was fortunate to be able to finish up my studies while I worked on Capitol Hill. This was amazing to me. So it has been a wonderful experience for me. To be able to find different ways to pursue my passion for advocacy and share it with others, whether it is young people are now women as I move into my role here. I have

 been with NAWBO for the last seven years in my role. My portfolio includes obviously all of our advocacy efforts being based in Washington DC but I also work with our chapters on their individual advocacy plan that may be better suited for state or local pursuits and that is something we will go into later with the different branches of government and what each of them have purview over that may be impacting your business and to give you a brief synopsis of NAWBO -- NAWBO National and I will advance the slides here and hopefully you can see this picture of our original members. It was founded as the first person

 -- advocacy organization for all women business owners and this was 42 years ago in Washington just to give any of you women who may be listening a quick historical check on this, 42 years ago there were no advocacy groups or membership groups for women to join us business owners. They could not join a local chamber or Rotary and memberships were denied except if you were the spouse of a business owner and so they really had no where to go just to have a community to share ideas and the empathetic to each other and support each other, not to mention obviously this other services or products to each other. And so 42 years ago here in Washington DC, NAWBO was founded by a group of women who wanted to have somewhere to go and an outlet for their issues or therefore -- for their ideas. It was not only built for all businesswomen owners but we are proud to be a part of that today . Our members did a lot of great things and hopefully you're seeing the next slide now. This is a quick membership snapshot and this is here to do nothing more than let you see quickly the diversity of our membership. I believe our membership in many ways mirrors the small business community at large. Obviously, many of you may be aware that the small business administration here in Washington, which is the legislative -- the administrative agency kind of tasked with overseeing small business owners and programming like SCORE and other things, classifies small business owners as somebody who has less than 500 employees and obviously all of our members fall into that category and am very proud to work closely with the business center program and score and through their

 opposite advocacy and there is a lot of fantastic public servants working there to support not just NAWBO members that small business owners in general so I wanted to give you that ? Snapshot so that you can see where you are comparatively. So the average member , all coming from of course internal survey data that we get for ourselves and it -- annually, have owned their business 49.7 years and 16% of them employ more than 11 employees in 35% of them have annual revenues over $1 million. So that is again a good snapshot. But it goes without saying that we also have solo entrepreneurs, women who are choosing for a lifestyle reason who have no interest in failing and we have a lot of people fall into that very famous missing middle we call it here in Washington DC, that people have that underneath the million dollar mark and are trying to scale to that level but sometimes [Indiscernible - audio skipping] struggle because they feel there is a lot of programming for small business owners both in the public and private sectors so both the government and perhaps nonprofit groups that provide programming and content and resources and they feel that people who get $1 million they can bring on their own internal staff our contract externally to advocate for them . I know a lot of members in the missing middle struggle to find program and content that serves them and as a service to them so if you feel that way and one of those people in the missing middle that you should know you are not alone in that space. My experience with NAWBO has led me to a couple conclusions that I hope will resonate with you today . I think it is true for a lot of business owners. The first is decisions that are made at all levels of government are impacting your business and really can be viewed as either obstacles are often

 -- opportunities to how you conduct your business whether you are just wanting to maintain or scale and grow or looking to sell am looking for that exit strategy and obviously for those who are starting out as well, there can be obstacles and opportunities. I think a lot of business owners are not aware of really where to start and how to get opportunities that may exist and especially for small business owners, but this is not isolated to them. You may not have the time or the resources. It can feel like a whole other job of having to assess the landscape and feeling like you need to learn a new vernacular and understanding how to interact

 with elected officials and it can feel like a whole other skill set but you may not feel like you have the time or resources to undertake it matter how much you may be passionate or engaged on the issues. The good news that I hope to share with you today that I hope resonates is I am not here to give you a civics quiz or make sure you understand and can memorize and recite back to me the latest polling data or specifics on legislation. If you want to do those things, obviously that is my passion and I would enjoy those conversations, either today or you can contact me privately, but I think a good news -- the good news is really tapping into strengths and knowledge bases that you already have as a business owner. I hope today to be able to convey an answer questions you may have that alleviate any concerns that you have about how difficult this may seem. Again, you really have skills and knowledge that are necessary

 in this environment of advocacy and public service. Of the next slide you will see, hopefully, says access to capital and I hope the slides are advancing as I go through them. And you can let us know if they are not. I apologize. But what I have also noticed in my conversations traveling with small business owners is there are a lot of things that are true in all the communities like obstacles and ops -- opportunities as you will hear me say. One of those is absolutely access to capital. I feel like every conversation I have with a small business owner in some way comes back to access to capital. I hope those of you who are listening, your heads are nodding and you are agreeing, there is not enough capital and again this is a very key advocacy issue to talk about. There is a lot of talk right now in Washington DC about tax reform. That is important because obviously that is potentially a way to get more capital back into your business. We know a lot of small business owners in their early stages, there capital can get tied up when they are really slow to get started. They might not be able to afford external tax help or they do commit the resources there. It's easy in common to make mistakes in your initial tax reporting as you are learning and understanding how to run your business. So, I think the access to capital part is key in that any money that you are spending in the tax base, or not getting in terms of taking deductions or getting a refund is money that you are not reinvesting back into your business and what can they really critical time for you and your business. And there is also of course and access to capital and a lot of things I see anecdotally or in survey data is a small business owners can be somewhat risk adverse especially women comparatively to men often times and so you undervalue, you don't ask for what you need or if you get the initial no from a traditional or nontraditional lender, you don't go back and ask again and business owners are very prone to wanting to move forward and wanting to move forward on their idea and tapping into their personal retirement funds and taking out a second mortgage on their home in utilizing personal savings or a credit card and what we discovered through our partnership about this anecdotally is that when you don't start off your business with a lender, a good relationship with your lender, it is harder to start that relationship later on so some of this that we see with access to capital, when they are in that missing middle that I spoke of, oftentimes, unfortunately, it stems back to reliance on personal financing to start the business and therefore they don't have a relationship with a lender who is fully invested literally and figuratively in the growth of their business and the concept. So again access to capital comes in a lot of ways in both the public, government, and the private sectors, which are obviously private lenders etc. So this is a very common issue that we have with a lot of small business owners. So speaking of access to capital, I will advance the slide and hopefully you can see that the poll is live. We would love to get a gauge here and if you can let us know an answer this question, which, if any, of the following avenues of financing has your business utilized? We would love to see where you are getting your financing from. So I will [Pause] you answer. >> This is going very well. I can see the official Paul and the chat participants coming through so I am glad I am keeping an eye and both worlds. I appreciate all of you responding and we will keep it open for a little bit longer just to be respect will and once I start to see the responses go off we will close this often I will share the results and move forward. But I'm seeing a lot of you saying that you on so I completely again hope that you feel a sense of community about that and you're not alone in that sense. So I am happy to discuss that a little bit more and we will leave it for a little bit longer. I see somebody used a grant. That is fantastic. I would say about grants very quickly while we're waiting, grants are tedious process as I am sure you can attest that they are all a little bit of a consistent funding stream. It's kind of like and I hate to make an uneven analogy that government contracting there is understandably a lot of paperwork and proof that goes into getting a grant or being granted a government contract but once you get them there is usually a nice sense of consistency and constancy in the grant world. I am glad to see someone utilizing that. That is wonderful. I see a lot of people asking about I am sorry, can they see the chat had a question answers for each other or do I need to read them?

You can read those. Yes. We are getting a lot of questions about the grant my much am happy to take a moment and talk about because that is a unique answer that I have not included so thank you for raising that. So Jackie Griffin, thank you so much for sharing your story. She shares we are nonprofit . What are the options and sometimes we don't have the same loan options.

Absolutely. Actually been a nonprofit makes you a much better option for the grant world and I don't want to get to super specific if people don't want to all hear this but a lot of grants come from the nonprofit world as well. So there are designations of the IRS in terms of what kind of money organizations get out and usually grants come under what we call the C3 side which is tax exempt structure. Usually people who are giving out grants are actually a C3 and give money and can only give money oftentimes to a C3 so there are lots of groups out there and a AARP comes to mind and they do grant giving for folks in traditional businesses and for nonprofits but you should not overlook the educational community if you have a university in your area

 or just kind of a university has an expertise and what your business is an. There is also opportunities to collaborate there as well. There are foundations, for any of you who have heard of those that have given out a lot of grants so there are lots of resources like that available so that is an overlooked one. I am really grateful for everybody bringing that up. I have seen a lot of your responses and I appreciate them. I will go ahead, and skip to the results here so you can see that so we can make sure the slides are working for you as well and that you are able to follow along. As you can see, hopefully, answers to the question, which if any of the following financing avenues have you used in most of you said a line of credit, which is, again, very common and whether that is a business credit card or personal credit card, that is very common and next in line is bank loans and financing which is just for help and that is what I am calling a traditional funding mechanism and lending and to go to a bank in your community and 1% of you have used the 504 program. Four-point 1% of you have used the FCA seven a program and that is wonderful to hear and then 2% the community and then the microloans. This is pretty common is that gives you any sense of where you are in the business community. I think that is helpful to know. I do want to mention quickly that one of our partners for those of you who do have inquiries about the program, just to clarify, the small business administration is not an actual lender. The actual guarantee loans and the loans come through different lenders in your community and there is also wonderful partner we work with called national Association and development companies and the acronym is NADCO and they actually help with matchmaking and packaging of a lot of the programs. So if you have not done any prior research you may want to look there as well because again they can be very helpful in the space and we actually did our last membership survey with them and they are helpful in terms of helping you understand the loan programs because they are designated for different things and some are for leases and purchases and others are more traditional lending for capital India business. So it can be a great resource for you. This is for you to understand the loan program as well as them

 themselves. And don't beat it toward from reaching out to local offices

 or women's business Center program and they also have the small business development centers and there are a lot of acronyms in one thing you will learn is everything in DC has an acronym and I am trying to avoid using those too much because I don't want to assume that you know things that maybe you don't. But

 I would recommend that you pursue those ideas with them and with the FCA directly because I think there are a lot of programs out there. These are not loan program is only for women and businesses, these are ones available to all business owners and I will stop doing that but please keep the questions coming and I am happy to continue to take them as I said as we go forward. That is no problem at all. I want to keep going a little bit and happy to take questions as they make sense. Again, as I mentioned, what started this conversation and you all have proven topic is so much is that a lot of this is questions about financing and whether it is the tax reform package being debated now and how that might help you get more money back into your business to reinvest as capital or the traditional funding mechanisms that we just talked about. Another thing that we talked about a lot with small business owners that they need is access to community and I don't want to talk about this at length and I don't want to pretend that they are even but I do want to touch on this for all of you, this is so you can again hopefully understand what we're talking about here, which is business ownership and entrepreneurship etc., can be a little bit lonely at times and obviously if you are a sole open door and you're out there by yourself doing everything every day, you can start to feel like you are in a silo quite frankly from the world especially those of you who have moved on and scale them are fortunate enough to have employees and thankfully obviously contributing to growing the economy and growing employment, even if you have employees cost have concerns about your business, you are not going to take us to your employees and you won't ask them to have any emotional uncertainty or business questions you have . So we do find, as I go around the country and talk to small business owners that there is a lack of access to community, and I would encourage you, there are a myriad of organizations out there where you can make that connection if you have not already and I would encourage you to do so and allow them -- find other business owners who are going through the things that you are going through. So can you have somebody to walk through the process with you

 and have somebody I think and it's nice to have somebody who is your peer who is going through things with you as well as perhaps somebody has already been through it who can pull you along and reassure you that bumps in the business world are completely normal. So just wanted to make sure that we talked about access to community as well. The next thing that will talk about briefly is access to confidence. You can hopefully see the slide has [Indiscernible] and we talked a lot of organizations talked about this

 competence issue and I mentioned before that sometimes this -- business owners can be risk adverse and lack the confidence they need that values themselves and their business in the face it should be so you can see a couple of the ideas here kind of hovering around that lightbulb mentoring and coaching our training advice and motivation etc. and again, I really encourage you to think about advocacy as a way to access your confidence. We host anecdotally will see in the next slide, and I will show it to you, and we will skip it. There are two. We host and advocacy day here in DC every June, and I tell you about it not to advocate for it, but just to tell you again to share what I hope was a resonating story which is easy of his business owners and generally the way this works is this is what I do

 every day. This is on Capitol Hill and with people from the administration in with partners talking about issues and issue advocacy. For these women business owners, it may be the only time each year that they do this. For the process of the day generally goes like this. We start the day off with the first meeting and perhaps sitting around a large table, a conference room table and everybody is leaning back and nobody wants to engage in nobody wants to be called on and there are a lot of call that parking

 back to the classroom and I am kind of the only one leaning forward and asking questions and engaging and what I am happy to say and again I tell you the stories as a means of encouragement for you to get engaged in the process yourselves is by the end of the day, the transition is happening and it's the opposite. By the end of the day I am able to lean back in my chair and the business owners are leaning forward because it really literally just within one experience of the day, they come to realize how valuable their opinion and expertise is here in DC and that is true be on Washington DC as well. So I hope you will look at this gorgeous picture last year and this was last June. I am happy to tell you the picture is gorgeous. This is June 2017 and at that point capital those of you who are DC locals,

 this is the hottest and most humid day of the summer so far. Those highs were later surpassed but even though it looked beautiful this is 8:00 in the morning and we were already really hot and sweaty. So it was a really beautiful than I appreciate all of them coming here and again you letting me show you these pictures and this is a good segue and I think for where we are going and I do one apposite again and he'd to you to see if we have any questions that you think are pertinent now. I think it's a good time for me to pause and check in with you and check in with everybody to see how we are doing.

We have had a few questions come in that we can address here. A question came in from [Indiscernible] asking if you can elaborate a little bit more about the 504 and seven a loans.

 And also give a little insight as to applying for grants successfully. >>

 Let's do them backwards. Applying for grants successfully, I will assume and this is the assumption that you have never applied for a grant before, applying for a grant, can be a pretty tedious process it would not hurt you to hire a grant writer. If you have those means at your business and I understand that everybody does, but there is a certain skill set and expertise and grant writers and that they understand the process. They understand the language and they understand what the grant person is looking for in their grantee. If you can bring on somebody to do it for you professionally our consult with you that is a great idea. Absent that please also don't ever hesitate to think about in terms. There are a lot of really wonderful young people out there in colleges and universities are looking to get some experience in the nonprofit world and this is a great way to engage them there. this allows them to do the research for you. I would say the key to successful grant applications is really doing your diligence and research. Again, be prepared that this is a paperwork heavy tedious process and often times you need to have proof of concept. It's not about having a vision but really having an executable plan to show that again not only do you have the vision but that you have thought through how you would utilize the grant money that you very diligently and strategically thought through and how you'll use the grant money and that you have a budget and a plan and a calendar outline for how you would use the money and when so you can really show them that you have put a lot of thought and strategy in the that. I think the key there is a few things. Doing your homework and making sure you are applying to the right grant and please don't waste your time applying for everything. Make sure there is really a clear connection between your business or nonprofit and the person giving to you. People are usually very good about giving specifics about at least the issues that they are interested in. So be careful and don't waste your time there and just be very prepared to be as specific as you can and obviously if you are of a business that exists that again that allows you to show proof of concept and allows you to show that you have already the mechanism in place to be a good steward of your money and those are usually good ways to move forward with the grandson again if you can bring on external help, whether you are paying for it or getting a wonderful young person that can in turn with you, I think that is a wonderful way to pursue the grant opportunity. So that was the first part . The second part was the 504 loan program. Is that right? >> Yes. If you can elaborate further on that.

The 504 and this is where we start getting into acronyms in numbers, the 504 loan, kind of examples I think they go up to probably upwards and to $1 million and eligibility is usually like a building purchase or a land lease or purchase our renovations or furniture and equipment. So the 504 program is kind of for acquisitions if that makes sense to you for actual things that you are going to be of acquiring -- acquiring. A lot of small business owners use it to lease equipment or purchase equipment or lease office space or purchase land build offices on. So that is really the 504 program. And then it's really a lot for commercial purposes is that make sense. There was also a question about seven a. So the seven a program is more of a traditional loan program . So it depends on the project again. There are a lot of loans that go to disaster relief. So there was a lot of for example we actually had a lot of increased from SVA and vice versa during the hurricanes in Florida about the seven a program during that period when people were trying to obviously recover and there was a lot of funding available for business owners then but, like I said, the seven a program is more of a traditional lending program, more of -- you have to prove that you are using it for but there is a little bit more flexibility there perhaps if that's the right word and then the 504, at least think of more for kind of commercial real estate and heavy machinery purchases etc. If you are just looking to purchase a business, perhaps we have not cover that either, but if you are purchasing another person's business, which does happen from time to time if you are doing acquisition or trying to get some working capital for your business, then I would say seven a is more what you want to pursue. I hope that helps. I don't want to go too deep into the weeds covered happy to take as many of these questions as I can. I hope that helps you.

If you would like we can go ahead and proceed and we have questions coming in and we can certainly hang on to those for the Q&A portion of the next segment.

No problem. I am happy to heed to you. Thank you for all your help. So I advance the slide and hopefully we are all in sync again and thank you for your questions. So the next slide that you are saying is what is advocacy. This is a placeholder slide but I hope you're able to see closely enough to see the definition that is highlighted and that is really what I put this slide in here because I love this. It says the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something such as a cause or a policy or interest and showing active support or an idea and that really to me is what advocacy is all about. So that is there for that purpose and that is obviously why we are here today to talk about how to better be an advocate for your business. That is the definition of advocacy that I love and as you will see, now we are on to our next poll Bustin so feel free to jump onto that. This is in either the chat feature or the traditional mechanism as you have time and the question is what issue most impact your business and I think this will be a nice place have a conversation as we see the results come in and then it will also help me help you from this conversation for the rest of our time together. So go ahead and take the poll at your convenience. >> I saw some of you have found a webpage and I am so glad to say that I can't say enough about this and what a great resource it is and I hope to remind them the matter what program you are working with they are at the end traditionally wonderful public servants who are really there to support small business owners and in both directions they want to hear from you and obviously want to share with you the resources they have available for small business owners.

I am watching the results come in. I am seeing as expected a lot of you are saying taxes and we will leave it open for just another few seconds. I definitely want to get to all of your questions and that is the best use of your time and I see others of you are putting things in there so Thank you. I can still see answers coming in . Who will do it a few more seconds for anybody who likes live play-by-play. We will let it keep going.

 I feel like we are starting to slow down. I will go ahead and call it and share with you the results. Hopefully you are saying that. Again, not a big surprise. Hopefully you can all see the slide. Taxes our first followed by regulations, which again is not a surprise which is a whole different sense of advocacy by the way and then we have government contracting which is an interesting thing to talk about and I am happy to take questions and healthcare and zoning. So thank you all for taking the time to answer those, and I am just looking to make sure we don't have any other ones coming in. So taxes and regulations always topmost survey so I hope it makes you feel better that this is very common for small business owners. Again, it's two different kinds of paths of pursuit for advocacy. I've mentioned these and hopefully have seen these in the news or in the newspaper a social media tax reform is actually in conference committee in Congress now so it looks like we are close to having tax reform changes made and beyond that , regulations are always a big deal for business owners. The regulatory process is a little different. That usually takes place through the agency and the process is not the same cause a we will talk about that as we move forward cut is a different kind of advocacy and everything, as assessable using the right path of pursuit. Let's move along here because I want to make sure we have plenty of time. Questions. Why advocate ? Any of you who are old enough to remember the television show the West Wing, which was on several years ago, I borrow and always give homage back to the show for this quote, decisions are made by those who show up. And I believe very passionately in that and I would say as we continue this conversation, decisions are being made at all levels of government about your ability to do business and things to impact your business. It seems like a silly cliché but decisions are made by those who show up. All politics is local. I want to briefly go through and go back. For those of you said zoning issues are important to you, I was glad to see that because other questions and concerns that go to the first picture there. City Hall -- zoning is local government issues of those of you who are having issues with zoning regulations in your community or in your city, those are usually municipal or local government

 and right across from that you see a picture of the New Hampshire state capital, so that is the state politics place. This is where actually, over the last decade or so, a lot of activity has been happening in your state governments. As you may have seen how Washington DC has been a little bit sidetracked and had a little bit of difficulty getting things done for a myriad of reasons and as such we have seen a real uptick and advocacy at the state capital level and as that becomes a place where things are moving forward and getting done. Finally, you see at the bottom of the people -- picture of the White House it's there to indicate the federal government policies that take place here in Washington DC. By that we are talking about not just about Congress and the White House, which obviously has a huge role in legislating, but also the federal agencies who dispersed government contracting dollars for those of you who are interested in that. Also for those of you who have regulatory issues with the agencies and can provide comments and positive information there. those are the three branches of government and what they cover. Let's go ahead and keep moving and do another quick poll question. If you can please answer and I hope I have all the things you need. Do any of you know your elected officials? We will pause and take a moment to do this.

You guys are very quick with the clicking. I appreciate the expediency. For those of you, for whatever reason can't or don't want to fill in the poll function we can see your questions as well and the QA check portion and I do see a few of you doing that. We are starting to slow down and I will go ahead and

 flip over to the results for all of you and I am happy to see that so many of you do know your elected officials because as you will see that is an important step in a great place to start. Again, holding on what I spoke about earlier, this process of being an advocate for your business, I hope will be easier and less painful than you perhaps may anticipate. 69.8% of you do know some of your elected officials are any of them and 24% said no and then just for .3% of you said not sure. So for those of you who are in the not sure part, I want to say this is a great place to start and a great place to assess and you may want to talk with other business owners, if you have employees or family members because you never know where those connections may exist. The next slide is number two but we will go ahead and talk about that , really understanding to your elected officials are and contacts you may have. Obviously the odds are more likely that you will know an elected official at a local or state level because they are probably living in your community and your kids may go to school together or participate in some afterschool program together. You may run into them at the supermarket and all of that. So just being aware of who is running for office and who is running your city and state and a lot of states obviously you have a governor and the legislature is sometimes called delegates are representatives and usually have a state Senate as well but just being aware of those names and understanding who the players are is a very important. Of course, knowing who your member of Congress is and who the two U.S. Senate is our from your state as well as very important. Understanding that it may seem very basic. It's a great place to start. This is because, segueing back, going up the slide, networking and establishing relationships, I am sure it's something you have become very good at if you are not already as you have built and grown your business. Getting out there and networking and letting your people know who you are and what you do and what products or services you may offer is important and the same thing here is true. As you learn who your officials are, the next thing is to understand any relevant committee assignments. All governments, whether local or state or federal, here in Washington DC, are broken up . They are assigned to committees, as I said, and agencies. What you want to look for now is to your city Council or to your mayor's office. Who is in charge perhaps of economic development in your area and who is handling disparity studies, which will tell you where government contracts are going from the municipal and state level. And your state capital, again, there are some different things but again you are looking for people who are on an economic development can -- committee and some capitals will have a taxes committee. What you are looking for those sorts of things. Usually budget is reserved for actually the state budget and the name gives it away. So there can be some things relevant to business owners and their in terms of the funding of state programs to support business owners but generally you are looking more for the taxes and financial regulations and those are the things on the state level that will impact your ability to do business and how much in taxes you are pain and why and if there are these you have to pay to the state or services or registration fees and those of the places that you want to look in that space. Here in Washington DC, to give you a quick overview, a lot of the relevant committees that I'll is look to, there is a house in small business Senate committee and the name gives it away and these are the people that are tasked with small business issues of everything, to elegy and privacy and taxes and government contracting and a whole gauntlet of small business issues fall under their jurisdiction and they work closely with the small business administration and work on their budget together so they are involved in the funding mechanisms for those small business loan programs etc. So just be aware of small business committees and I also work closely on tax reform in the house and that was the House Ways and Means Committee on the Senate side. So again, there is some variance but I think what you're looking for is individuals who have jurisdiction over financial issues. If your business is again about technology or privacy, you may want to look for consumer services and those sort of things because there is a lot always about cyber security and that kind of thing happening. If you're in the healthcare industry a lot of happen as has happened federally about healthcare

 so you need to be aware of that as well. So understanding the relevant committee assignments that are most likely to impact you is a great place to start because these are likely the elected officials that you want to develop a relationship with first and just to be clear all legislation, generally start at the committee level. So what you are looking for is to get to know members of the committee that has jurisdiction over issues relevant to you because they are the people who will share expertise and understand what you are talking about and be able to throw you in of what is in the works and they are the ones that if you need a conduit to rules and regulations are going to be the right people to do that. I know we are running low on time but I warn you all at the beginning that I can talk about this all day. Let me continue through and I will take some questions if we don't get to some of them, I will make myself available afterwards as well. That I want to touch on these last few things. You are the expert in running your business and I know maybe that seems pedestrian. But I can't express that enough. You have expertise about your employees and your customers and your contractors, whoever it is, that are very valuable to your elected officials. They need to know and want to know how what they are doing is impacting you, whether it is rezoning or a disparity study or how they are choosing to disperse government contracts or there is tax reform and how that impacts small business owners, many of whom you are pain personal income tax rates and not corporate so having actual comprehensive tax reform

 that impacts both a personal and corporate tax rate is important and I can't overstate how important your expertise is

 and how valuable it is for you to reach out and that is the last step to reach out. It's better, like in all things, and I showed -- am sure you know this in your business it's better to reach out when you don't need something. Start those relationships A your elected officials know that you are there in the community. Again, employing people and offering services and contributing and don't be afraid to be an advocate for yourself and your business. Because any good elected official is going to want to hear from you, and again, see how you are doing and meet your employees and customers and that is true again from the municipal local level all the way up through your member of Congress you should feel free and empowered to reach out and again find the right staff member, especially as you extend the federal level and don't be disappointed if you don't get to interact with a member of Congress or Senate directly at the beginning and please know as a former Capitol Hill staffer, those are young people but they have a lot of power. They are the conduit two their boss and they can certainly make sure that any suggestions you have get passed along. You can really develop a powerful relationship there through the staff level as well. So don't be afraid to reach out and begin those relationship make sure they know about your business and what you're doing and then just ask what their plans are and this is actually a great time of year to do that, in December, this is postelection time, so there is no political pain and you don't have to worry about taking sides in an election or people being busy with that and right now it's a good time because almost everyone again from the municipal to the state or federal level are going to begin again in January. And so December is a great time to reach out and make sure that you are on your elected officials radar so when they come back to work in January they are thinking about you and have an open line of communication between you and your business. I hope that is helpful. Again I want to be respectful that everybody's time and I know I have talked a lot. So if it's okay with you I will advance where we will take questions and comments and at your convenience you can go ahead and throw some at me.

Thank you so much. We will now start the QA portion of our call and I will be meeting questions that have come in over the course of the presentation. Please continue submitting your questions and in the time remaining we will address as many as we can. If we don't have time to get to your question today, I encourage you to connect with a score mentor after today's webinar and you can find score mentors online or in local chapters near you that can help you apply these strategies that she has been talking about today. The slide deck will be sent out after the webinar as well which contains her contact information and as he said as if any questions you can reach out there as well. So with that, let's go ahead and jump in to these questions our first question comes from us -- to us from Karen. Are there any specific programs for older women that are interested in starting their own company, specifically a service-based company in her case.

 That is a great question. There actually are some programs and I would say it's interesting because there is a lot more experience and put a positive spin on it that are entering the entrepreneur community for a lot of reasons. This is because they are not time and they want to continue their career and perhaps somehow financial reasons drive people as well but we entered into a partnership with AARP so if that applies to any have a membership there are want to think about that just know it's a great resource for that as well. But there definitely is a lot of attention right now and all the things that we see show that more and more experienced women are entering into the entrepreneurial space and I am not aware of any specific grants or programs that are geared toward that that I will give you a few off the top of my head that you may want to look into that may have that. So there's the Eileen Fisher women owned business grant program and I think that is a great place to start and they give out small business grants and I apologize I don't know again for sure if that is for more experienced women are not but I certainly don't think they would discourage you from doing that. So [Indiscernible] program that you want us check out and I would also say, there in mind everyone, but also more experienced women, the innovator program which we just went through which just concluded here in Washington DC in October, so it's innovate program and it's just for women. So I think there is a boon to you there. this is a program that runs during the year, so there ready to start over again for a grant with this foundation and there are local competitions across the country and it's kind of like shark tank for those of you have seen that TV show. It's kind of like the small business administration and they have a shark tank program and they meet in different places across the country to kind of assess people and filter them through the process and if you when you assigned and I think it's the top 10 and appear in Washington DC and are judged by a other business women groups and I think there are hundred thousand

 prize to the whenever the business so again hopefully that is a nice mix of public and private sector opportunities for you. That you can pursue. Our next question comes to us from [Indiscernible]. Which would you say is the least expensive funding available ? I guess that depends in part on what you're thinking about giving up, obviously getting a grant , it only cost you your time and potentially funds that you put into again hiring a professional. But I think there are a lot of benefits to the grand pursuits. Beyond that, I would say, there is probably your best bet is to go through traditional lender to go through getting a business loan and taking advantage of pretty low interest rates right now for business loans. So I would say grants and traditional lending in my opinion.

Okay. Kimberly asks if you know if they do any partner matching or bid matching ?

Not that I am aware of. It's a tricky entity and thank you for this question it's a good and important one to make. As I mentioned, they don't actually give loans they actually guarantee them. So it's important to know that because they are government agency, they don't really give away money. Even in the innovate her challenge that I mentioned cut that money is courtesy of that foundation and there is not really the ability of the federal government to give money to private sector and businesses because obviously that would be a conflict of interest and some people would be upset about the government investing in picking that. So I don't believe they do that. No.

This one comes from [Indiscernible] the government says her professional field is different from her hobby which she wants to develop a business, is there a loan program for this?

I don't know if there is a loan program. So pursuing your hobby, first of all, I think it's a great idea and I think it's important to be passionate about what you are doing and I think that enthusiasm comes through in always when you are getting funding and when you are getting customers. I don't know of any programs that are especially set aside for that. I would say, again, there is a lot of great grants out there and I would send you to that program because I think that competition and I saw some people in the comment section who participated it's very worthwhile and that is a great place if you do just do have a vision. It runs the gauntlet there. we saw some women come to that program who had an actual sample and were in business and producing am looking for that and we had people come to that program who were selected who are really in that visionary stage looking for start of money. So I think the innovate program is a great place to go if you can get into it at the venture capital space, that is a good place to go when you have a vision and [Indiscernible - audio skipping]. >> She would like to know if grants are only available for nonprofit organizations?

That is a great question. No. Grants are definitely available to nonprofits and for-profits. You just have to again do your diligence and make sure. As I said earlier, a lot of the designation you will see with the acronyms comes through in the IRS application. So for example cut is to give you an example, this functions as a 501 C 3 which is nonprofit side and 501(c) A 6 which is a business organization designation so make sure you understand what your designation as an pursue grants that are able to give money to you and there are some legal things but you absolutely can receive grant money when you are not a nonprofit. Great question. Sorry if that was confusing.

The next question comes from Sherry. She has participants which travel with her internationally and she created a waiver of nonresponsibility. She would like to learn more about reliability and how to ensure that she is free of any issues around this.

There is actually another great public sector, public sector space for this , and if you have not already done this, I would suggest that you reach out to the international trade administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of commerce. The international trade administration is an amazing resource for these kind of questions and for any of you, I will give you the segue will think about

 exporting products or services or people or personnel into a foreign country or vice versa, coming into this country, the international trade administration has a married of resources, both here and in the US and in other countries who can help answer questions. I think they would be able to help you. If not, circle back with me and I will find you somebody else.

We have time for one more question. This comes to us

 from Sheila and she would like to know if you could repeat that information on the annual event regarding the capital.

The NAWBO event ? The advocacy day we do? I wanted to make sure.

 The one where you are showing the picture of all the people.

Yes. That is the NAWBO annual advocacy day we do here in DC and that was June 2017. Every June we bring NAWBO members and partners here to the capital to advocate for small business issues and that was this year so we call it our annual advocacy day here in Washington. It will be cut in case anyone is interested it will be June 19-28 team.

Last question comes -- would it be a good idea to be a part of NAWBO to join hands for advocacy?

I have a lot -- I am obviously biased. But I do think it is. I think honestly, two quick things . NAWBO is the first advocacy organization for women business owners so we are well-known here in Washington DC and beyond . What I like about it is we have a team which includes myself but we have a very strong chapter model and metropolitan areas across the country that gives us a reaching the state capitals and municipal governments and I would say that my final plug for how we do advocacy and I believe partly why we were kindly invited why we do this today is that we pursue advocacy on a purely bipartisan fashion and I have equal strong relationships with Democrat and Republican members of Congress and I have very close relationships last year with both the Clinton campaign and the trump campaign. It is imperative to us that we have equally strong relationships with both political parties on behalf of our members because we have members of both political parties and we are proud to represent them both and we want nobody to feel like their point of view is not respected for left out. It is important as power changes in Washington to have both of those relationships. There are a lot of groups who understandably take sides between the parties and

 there are a lot of benefits to doing that. They get a lot of benefits for that but we don't do that. We are proud to be bipartisan. There is a lot of great strengths in being well known in Washington but also well-respected for being fair to both political parties. >> Okay. Those are all the questions we have time for today we had a lot of great questions and we did get

 through many of those but we are out of time. So if we did not get a chance to address your question in today's QA segment, we encourage you to connect with a score mentor and you can indicate that on the survey that will be prompted once we log off the webinar session today. Or you can go to [Indiscernible - audio skipping]. We will send out a slide deck and a recording of today's presentation if you have questions regarding NAWBO or questions for Joy and her information is in their as well. On behalf of SCORE I want to thank you so very much for taking the time out of your day today to join the session and I would like to give a very big thank you to Joy Lutes for presenting today. Thank you so very much, Joy.

Thank you all for having me. It was a great pleasure and thank you all for your good questions. I hope I answered them and I hope this was helpful. I hope I encouraged you to get into the advocacy space for your business. I don't think you'll be sorry. I think it will be more engaging and rewarding than you can imagine. So please get out there and participate.

We hope you will join us. We have live webinars next week and we wish you all a great day and we look forward to seeing you next time. Take care. >> [Event concluded]