



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20416

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

July 30, 2008

The Honorable John Kerry  
Chairman Committee on Small Business  
& Entrepreneurship  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for your recent letter in reference to the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) proposed rule on the Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contract Assistance Procedures.

SBA is currently continuing the review process of the approximately 1,700 comments which were received on the proposed rule. The comment period was extended from 30 days to 60 days to ensure the public had an opportunity to provide comments. We are also in receipt of the comments you have provided, along with comments from other members of Congress.

Public comments closed on March 31, 2008. As a part of the regulatory process we are reviewing and analyzing all of the public comments received. After the review and analysis is complete, SBA will prepare an initial draft final rule for internal clearance. After SBA's internal clearance SBA will send a final regulation to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance. The regulatory process requires clearance from OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and with this rule, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy prior to the regulation being published as a final rule in the Federal Register.

For the past several years, SBA has acted to improve access to federal contracts for WOSBs. In 2002, the Rand Study identified nearly one million Women-Owned Small Businesses in the U.S. with at least one paid employee and approximately 56,000 were registered in the Government's Central Contractor Registration (CCR). SBA has implemented an initiative to increase the number of WOSBs registered in CCR so that they are eligible to compete for federal contracts. SBA has developed training materials, marketing tools and a marketing campaign to provide information regarding steps required to register in the CCR and to do business with the Federal government. Additionally, numerous outreach events, such as business matchmaking events are being conducted throughout the country by SBA's District Offices and Resource Partners in an effort to educate and assist WOSBs in this process. Over the past 6 years there has been steady growth of WOSB registered in CCR. Today there are approximately 63,000 registered, averaging 1,000 new WOSB firms in the CCR each year.

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I hope this information will be useful to you. We have sent a similar response letter to Senator John Kerry. If you have additional questions or comments please contact me directly.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jovita Carranza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Jovita Carranza  
Acting Administrator