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Wolf Administration Visits Small Businesses Across Pennsylvania, Highlights Investments Made in Celebration of Small Business Week

Harrisburg, PA – Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Acting Secretary Neil Weaver and other DCED executives traveled across the commonwealth this week to celebrate [Small Business Week](#) by highlighting the investments made by the Wolf Administration in small businesses.

“This week I had the pleasure of touring many small businesses across the commonwealth,” said Acting Sec. Weaver. “These small businesses are owned by our families, friends, and neighbors, and the effect they have on Pennsylvania’s economy is significant. For every \$100 spent at a small business, \$48 goes back into the local economy. More than 1 million small businesses call the commonwealth home, employing nearly 2.5 million individuals. The Wolf Administration has made supporting these businesses a priority, and I am proud to see so many of them succeed.”

In Berks County in the City of Reading, Acting Sec. Weaver was joined by Mayor Eddie Moran, US Representative Jim Gerlach, state Representative Manuel Guzman, and Councilwoman Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz on a walking tour in downtown Reading. As they visited New Heightz Grocery Store, The Great American Creamery, La Casa Del Chimi Restaurant, Juice Bar, and the American Barber and Beauty Academy, Acting Sec. Weaver celebrated the impact these businesses have on the city.

“Reading represents the amazing diversity of Pennsylvania’s small business community,” said Acting Sec. Weaver. “Owners of all backgrounds are running businesses that span many different sectors and industries. It also represents a place where small businesses are building and shaping the community in which they’re located. Each minority-owned business we visited reinforced the message that no matter your background, where you live, or how you look, if you’re a small business owner with a can-do spirit, you belong in Pennsylvania.”

In Philadelphia Acting Sec. Weaver visited Love City Brewing to highlight the resources available to small business owners to help them grow their businesses online. Over the past two years, consumers have accelerated their online shopping habits, making eCommerce a critical revenue stream for small businesses. Acting Sec. Weaver discussed the [PA Business One-Stop](#) and the [Small Business Development Centers](#) (SBDC) as two resources small business owners can use to help develop their eCommerce capabilities.

“For many small businesses, eCommerce doesn’t come naturally,” said Acting Sec. Weaver. “Owners may not have done it before, or they may not know if it’s right for their business. They

may not know where to start. That's where DCED and the Small Business Development Centers come in. We know that when our entrepreneurs and small businesses succeed, Pennsylvania's economy and communities succeed as well."

In Bedford County, in the borough of Bedford, Deputy Secretary of Marketing, Tourism, and Film Carrie Fischer Lepore and Deputy Secretary of Technology and Innovation Steve D'Ettorre highlighted the importance of travel and tourism in support of small businesses. While visiting Pigeon Hill Studios, Juli's Wearable Art, Bedford Candies, and Next Door restaurant, Deputy Secretary Lepore and Deputy Secretary D'Ettorre listened as business owners discussed the role the Bedford community has had in their successes.

In Scranton, Acting Sec. Weaver was joined by Mayor Paige Cagnetti on a walking tour in downtown Scranton. While touring RD Salon & BlowDry Bar, The Giving Tree, Commonwealth Coffeehouse, Pink Pedal, and Adezzo, Sec. Weaver highlighted the programs the Wolf Administration has created to help women and minority-owned businesses, including [Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority \(PMBDA\)](#), the [Small Diverse Business Capital Access Program \(SDBCA\)](#), and the [Business Opportunities Fund \(BOF\)](#).

"Small businesses contribute to the culture and fabric of the communities in which they reside," said Acting Sec. Weaver. "They provide a sense of place and a local identity in addition to the economic benefit they bring. These are people who don't just care about their business succeeding – they care about their community succeeding."

In Erie, Executive Deputy Secretary Michael Hanna, Jr., was joined by Mayor Joseph Schember in a tour of some of Erie's newest small businesses. While touring Flagship City Food Hall, Primo Tailoring, Chipperes Seafood and Southern Fusion, and Purrista Cat Café, Executive Deputy Secretary Hanna learned how downtown Erie has grown and persevered over the last two years.

In Butler County, in the borough of Zelienople, Acting Sec. Weaver closed out Small Business Week on a walking tour of downtown Zelienople with Mayor Thomas Oliverio. The tour celebrated the diversity and impact of small businesses on Pennsylvania's economy and communities by visiting Kaufman tavern, Eva Bryn Shoetique, Elluinger's Meats & Delis, and The Little Green Bookstore.

"Small Business Week has been a tradition for Pennsylvania and the United States for decades, but it's also so much more than that," said Acting Sec. Weaver. "Small businesses are the backbone of our commonwealth. They strengthen our communities, support our local economies, and provide jobs to more than 2.5 million Pennsylvanians. When we shop small, we help the community."

The Wolf Administration's support for small businesses has been steadfast. At the beginning of the administration, Governor Tom Wolf launched the PA Business One Stop Shop which serves as a resource for small business through all phases of opening, permitting, and hiring and provides technical support and funding opportunities.

Additional support includes:

- Creating the [Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority](#), which provides low-interest loans to businesses owned and operated by ethnic minorities.

- Implementing the [Small Diverse Business Capital Access Program](#), which provides low-interest loans and lines of credit to small diverse businesses that commit to creating and retaining full-time jobs within the commonwealth.
- Providing [direct support to small businesses](#) in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by allocating \$225 million for Small Business Assistance through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

[Gov. Wolf has been advocating](#) for Pennsylvania's legislature to further support small businesses by spending \$225 million of the commonwealth's uncommitted American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars on small businesses. The money could support thousands of Pennsylvania businesses struggling with inflation and pandemic recovery, without a plan the federal dollars will need returned to the federal government by December 31, 2024.

For more information about Small Business Week, visit the DCED [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#), and be sure to talk about your favorite local small business on your social media accounts and tag them with **#PASmallBiz** or **#ShopLocal**.

Note: Photo and video of the tours in Reading and Zelienople will be available at [PACast.com](#).

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