



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

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

JUL 18 2005

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Ranking Member
Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

Thank you for your letter of June 29, 2005, regarding your continued interest in the Women-Owned Small Business Set-Aside Program. In your letter you ask the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to provide you with target dates for releasing the women's business study and for issuing the proposed regulations.

The SBA's Office of Federal Contract Assistance for Women Business Owners (CAWBO) is working closely with our Office of General Counsel (OGC) to finalize and issue a Statement of Work to perform a revised study to identify the industries in which women-owned small businesses (WOSBs) are underrepresented and substantially underrepresented in Federal procurement. The target date for releasing the Request for Proposal (RFP) for this study is July 30, 2005. CAWBO is also working with OGC to issue the proposed regulations for the Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program. We anticipate completing the draft of the proposed regulations shortly after the release of the RFP.

In your letter you also ask us to discuss how the Business Matchmaking Initiative has successfully created business opportunities for women-owned businesses. The Business Matchmaking Initiative has afforded women-owned small businesses opportunities to pursue contracts (without geographical limitations) in both the Federal and private sector. In fiscal year 2004, women-owned small businesses received 19 contracts totaling over \$6.9 million as a result of attending the various SBA Matchmaking events throughout the country. Contracts awarded as a result of Business Matchmaking Initiative are verified by contacting the procuring entity and the small business receiving the contract. This process is performed by the Hewlett Packard Small Business Foundation (HPSBF), SBA's partner in the Cooperative agreement to produce Business Matchmaking events.



As implementation of the Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program moves forward, CAWBO will continue to work closely with Women Advocates in each agency and the Directors of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to promote opportunities for WOSBs. SBA will also continue to work diligently to enhance the efforts of Federal agencies to achieve the goal of awarding not less than five percent of the total value of Federal contracts to WOSBs.

Thank you for your support of the SBA's programs and efforts to increase small business opportunities in the Federal arena. Should you have additional questions, please contact Janis Coughlin-Piester of our Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs at (202) 205-6700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hector V. Barreto".

Hector V. Barreto
Administrator