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# United States Senate

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

April 8, 2005

Via Facsimile and First Class Mail

The Honorable Hector V. Barreto  
Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Administrator Barreto:

I am writing to request an assessment of the total cost to date and the role of the Small Business Administration (SBA) in President Bush's "60 Stops in 60 Days" tour in which the President and the Administration are traveling across the country to garner support for the President's ideas for Social Security. Yesterday, the *Washington Post* reported that the SBA is tapping its own travel budget.

I do not dispute the right of the President and his Administration to make his policy recommendations known to Congress and the public. However, I am concerned with the costs associated with this tour and the specific role of the SBA. Since the tour has started, SBA officials have at least traveled to California, Florida, Nevada, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The Administration has cut the SBA and its resources to our small businesses 36 percent since 2001, the most of any Federal Agency, and spending scarce funding to market the President's Social Security proposals would raise serious concerns for this Committee.

Please provide the following information:

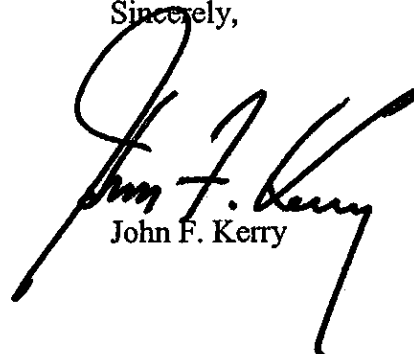
- 1) Identify the official events since March 1, 2005, at which SBA officials have promoted the President's Social Security agenda, and all upcoming events for the remainder of the year.
- 2) Assess the cost of these events to the SBA, including the cost of travel. Please include the specific role of SBA officials, the number of SBA staff working on each event, the location of the event, the date, the purpose of the event, and the cost or estimated cost. Indicate if any, the amount of the expenses that will be covered by other sources than the SBA budget and what the sources are.
- 3) Has SBA played a role in selecting participants for its own events or other officials' events? If so, what are the criteria for selecting participants?

- 4) Identify who at the SBA is responsible for authorizing the travel and associated expenditures.
- 5) Has the SBA provided any documents to the press, field offices, or businesses related to Social Security? If so, please provide the documents.

Please provide this information by close of business on Friday, April 22, 2005. If there are questions regarding this request, please contact Kathy Kerrigan, Social Security and Tax Counsel, at 202-224-8496. Please have the reply faxed to 202-228-1814.

Thank you for the attention to this request.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry

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