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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

EMILIA DISANTO, STAFF DIRECTOR
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March 8, 1999

The Honorable David Walker
Comptroller General
U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

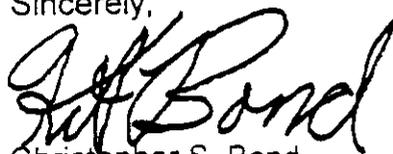
Dear Mr. Walker:

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business, I request that the General Accounting Office (GAO) independently monitor the steps being taken by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL/Department) to implement the recommendations contained in GAO's January 1999 report (GAO/HEHS-99-21) entitled "Davis-Bacon Act: Labor Now Verifies Wage Data, but Verification Process Needs Improvement." Enclosed for your reference is my letter to the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman, expressing my concerns regarding the deficiencies GAO identified in DOL's verification activities and the implications for the immediate goal of improving the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of the Davis-Bacon wage determinations.

In my letter to Secretary Herman, I request to be kept apprised of the Department's efforts to implement GAO's recommendations. By 3 p.m., Wednesday, April 7th, DOL is to provide a written response that describes the steps being taken to implement GAO's recommendations, which is to include a timetable with dates by which each step is scheduled to be completed. In addition, DOL is to provide the Committee's Regulatory Counsel, Suey Howe, with quarterly updates, beginning June 1, on the Department's efforts to improve the veracity of the data used to determine locally prevailing wages and fringe benefits and the status of the Department's efforts to re-engineer this program, including the pilot programs involving the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

By this letter, I request that GAO independently verify and validate the actions being taken by the Department to implement GAO's recommendations to improve the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of the Davis-Bacon wage determinations. In addition, I look forward to receiving a copy of the GAO's upcoming study on the Department's re-engineering efforts. If you should have any questions regarding this request, please have a member of your staff contact Suey Howe at (202) 224-5175.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Bond
Chairman

Enclosure