



News Release

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SBA Administrator Proposes More Support for Veterans

Agency Exceeds Three Percent Goal for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Contracting

WASHINGTON –Administrator Steven C. Preston of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) issued the following statement:

“I am delighted that Sen. Kerry has chosen to focus on America’s veterans in his first hearing as Chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. The U.S. Small Business Administration, including our nearly 800 veteran employees, is also committed to serving those who are serving our nation. We have done a great deal to date, and we intend to do more.

“Under President Bush’s Executive Order 13360, the SBA is responsible for helping other federal agencies meet the requirement to award 3 percent of their contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSB). This is an ambitious goal, as fewer than 1 percent of all small businesses are SDVOSBs. However, SBA and the Department of Veterans Affairs are leading by example: both agencies exceeded the 3 percent goal in FY 2006. Government-wide, substantial progress is also underway: from FY 2004 to FY 2005, the most recent years for which data is available for all federal agencies, federal contracting with SDVOSBs increased 58 percent to \$1.9 billion. And last month the General Services Administration announced contract awards to more than 40 SDVOSBs, with a potential value of \$5 billion over the life of the contracts.

“Early this month, the White House’s Office of Federal Procurement Policy and SBA sent a joint letter to the heads of other federal agencies, reaffirming our commitment to the 3 percent goal across government. To help achieve that goal, SBA has increased the staff of the Veterans Business Development office by 50 percent this year. If Congress acts on our request to address the \$21 million shortfall in our operating fund we will dedicate more resources to this effort this year; if not, we will prepare to further ramp up our training and oversight next year.

“More than 14 percent of small businesses in America are owned by veterans. In 2001, to help small businesses that suffer when reservists and guardsmen are called to duty, SBA began offering the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program. However, this program only helps small businesses *after* the economic injury has occurred. SBA is now considering ways to provide improved counseling to reservists and members of the National Guard before they are mobilized, so that they do not suffer undue financial hardship when the call to active duty comes. I have ordered a review of the coordination among our contracting assistance, training, and other programs to ensure veterans’ small business needs are well served.

(more)

“I know that Sen. Kerry, Sen. Snowe and the other members of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship also consider veteran’s needs a top priority. On behalf of the SBA I look forward to working with the committee to continue to ensure that America’s veterans, who put themselves between us and harm’s way, are properly supported.”

The SBA and its Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) provide comprehensive assistance, outreach and support to veterans. Each year the SBA assists more than 100,000 veterans, service-disabled veterans and Reserve Component members. Some key programs/services SBA provides include:

- Special support through 68 Veterans Business Development Officers (VBDO) nationwide who help veteran entrepreneurs access the full range of SBA programs and partners. For your nearest VBDO, visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/rebs.html>.
- Funding for five Veterans Business Outreach Centers that provide outreach, training, counseling, mentoring and directed e-referrals to veterans owning or considering starting a small business. Visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/vbop.html>.
- Planning, e-counseling and lending assistance for self-employed Reserve and National Guard members facing activation or deployment. Visit: www.sba.gov/reservists.
- Federal goal setting and guidance for veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses seeking contracting opportunities in the federal marketplace.

For more information about the SBA’s veterans programs, visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/>.

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Editor please note:

A copy of the SBA testimony can be acquired from Dennis E. Byrne at 202-205-6567 or via e-mail at dennis.byrne@sba.gov , or at the hearing.