



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

February 15, 2006

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
United States Senate  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

This is in response to your letter requesting information about the measures the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) is taking to fully use the procurement program for small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans pursuant to section 308 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-183), which allows for sole-sourced contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses.

In fiscal year 2005, the Commission awarded .048% of its total contract dollars to service-disabled veterans and 3.49% to veteran-owned small businesses. As you noted in your letter, in 2004 the Commission awarded 0 percent of its contracts to these firms while the Federal government awarded 0.38 percent of Federal contracts to these firms. Although the Commission has increased its awards to service-disabled veterans and veteran-owned small businesses and does set aside percentages of contracts for small business owners, the Commission has not yet set aside any contracts specifically for service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses.

I understand that the Commission has not used the sole-source tool made available by the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003. I have directed the Commission's staff to identify opportunities to use the sole-source tool contained in the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 for contracting and procurement opportunities for the remainder of fiscal year 2006 and in the future.


The Commission has implemented strategies to inform agency contractors about opportunities for service-disabled veterans available through the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003. Specifically, the Commission actively participates in small business seminars and expositions to make service-disabled veteran-owned and all other small businesses aware that we seek their services and products. In addition, the Commission advertises its procurement and contracting opportunities in FedBizOpps, which is the General Services Administration (GSA) Internet portal for federal government procurement solicitation and contract award notices. As a result, the Commission's contracting and procurement staff regularly receives contacts by phone and by email from service-disabled veteran-

owned small businesses. To expand outreach efforts to eligible veterans, I have directed the Commission staff to develop educational materials and other tools, including providing additional information on the Commission's Internet site, to further inform interested bidders about veteran opportunities. This expanded outreach effort should also ensure that service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses can proactively contact the Commission's contracting officers or the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to learn about contracts for which they are eligible under this program.

Finally, the Commission's Contracts Officer has trained key contracting and procurement staff on the goals of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 to ensure the staff is aware of the statute's requirements and opportunities. The Commission's staff regularly attends training conferences and seminars that address a variety of issues affecting Federal contracting and procurement activities, including the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003.

I hope that you find this information helpful. If you wish to further discuss the steps the Commission is taking to comply with the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 or any other issue, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Martin