

Duckworth Joins Women's Business Development Center to Discuss Intersection of Gender and Race in Government and Business

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) participated in a fireside chat with the Women's Business Development Council as part of its Raising Up

The Vote initiative focusing on gender and racial equality. Duckworth, in conversation with Midway Broadcasting Corporation Chairwoman Melody Spann Cooper, discussed the importance of women of color in leadership roles in both government and business, as well as legislation she's worked on to support women and communities of color.

“From flying helicopters overseas to passing bills in the Senate, I've spent my entire life in male-dominated fields, but I've learned the good that arises from bringing different perspectives into the conversation,” said Duckworth. “It was an honor to join Women's Business Development Center to celebrate 100 years of the 19th Amendment and discuss the legislative priorities that impact the lives of women of color. It's so much more than just equal pay, paid family leave and child care – healthcare is a woman's issue, the economy is a woman's issue and national security is a woman's issue.”

“As citizens of the United States, we all have a responsibility to participate in the democratic process of voting and ensure our voices are represented in the public policy arena,” said Emilia DiMenco, President and CEO of the Women's Business Development Center. “Fair and equitable public policy is critical for securing and maintaining economic self-sufficiency for women, minorities, and other underserved communities. As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment, we still have more work to do to ensure voices of all women, especially women of color, and all diverse community members are heard and represented. We greatly appreciate Senator Duckworth's leadership and support for this important initiative.”

In the Senate, Duckworth has been a strong advocate of legislation to help women, working families and Black and Brown communities. Earlier this year she introduced the [*Newborn CARES Act*](#) to ensure new parents quickly receive the additional \$500 per child in *Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act* stimulus payments without having to wait until 2021. Senator Duckworth has also [introduced](#) legislation to make workplaces more family friendly, improve child care services and make it easier for low-income and middle-class families to obtain diapers for their children. Last month, Duckworth's *Friendly Airports for Mothers (FAM) Improvement Act* [passed the Senate](#), which expands upon the Senator's *FAM Act* that has already been [signed into law](#).

Last year, Duckworth also introduced the [*Microloan Program Enhancement Act of 2019*](#) to help small business owners secure the financing they need to grow their businesses and create good-paying jobs in their communities. The legislation would improve the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Microloan Program to help more small businesses – particularly women, Veterans, low-income and minority entrepreneurs – that may have been overlooked by traditional commercial lenders.