

**STATEMENT OF  
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U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

**BEFORE THE**

**Government Reform Subcommittee on Energy Policy,  
Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs  
and the  
Small Business Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform  
and Oversight**

**July 20, 2004**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**



## **Hearing on GSA's Implementation of the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act Public Law 107-198**

Good Afternoon Chairman Ose and Chairman Schrock. I would like to thank you and the other members here, for inviting me to appear before you to discuss GSA's implementation of the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act. My name is Felipe Mendoza, and I am the Associate Administrator for the Office of Small Business Utilization (OSBU), of the U. S. General Services Administration (GSA).

Before addressing the Act, I would like to share some information with you regarding the positive impact GSA is having in promoting Federal government contracting opportunities within the small business community.

GSA's mission is to help Federal Agencies better serve the public by offering, at best value, superior workplaces, expert solutions, acquisition services and management policies. To effectively fulfill this mission, the Office of Small Business Utilization frequently conducts training within the agency to keep the contracting staff apprised of recent changes in procurement policies, procedures and regulations.

## GSA and Small Business

In order to reach as many small businesses as possible, GSA conducts outreach activities on a national and regional level. One example includes the "2004 Native American Conference – Doing Business with the Government", held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This conference was held to promote Federal contracting with Native American/Alaska Native-Owned Businesses. The event had over 600 registrants. Another example includes GSA's "Opening Doors for America's Heroes", held in Washington, D.C. This conference, with over 700 registrants, was held to promote contracting opportunities with the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business community. In addition, within the past year, GSA joined efforts with Congressman Tom Davis, and local members of Congress, to host small business events around the country. Senior officials from GSA and other Federal agencies participated in these events. These events provide small businesses with direction on how to best navigate the Federal government procurement process. We are actively planning more of these events.

GSA constantly seeks ways to make doing business with the Federal government easier for small business. The GSA Information Technology (IT) Acquisition Center recently launched "eOffer", a tool to submit contract offers and contract modification requests to FSS online. The eOffer tool provides offerors interested in getting on the IT Schedule with an opportunity to submit their offer electronically, thereby significantly reducing paperwork burden. This electronic

proposal process guides users through each step of the solicitation, using the latest in digital authentication technology to ensure the integrity of the data, and provide for the electronic signature of the proposal. The Office of Acquisition Management's Systems Management Center developed the program and is currently adapting the program to process modifications electronically as well. The IT Acquisition Center expects to reduce its cycle times for awarding contracts with the help of this new program. The program will be rolled out to other centers in the Office of Commercial Acquisition within the year. You may visit the site at <http://eoffer.gsa.gov>.

#### Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002

With regard to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act, the Committee's invitation to testify requested that we address the following issues:

1. GSA's implementation of this Act,
2. GSA's explanation for failure to publish its compliance-assistance resources for small business – due June 28, 2003,
3. GSA's explanation for failure to submit a regulatory enforcement report - due December 31, 2003,
4. GSA's experience with the Office of Small Business Utilization as the agency's single point of contact.

As you are aware, this law has four requirements: agency publication of compliance-assistance resources; the submission of agency regulatory enforcement reports; the establishment of an agency point of contact in respect to collection of information and the control of paperwork; and agency

participation in a task force to study the feasibility of streamlining collection requirements for small business concerns.

### Regulatory Enforcement Report

Specifically, in regard to the submission of the regulatory enforcement reports, this Act imposes a duty upon Federal agencies to report to Congress, and to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman, those regulatory enforcement actions in which a civil penalty is assessed. Further, Federal agencies must report the number of actions in which such penalties are assessed against small businesses. The Act states that the report shall include a definition of "enforcement actions" as determined by the reporting agency. GSA did not submit an initial report; because we do not initiate enforcement actions in which civil penalties are assessed. However, for the December 31, 2004 reporting period, GSA will submit a report that so states.

The core missions of our agency are procurement and property management. Under our enabling legislation, the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, GSA supplies executive agencies with personal property and nonpersonal services and maintains and operates government-owned and leased buildings. Our regulatory expertise involves guidance to Executive Branch agencies regarding procurement of goods and services (the Federal Acquisition Regulation and the General Services Administration Acquisition Manual), property (Federal Management Regulation), and travel (the Federal

Travel Regulation.) GSA's procurement guidance is subject to the direction of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy. In addition to the direction provided by these offices, GSA complies with the requirements of applicable statutes that are in accord with this Act's goal of reducing paperwork burden on small business.

#### Compliance-Assistance

Pursuant to discussions with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the subcommittees, we are in the process of compiling a list of compliance-assistance resources to be submitted to OMB. A partial list has already been provided to OMB. We plan to post a more extensive list of resources by September 30, 2004.

#### Agency Single Point of Contact

While the GSA single point of contact listed is currently within the OSBU, the Agency's plan of action is to transfer this function to a staff person within the GSA's Chief Information Office. This should be accomplished by September 30, 2004. Additionally, not later than October 1, 2004, GSA will have a dedicated toll free telephone number available to the small business community for assistance with SBPRA inquiries. The staff person delegated these responsibilities will be knowledgeable of the SBPRA and will respond to small business inquiries.

### Task Force Representation

As required by statute, GSA participated in the task force that studied the feasibility of streamlining collection of information requirements for small businesses.

GSA recognizes that the purpose of the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act is to reduce the challenges faced by small businesses in complying with government information-collection requirements. Where applicable, GSA intends to continue to do its part in addressing this issue.

This concludes my testimony. Again, I appreciate having the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions the Committees may have.