

Congressional Hispanic Caucus

United States Congress

Washington, DC 20515

CHAIRMAN

CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

20TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

December 19, 2011

Donna Ward
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
Office of Minority and Women Inclusion
1 Memorial Drive
Kansas City, MO 64198

Dear Ms. Ward:

Thank you for meeting with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus on December 14, 2011 regarding diversity implementation at the Offices of Minority and Women Inclusion. As requested in the meeting, we respectfully ask for follow-up answers to questions regarding Hispanic employment and contracting.

As you are well aware, section 342 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (P.L. 111-203, "Dodd-Frank") required each Federal Reserve Bank and federal regulatory agency to establish an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion ("OMWI"). We made clear that we continue to hear of access and communication problems for many qualified Hispanic candidates and Hispanic businesses seeking to do business with your agencies, and that is unacceptable. Therefore, we request answers in writing to the following questions:

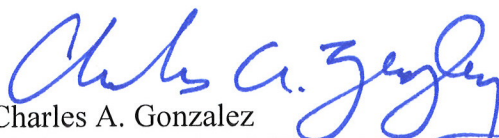
- 1) **Diversity of OMWI Directors and Senior Staff:** There seems to be an apparent lack of Hispanic directors and associate directors at the Federal Reserve offices and other OMWI offices. Does your office have an Assistant Director position? If so, is that person Hispanic? How many senior officials are Hispanic, both within the OMWI office and at the agency at large? What is the current breakdown as a percentage of all senior professional positions, by gender and ethnicity, within your agency? What have been your efforts to recruit Hispanic directors and senior staff? What are your targets, and what is your timeline for achieving those targets? What are the consequences if you do not achieve those targets? Can you describe the diversity and awareness training your Agency provides to executive leadership and other staff?
- 2) **Current Procurement Figures with Hispanic Vendors:** What percentage of goods and services, including professional services (financial and investment management), are provided by Hispanic firms? What is the total dollar spend that corresponds to that percentage? What percentage of your total spend does Hispanic procurement comprise? What percentage are prime contractors and what percentage are subcontractors? Also,

please provide the same breakdown for professional services contracted to Hispanic firms only.

- 3) **Implementation of a Written Procurement Plan:** We have concerns about whether every agency has set adequate targets, or whether they have any targets at all. For example, a December 2011 press release from the Treasury Department stated that their goal for FY11 procurement services for women-owned small businesses was only 5%. While we applaud Treasury for exceeding that goal with 12.6%, we believe that this should be the minimum moving forward. We would like to better understand what efforts you are undertaking to find Hispanic talent and service providers, and how to ensure such firms have opportunities to compete for contracts. Please provide us a written plan that specifically lays out your strategy for procurement that includes professional services (financial and investment management) as well as traditional goods and services. Please also include a detailed description of the targets and/or benchmarks you are using, and what your timeline is to reach those targets. How do you plan to track progress to reach those benchmarks, and how will you report your progress? What are the consequences of failing to meet your goals? And what timeline will you be operating under with respect to implementation of the procurement plan if one has not already been installed?
- 4) **Outreach for Contracting Opportunities:** In order for your office to be successful, outreach to diverse firms about contracting opportunities at your agency is critical. How do women-and-minority-owned firms learn about contracting opportunities and compete? Is there any specific outreach being done for Hispanic firms in particular? How many contracts do you expect to award within the next six and twelve months? How are those contracts being publicized? Have you implemented regular meetings with minority and women owned firms where they have an opportunity to present their concerns and questions about contract opportunities? What are you doing to incentivize partnerships between small and larger service providers/contractors? Have you used industry consultants or partner organizations to improve participation of minority and women owned businesses? What feedback and recommendations have you received?
- 5) **Identifying Barriers to Competition:** What barriers have you identified for women and minority owned firms to compete? What barriers are unique to Hispanic-owned firms? What are you doing to overcome those barriers?

We respectfully request written answers to these questions no later than February 1, 2011. Again, thank you for meeting with us earlier this month. We appreciate your willingness to discuss these issues of mutual importance, and look forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals of diversity. If you have any questions, please contact Patricia Tamez, CHC Executive Director, at (202) 225-2410 or via email at patricia.tamez@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,


Charles A. Gonzalez
Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus


Robert Menendez
United States Senator