

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Cuts ribbon on Wisconsin MBDA Business Center to support minority-owned businesses

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*MILWAUKEE* – Today, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development Donald R. Cravins, Jr. in Milwaukee for a ribbon cutting at Wisconsin’s new Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Business Center.

In September, the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) awarded the Wisconsin North Central Minority Supplier Development Council (NCMSDC) a 4-year federal grant totaling \$1.61 million through the MBDA’s Business Center Program to operate Wisconsin’s first Business Center to assist minority-owned business. MBDA Business Centers provide high quality, technical assistance to Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) – including counseling and mentoring, assisting with access to capital and contracts, and supporting job creation and retention.

“Starting a business is a challenge for every entrepreneur. But too often, our minority entrepreneurs face additional obstacles to accessing capital, contracts and markets,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “By investing in expanded access to the MBDA’s Business Center Program, we can build a stronger and more diverse small business economy in Wisconsin.”

“To give Wisconsin’s minority-owned businesses the access they need to succeed, we need to meet people where they are,” **said Under Secretary Cravins, Jr.** “The greatest obstacle facing minority-owned businesses is access: access to capital, access to contracts, and access to markets. Expanding MBDA’s national network of business centers is critical to breaking down those barriers. The North Central

Minority Supplier Development Council understands the unique challenges Wisconsin businesses and entrepreneurs of color face. We are ecstatic they will be operating the state's first MBDA business center, not only to strengthen Wisconsin businesses, but to further MBDA's evolution as a leader for America's 9.7 million minority-owned businesses. We are proud Wisconsin will now have an MBDA business center to call their own."

"There is untapped human and economic potential in Milwaukee, and I want our local businesses, including minority-owned businesses, to find opportunities. This Minority Business Development Center will certainly help," **said Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson**. "I appreciate the work of the Minority Business Development Agency and Senator Tammy Baldwin's efforts to make sure Wisconsin's businesses have the support they need to grow and add jobs here."

"The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is proud to support the Minority Business Development Center," **said Missy Hughes, secretary and CEO of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)**. "As WEDC continues to build an economy that works for everyone, we realize that diverse businesses can have big impacts in our communities. This center is another resource to help these small businesses thrive."

Senator Baldwin worked to include the bipartisan Minority Business Development Act of 2021 as an amendment to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, making the MBDA permanent and increasing its funding and reach. The goal of the MBDA's Business Center Program is to promote the growth and global competitiveness of America's MBEs. Wisconsin is currently served by offices in Detroit and Chicago.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).