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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

October 8, 2002

The Honorable Roderick Paige  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Paige:

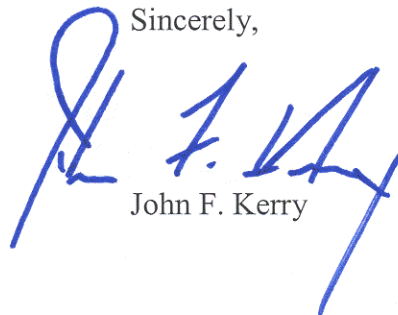
I am writing to express my support of the proposals put forth by John Gonzalez, President of JDG Associates, Inc., in a letter sent to Glenn G. Perry addressing the Department of Education's small-business contracting practices and the Multiple Award Task Order (MATO) awards schedule and procurement process.

As you know, the Department of Education has come under scrutiny for its low small-business procurement numbers, particularly with regard to minority- and women-owned companies. In the July 24, 2002, letter, Mr. Gonzalez outlined several recommendations, including appropriately reaching out to the 40 small businesses on the MATO schedule, reaffirming the Department of Education's commitment to increasing business opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses, establishing a system of accountability for all offices within the Department of Education, and strengthening and increasing the Department of Education's small business outreach efforts.

It is my belief that, if implemented, the proposals put forth in Mr. Gonzalez's letter would improve the disparity that currently exists in the procurement environment for small, minority-, and women-owned businesses at the Department of Education and increase the contracting opportunities for such companies. I urge you to take Mr. Gonzalez's recommendations into full consideration to help improve the deficient number of contracting dollars awarded to small and disadvantaged businesses through the Department of Education.

Thank you for attention to this important matter. Please feel free to contact me, or John DaSilva of my Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee staff, at (202) 224-5175, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry