

May 14, 2008

Statement of

WILLIAM D. ELMORE

Associate Administrator for Veteran Business Development

U.S. Small Business Administration

Before U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship Roundtable

I am William Elmore, the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development, and I am pleased to be here today representing Administrator Preston and other SBA employees who work every day to support the small business success of America's veterans, reservists, and family members. The mission of the Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) is to maximize access to the Small Business Administration programs and services for Veterans, Service-Disabled Veterans, and Reserve Component Members of the U.S. Military.

SBA is hard at work implementing the Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act (PL 110-186). The Office of Veterans Business Development has already received two requests from Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) requesting appointment to the Interagency Task Force. The charter for the SBA Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs has been revised and the first meeting of the now permanent Committee has been scheduled for June 24-25. Veteran Business Outreach Centers (VBOC) Program Announcements have been modified to allow them to provide grants to entities in Transition Assistance Program locations. SBA is working with the Department of Labor to provide program materials and "hotlinks" from the DOL-TAP website to SBA funded VBOCs.

SBA plans on awarding five grants to SBDCs for a marketing campaign to promote awareness and education of the SBDC services available to veterans. SBA is in the process of drafting regulations to allow reservists to have their MREIDL applications filed and processed before reservists are formally called up for duty. SBA is also extending the filing period and extending eligibility through the full active duty period. Finally, SBA is drafting regulations to provide veteran loans processing priority.

It is important to note that SBA's efforts to support veteran entrepreneurs go significantly beyond the activities of SBA's OVBD. Each program at SBA is tasked with expanding and improving their services specifically for veterans, service-disabled and reservists veterans. This includes our Capital Access (loan) programs, our business counseling and training programs, our procurement programs, our field offices and our Disaster Assistance program. The Patriot Express pilot loan program, in the past 10 months, has produced 1,300 guaranteed loans amounting to more than \$135 million with an average loan of nearly \$104,000. Additionally, SBA business outreach, counseling and training services assist more than 100,000 veterans, reservists, active service members and spouses each year, including the growth of special outreach and coordination efforts through our district and regional offices.

The Administration is committed to enhancing all of our entrepreneurial programs and services for veterans and reservists returning from duty in the Global War on Terror, and more specifically for those service members injured or disabled in service to America.

SBA has strengthened our written agreements with our Small Business Development Centers, encouraged SCORE to increase its online assistance for veterans and reservists, funded five Veterans Business Outreach Centers, grown our District Office Veterans Outreach initiative, targeted veterans and veteran reservists in our Community Express Loan program, established the Patriot Express loan program, focused more PCR/CMR activity on veterans, implemented the procurement goal scorecards for Federal agencies, and worked to reconcile the differences between the SBA and the Federal Acquisition Regulation procurement rules for veterans. We are also working with the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Labor (DOL) to enhance our involvement in TURBO TAP (Transition Assistance Program) in efforts to improve small business opportunity and employment support for returning veterans and reservists, and we are assisting components of DoD in various planning initiatives.

SBA is strongly committed to working with all of our programs and with all of our Federal agency counterparts to reach out to and help create more veteran-owned small businesses, and to make use of their talents and services in federal procurement, in strengthening the American economy and in strengthening America's involvement in the International economy.

This concludes my comments, and I welcome any questions you might have.