

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 27, 2008

The Honorable Steven Preston
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 Third Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Administrator Preston:

We are writing to you out of concern for the victims of the January 21st fire in Lawrence Massachusetts. As of now, six victims have completed their applications to the SBA for a loan, and all six have been rejected.

The victims of this fire have had their lives uprooted and they are struggling to get back on their feet. While we understand that the SBA must maintain criteria for applicants to verify that they will be able to repay their loans, we must also do all we can to ensure that the victims of this disaster are given the assistance they need to rebuild their lives.

We urge you to work closely with the victims of this fire to ensure their applications are complete and communicate with them clearly what information they can provide and how best to structure their applications to secure a loan. We also ask that you share all available information with our offices so we can work with the disaster victims to help them navigate the loan application process.

We ask you to make it your priority to use every available avenue to disburse as many loans as possible to this community.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
United States Senator



Niki Tsongas
United States Representative