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To: David C. Childs A-76comments/OMB/EOP@EOP  
cc:  
Subject: Comments

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December 17, 2002

Mr. David C. Childs  
Office of Federal Procurement Policy  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Childs:

On behalf of Huitt-Zollars, Inc. I am writing in support of several revisions to OMB Circular A-76 and several related policy documents that govern how the Federal Government obtains goods and services. Our company and its employees applaud the underlying premise behind these revisions, which is that all activities currently performed by the Federal government are presumed to be commercial in nature unless they are justified as inherently governmental.

Alignment of OMB Circular A-76 with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) is a very sound decision. With the exception of dealing with the procurement of Architectural-Engineering services that will be discussed later in this document, it will facilitate the Administration's competitive sourcing policy and ensure "apples to apples" comparisons in any resulting competition between the private sector and government agencies that are commercial in nature.

Leading edge companies such as ours provide the ideas, innovations, studies, designs, and related services upon which projects are based. These significantly impact life-cycle costs and ability to satisfy customers. We applaud the decisions to end "back door" inter- and intra-service agreements (ISSAS) that preclude our being considered and to restrict Federal agencies from aggressively marketing their services to our clients – state, local, and tribal governments – often using the gambit of partial funding at taxpayer expense.

I call to your attention, however, a conflict between the revised Circular A-76 and the statutory requirements for the procurement of Architectural-Engineering services. Since the procurement of these unique services is done through "Qualifications Based Selection" (QBS) and not simply on the basis of cost, as prescribed under (40 USC Section 541 et seq.). An approach needs to be crafted to enable Federal agencies to compete in a manner consistent with the statute.

We strongly support the suggestions that are being made by our various industry organization to address this matter consistent with statutory requirements. Alternatively, since there is no justification for the Federal government to have this costly and redundant capability when such are readily available from a more efficient and innovative private sector. We respectfully urge that these be Directly Converted.

Our company and its employees applaud this courageous initiative to issue a revised OMB Circular A-76 and appreciate this opportunity to comment on them.

Huitt-Zollars, Inc. is a full service E/A design firm with discipline expertise in engineering, architecture, planning, landscape architecture, surveying, and construction management. Huitt-Zollars was founded in Dallas in 1975 and currently has 14 offices in major cities throughout the southwestern and western United States. The firm has over 400 professionals with diversified skills capable of handling highly complex multidiscipline assignments for private and public clients. Public work includes governmental projects at the local, state, and federal level.

Sincerely yours,

Robert L. Zollars, P.E.  
President  
Huitt-Zollars, Inc.

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