



**Opening Statement for Hearing on
SBA Budget for FY 2012
Chairman Sam Graves
Committee on Small Business
U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC
March 2, 2011**

Good afternoon. The hearing will come to order.

At today's hearing we will hear about the President's proposed FY 2012 budget for the Small Business Administration. I would like to welcome Administrator Karen Mills back to the Committee.

The mission of the SBA is to promote the growth of small businesses throughout the United States. In doing so, the Agency tries to be all things to all small businesses, from a startup in the inner city to a mature business in the remotest areas of rural America.

Given the importance of small business to the American economy, the breadth of the mission is laudable. In a different time, we might be able to afford funding of this broad mission. Unfortunately, we do not have that luxury. The government's fiscal situation is dire. Even agencies and programs that we view as valuable will need to do their part in reducing unsustainable federal expenditures.

The fiscal situation requires that the mission of the SBA be pared back to core objectives: enabling small businesses to obtain capital and credit so they can create jobs; assisting small businesses in penetrating the federal procurement arena; and counseling America's entrepreneurs. In assessing these core functions, we must focus on those programs that are most efficient in helping small businesses create jobs while reducing financial risk to the federal taxpayers. Programs that do not meet these objectives should be cut; programs that meet these standards should be strengthened.

I look forward to hearing the Administrator's testimony and explanation of how the President's budget meets the core mission of the SBA while recognizing the current financial constraints facing the federal government. I now recognize the Ranking Member for her opening statement.