

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1104

January 3, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

I write today to request that you renominate Dilawar Syed to be Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) without delay. Mr. Syed is highly-qualified for the position, and would be an important asset to the SBA at a critical time for businesses.

The Deputy Administrator of the SBA plays an important role within the agency, but unfortunately this position has remained vacant for more than four years. As Administrator Guzman commented before the Senate Small Business Committee on April 27, 2022, “[the] Deputy Administrator plays a role in operations... of course that position is important... Dilawar Syed is highly-qualified and would be an excellent choice if the Committee moves forward to vote.” With businesses still working to recover from the pandemic, it is important for the SBA to have a fully-staffed leadership team that can deliver for the American people – which would include a Deputy Administrator with the necessary background and experience to oversee the agency’s day-to-day operations.

Mr. Syed has the necessary background and experience to serve as Deputy Administrator. In many ways, he is the very picture of the American Dream – a businessowner, entrepreneur, and job creator who was born in Pakistan and educated in the United States. But beyond his compelling personal story, he also has firsthand experience dealing with the challenges small businesses faced during the pandemic, which makes him well-suited to join the SBA’s leadership team at this time. His qualifications have earned him the backing of numerous business groups and organizations. In addition, he would also be an important nominee for the Asian American and Pacific Islander community as one of the highest ranking AAPIs within the Biden-Harris Administration.

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Despite Mr. Syed's qualifications, Republican senators repeatedly blocked his nomination to be Deputy Administrator during the 117th Congress – denying a quorum for the Senate Small Business Committee to conduct its business on several different occasions, even as the SBA was working hard to help businesses recover from the pandemic. While Republicans changed their reasons for blocking Mr. Syed's nomination several times, those reasons have consistently been unrelated to the nominee's qualifications since he was first nominated on March 3, 2021. Given his qualifications, Mr. Syed deserves to be renominated for the position and fairly considered by the Senate.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that you waste no time in renominating Mr. Syed to be Deputy Administrator of the SBA. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Isabella C. Guzman, Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration;
The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin, Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship