



Bristow Promotes New Measures Taken to Help Illinois Small Businesses During Crisis

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ALTON, Ill. – To connect small business owners with economic relief, state Rep. Monica Bristow, D-Alton, is highlighting the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) new Business Interruption Grant (BIG) Program.

“Restaurants, bars, hairdressers, and fitness centers have been hit especially hard by the temporary closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, so this program is essential for getting these types of businesses back on track as we move towards reopening,” said Bristow. “While there is still a lot of work to do to restart the economy, this program will help the business owners that have been most affected by the pandemic.

Bristow is highlighting DCEO's new BIG Program, expanding critical relief for business sectors that have been hit hard by state closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications must be submitted by Tuesday, July 7 at 5 p.m. The BIG Program includes support for:

- Bars and Restaurants - \$20 million for bars and restaurants unable to offer outside, patio, and/or “al fresco” service, providing 1,000 grants of up to \$20,000;
- Barbershops and Salons - \$10 million for barbershops and salons, providing 1,000 grants of \$10,000 each; and
- Gyms and Fitness Centers - \$10 million for gyms and fitness centers that have lost significant revenue due to COVID-19, providing 500 grants of \$20,000 each.

More details and the online application for the BIG Program can also be found at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/C19DisadvantagedBusGrants.aspx>.

“As we continue to adapt to new guidelines and safety precautions, I will keep fighting to ensure small business owners and workers have the support they need to make ends meet,” said Bristow. “I would like to encourage everyone to keep shopping local and supporting the small business owners in their community.”