

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 12, 2022

The Honorable Isabel Guzman
Administrator
United States Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Administrator Guzman,

We write to inquire about constituent service procedures at the Small Business Administration (SBA) and inform you of issues our offices have had when requesting help for Arkansans.

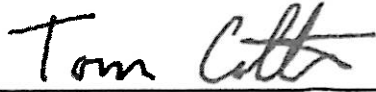
As you know, Congress approved the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and an expansion of the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL) under the CARES Act in March 2020. In the months immediately following passage of the CARES Act, it was understandable that the SBA's modest workforce would face issues reviewing and processing millions of applications to these programs. We appreciate the SBA's efforts to distribute EIDL and PPP loans to Arkansans struggling during the pandemic. However, nearly two years after these programs were signed into law, Americans are still dealing with unacceptable delays and limited communications from SBA. Here are a few examples from Arkansas:

- An EIDL grant was sent to the wrong bank account after approval. The money was returned over a month ago, yet the application portal still says "error."
- A constituent has been trying to update his business address. He asked SBA to update it several times, but SBA officials have not yet updated it on the SBA portal. He was then told to update his address via email. He attempted to do so, but the problem remains unaddressed.
- Another constituent sent in his 4506-T form more than 20 times, but SBA has not yet accepted the document. His document was denied a single time because it was submitted with a cover page.
- One constituent's inquiry has been open since April 2021. The SBA continues to send the individual emails with instructions to move forward in the process, except each time the included link is expired.

We understand there are cases with legitimate technical issues that are out of the hands of any individual SBA employee processing these applications. However, our offices have noticed a pattern of Arkansans experiencing unreasonable difficulty accessing SBA programs that were supposed to be a lifeline for businesses during the pandemic

We are also concerned that the SBA's remote work policies may be a factor in the organization's reduction of timely constituent services. We understand the need to provide employees with flexibility to carry out their jobs safely, but these policies must be reassessed when they negatively impact Americans' access to federal programs.

We ask that you consider ways to improve SBA's delivery of constituent services and work with Congress to make reforms, as needed. Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator