

April 23, 2025

SUBJECT: U.S. DOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program - Growing American Businesses

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Abbie Jones, PE, PLS, and I am the founder, owner and President of Abbie Jones Consulting, PSC — a Kentucky-based, DBE-certified (woman owned small business) civil engineering and land surveying firm. Since 2011, I've created 16 professional jobs in disadvantaged areas (disabled, caregivers, very rural, former coal mine, young people needing a job skill) who design and support critical infrastructure projects throughout both urban and rural communities. We are 100% American-owned and operated, and we've built our success through hard work, technical excellence, and long-term partnerships. We participate in projects that took years to plan and fund, and our long-term view is essential for building the infrastructure this country needs. The DBE program fosters job creation and competition — which every conservative leader values.

The DBE program has been a catalyst for our creation. I would not have started my business without knowing it would exist to help provide introductions with larger firms who had to team with a DBE firm to help grow government work in addition to private sector work. It doesn't guarantee contracts. It simply ensures small, qualified (woman, minority) businesses like mine get a fair opportunity to compete — especially in markets where large firms are virtually guaranteed the government projects (not small firms). Without DBE requirements, many of those large firms will not reach out to DBEs for bids/proposals for subcontracts on large state or federal projects. (Many of these large firms are not US owned or headquartered, compared to the small ones.) Over the past few years more and more of the medium size firms have been swallowed up by large firms. The difference between 10–50-person small firms, 50–5000-person medium firms and the 5000+ person large firms are immense.

DBE certification is not a handout. It's a business tool — and it comes with rigorous requirements, oversight, and results. Unlike some private-sector certification programs, DBE vetting is extensive and ensures real ownership and leadership are in place, not just names on paper. As a result, it helps develop a truly competitive small business sector that stands on its own. Could there be improvements to the program made? Absolutely. I would be glad to share very specific ideas with the correct individuals involved in the implementation.

The recent *Mid-America Milling Co. v. U.S. DOT* injunction has already slowed progress. Federal project pipelines are uncertain, and <u>our firm has seen government projects drop from 50% to just 10% of our backlog</u>. That translates into lost revenue, stalled hiring, and paused momentum — not only for us, but for our clients and communities.

Programs like DBE exist to level the playing field — not tilt it. They ensure that small women and minority owned businesses owned by hardworking Americans have a chance to compete, grow, and give back. <u>I respectfully urge continued support for the DBE program under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, especially through the Federal Highway Administration.</u> It's a smart investment in American jobs, American business, and American infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Abbie Jones, PE, PLS

President

Abbie Jones Consulting, PSC

Lexington, Kentucky

My name is Alicia Coleman, and I proudly own a small minority woman-owned construction company, AC Reliable Construction Inc., located in Bowie, Maryland. For the past 8 years, I have dedicated myself to breaking barriers in a field that is predominantly white and male-dominated. My company currently employs 7 employees, providing job opportunities and training to individuals in our community.

Operating in urban/rural/other location, I face numerous challenges daily, from racial and economic barriers to gender bias. The construction industry often places higher costs on minority-owned businesses like mine, whether through inflated rates for materials and labor or the economic stresses we face in today's market. The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program has been a crucial lifeline for my business, enabling us to compete in an uneven playing field.

Losing the DBE program would have devastating consequences for my company. Without this support, I would struggle to secure contracts, limiting our growth potential and ability to employ more people. The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already had a significant impact on my operations, creating uncertainty and hindering our access to vital resources and opportunities.

The DBE Program has not only benefited my business but also my family and community. It has allowed me to provide for my loved ones while also contributing to local economic development. By employing local talent and supporting subcontracting, we create job opportunities for others, fostering a sense of pride and progress in our community.

Moreover, the DBE program drives competition, ultimately resulting in lower costs for taxpayers. With over 50,000 DBEs across the U.S. employing more than 500,000 people, it is evident that supporting these businesses fosters economic development and innovation. The program is built on good faith efforts, aiming to level the playing field for disadvantaged small businesses like mine.

As a Republican DBE owner, I believe in the importance of policies that support economic growth and opportunity for all. I urge stakeholders to voice their opinions and advocate for the reauthorization of the DBE program, ensuring that businesses like mine can continue to thrive and contribute to our economy.

Thank you for considering my story and the vital role the DBE program plays in our success.

Alicia Coleman AC Reliable Construction Inc. Owner 240-346-7641 acreliable.construction@gmail.com



April 28, 2025

RE: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to implore you to reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, which has been a crucial element in leveling the competitive playing field for small engineering services firms in America such as mine, especially when we are required to bid against huge, multinational corporations with tens of thousands of employees and absolutely no interest in working with small, local disadvantaged firms.

Established in 1994 while I was getting an advanced engineering degree at UC Berkeley, Acumen Building Enterprise, Inc. (Acumen) is a U.S. Navy veteran-founded professional engineering consulting firm of 46 employees that became an S Corporation in 2002 and is headquartered in Oakland, CA. Acumen is certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) in California and with more than 15 agencies across the nation.

Acumen has specialized in delivering sustainable, secure transportation-system engineering solutions and energy-efficient multimodal public infrastructure development for 30-plus years for a wide array of local, regional and national agencies and organizations. As one of the more than 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing 500,000-plus people, we serve as a linchpin in our local and regional economic development via diverse, supportive hiring practices and an innovative workforce development program that supports the policies and actions that lead to growth and development of DBEs and all other types of small businesses across the nation.

Acumen, as well as its hundreds of DBE-certified subconsultants over the decades, have benefited from the good-faith efforts of the DBE Program to create a more level playing field, especially in the cut-throat arena of major transit system engineering and transportation infrastructure development projects. The DBE program also supports the subcontracting arm of construction to drive competition away from nepotistic "usual suspects" hiring practices rife with corruption and toward project hiring that lowers taxpayer costs and creates higher quality work. This support bolsters Acumen's ability to emphasize sustainable practices and giving back to our community.

If the DBE program is lost, Acumen will again find itself competing against huge, often offshore-based firms with no incentive to hire local, small and/or disadvantaged firms connected to the communities that benefit directly from this crucial transportation infrastructure development and multimodal transit improvements.

It takes decades to build small businesses that can reach the level to compete for, and win, the right to support major public works projects. Please reject policies that reduce or eliminate the incentives for local small businesses to grow into these roles and continue to be linchpins of opportunity in their communities and throughout the country. Reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

Sincerely,

Walter E. Allen
President & CEO



Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

April 28, 2025

Testimonial from Agency Landscape + Planning

Agency Landscape + Planning is a landscape architecture and urban planning firm with an emphasis on community engagement, founded in 2018 and currently composed of 32 employees. We seek opportunities that allow us to partner meaningfully with constituents, that welcome many voices and hands in the process, and that produce outcomes that are deeply connected to the richness and uniqueness of place. Agency is a woman-owned small business and certified DBE/WBE practice led by partners Gina Ford and Brie Hensold. Our leadership combined with a collective team of passionate and talented landscape architects, planners and urban designers – enables the full spectrum of design services – from strategic planning to complex landscape implementation. Agency is based in Cambridge, MA and works across the country with both urban and rural communities. We do mostly public work for public agencies (cities, towns, counties, states) but occasionally work for non profit organizations, schools, or developers. We are certified DBE or WBE with 28 state or local entities.

Through the DBE program, we have forged new and lasting relationships with other DBE businesses. Agency typically pursues projects as prime consultant, so we understand the need to search for qualified partners and appreciate the role of the DBE program in exposing us to new collaborators that are deeply embedded and represent the communities that we work in.

Agency has been able to achieve success over our seven years of operation because our work is reliable and our expertise is excellent. The DBE program has been a helpful tool and stepping stone as we became established – it helped us put our foot in the door as a new women-owned small business and it provides important communications and networks. We are occasionally chosen over similarly qualified non-DBEs because our participation helps to achieve DBE goals.

We believe that the DBE program provides a measurable way to include minority and womenowned businesses in government contracts. It is a way to ensure that not just the same, familiar players are getting government contracts – it opens up competition among the market and provides opportunities to smaller businesses that are looking to get established. Because of the program more prime firms are seeking out DBEs to work with and including them in their networks.

Losing the DBE program would mean that there would be less incentive to make new relationships with small DBE businesses, narrowing the design, planning, and construction market. Peer non-DBE firms that are older and more established would continue to get prioritized over DBE firms, limiting innovation in the field, as they are not being pushed to include new perspectives. Many DBE firms that rely on the program would lose out on the economic development benefits that the DBE program provides. Though we understand that the DBE program could use some improvements to make it more supportive of DBE businesses, we wholeheartedly believe in the goals of the DBE program and fully support its reauthorization.

www.agencylp.com

My name is Kelly Fumiko Weiss and I am the Founder and CEO of Allize LLC. Allize LLC is a technology consulting company. I am a sole proprietor LLC. I founded Allize LLC in 2023 after a long career in IT departments across the public sector. I also worked in large consulting firms that courted public sector work. Having been on both sides of the bidding process – the people soliciting RFP responses and the people responding to RFPs – one thing remained clear. There were not enough qualified, trusted, MWBE partners to work with and the big companies were getting all of the work. Pass through companies were claiming MWBE work, too. Everyone wanted honest-to-goodness MWBE partners to work with. I decided to take my 20+ years of experience and fill that gap. It's still a very competitive space. And it's still hard for companies to find the MWBEs they need. But once I become aligned with a good prime partnership, it means partnerships for years to come.

Allize LLC is located in Chicago. This urban landscape means connections are easy to make, but it also means that it's difficult for me to prime on bids due to the requirements and the competitive market. I rely on MWBE partnerships to move my business forward and be a part of bids that I would otherwise be too small to pursue. Losing any DBE program would upend my business model and would pretty much guarantee that I would never get public sector work again.

DBEs programs benefit our community by bringing people together. All of the contracts I've entered into have filled a pretty big gap in services and requirements. Specifically, one of my areas of expertise is Change Management, which larger companies rarely have enough expertise in, but is crucial to any successful project.

DBE programs allow smaller companies the ability to enter the market, provide for our families, and create sustained work and partnerships. Good faith efforts to be inclusive and to support small business are the backbone of our country and communities.

Analyzer International Inc Letter

Organization Name: Analyzer International Inc., DBE, SBE

Contact Name: Eng Yeong

Title: President

Email: eng.yeong@goanalyzer.com Phone Number: (925) 325-1838

Location: 277 Downs Road, Tustin, CA 92782

Statement

My company is a DBE based in Tustin, California, and our main business is civil engineering consulting and performing quality inspection for freeway and bridge construction for Caltrans and other local transportation agencies. Our business revenues basically stem from the Federal Funding DBE requirements which enable us to survive since our inception in July 2011 where we started with our first construction inspection contract with Caltrans. The number of our field inspections varies from 1 to 4, and without the DBE requirements, I think a lot of the small businesses like ours would cease operating because the big consultant companies would perform all the contract work with their resources and deprive the small DBE companies the opportunities to do so despite the fact that the small companies possess the experience and expertise. I think reauthorization of DBE programs is important for the economically social groups to achieve vertical mobility and the American Dream and to spread the wealth more evenly for a socially harmonious and just society where the small guys may have the opportunities to advance economically and socially in line with President Trump's policy to MAKE THE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN. More even distribution of wealth is the key foundation for the stability of aggregate demand for goods and services to support a strong and vibrant US economy. I fervently hope that our honorable Congress and Senate would reauthorize the DBE program to MAKE AMERICA GREAT again.

Dear Subcommittee on Highways and Transit (H&T) Members:

My husband, Duane Neshek, and I have been in the concrete construction business since 1994. My husband is Native American and a member of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin. We have on average 35 union construction workers on our payroll that earn better than average wages. Our primary area that we work is in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Shortly after we started our business we applied for and were approved for our Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certification from WisDOT. Since then, we have worked hard and reinvested the majority of our profits into our business year after year. The WisDOT DBE program has helped our business immensely by giving us a pathway to get our foot in the door of large prime contractors in our state. If there were no DBE goals on WisDOT projects we wouldn't have had the opportunity to work on many if not all of the large projects that we have been blessed to have worked on.

The DBE program has helped us provide for our family and the families of our employees over the years. We have employed people with no stable job that now have a house, a car, and a family thanks to their good paying job with us. We have personally improved our life thanks to our hard work, the hard work of our employees, and thanks to the DBE program WisDOT projects that we all have worked on.

My husband and I were Democrats when we started this business but are now Republicans thanks to the help we've received from DBE program. This also holds true for many of our union employees. Many of them were Democrats but converted to Republicans because they have had a stable good paying job working on WisDOT projects thanks to the DBE program.

If the DBE program were to go away, we would still quote projects and we may get some work, but the large projects would go to the large prime contractors. We have a good record of completing our concrete work while complying with all of the WisDOT specifications. If the large prime contractors weren't required to meet the DBE goals on projects we know that they would keep the majority of work for themselves and only give us the work they didn't want to do or couldn't fit into their schedule. This would mean that our experienced union employees would quit their job with us and start working for the large prime contractors. If we lost our experienced union employees we would be forced to close our doors and seek employment elsewhere to provide for our family.

We haven't been directly impacted by the Mid-America vs USDOT injunction yet. However, some of our 50,000 fellow DBE companies in the US that employ over 500,000 employees have been impacted severely. The DBE program supports the subcontracting arm of construction. It drives competition resulting in lower taxpayer costs. The DBE program is based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field and it fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses.

For these reasons we hope you reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program in the 2025 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Neshek

1500 S. Springdale Rd Waukesha, WI 53186

Am. hll

Phone: 414-443-1911

Subject: Support for the Continuation of Federal DBE Requirements

To Whom It May Concern,

As the owner of a small, certified Woman-Owned and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (WBE/DBE), I am writing to express my strong support for the continuation of the Federal DBE program. The opportunities made available through these requirements have been essential to the survival and growth of my business.

Because of the DBE program, we've been able to participate meaningfully in federally funded design projects—opportunities that would have otherwise been out of reach in a highly competitive and often insular industry. These projects have allowed us not only to demonstrate our capabilities, but to build a reputation, expand our team, and provide steady employment for five families. The impact is both personal and far-reaching.

Eliminating the DBE requirements would deal a severe blow to small businesses like mine. We don't ask for handouts—we ask for a fair chance to compete. The DBE program ensures we get a seat at the table. Without that invitation, we risk being excluded entirely, no matter how capable or qualified we are.

This program is not just about equity—it's about economic resilience, innovation, and ensuring taxpayer-funded projects reflect the diversity and strength of our country's business community.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of policies that strengthen small businesses.

Susanne Harrington Principal, Asterisk Group, Inc. Asteriskdesign.com



Axios Industrial Painting LLC Tarpon Springs, Florida 727-946-6709



Good afternoon,

My company does industrial painting on large structures such as Water towers, (elevated and ground), Over passes-bridges, Communication towers, etc. We employ a minimum of 6 people for a project.

We have been in business for one year and our business could potentially take us anywhere in the US.

The DBE program has allowed me to compete with large companies. Our business is based on bidding, period. There is not a perk to landing a job, you still have to come in lower than others. So, it is not "just giving an unqualified person the job". That's absurd. I am just as qualified, but I cannot compete financially with the big companies.

For example. The equipment I need to perform the blasting and painting on these structures costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. One blast/recycle unit could be \$500,000 or more. Obviously, that is a far reach for me and I must rent this equipment at \$20,000-\$50,000 a month for a job, where others own it. Now I've just added up to \$50k to my bid and will unlikely get this job or any for that matter.

Being a DBE helps in ways such as; even if I don't get the job as a primary contractor, the primary contractor may have to retain a DBE for X amount of the work as a subcontractor. I'll then get the opportunity to work because I AM QUALIFIED. Completely different than hiring someone incompetent because of a quota.

In the construction industry, it allows a more level playing field for us that do not have deep pockets and could never compete at pricing a job against a large construction company.

I have already seen a huge reduction in DBE offerings on the DOT websites and have not worked in months. I am not sure how long I can continue. I simply cannot compete.

DBE's employ people also and that should not go unnoticed. Small business is what drives our country.

My political views are quite conservative and a staunch supporter of the Republican party. I actually agree with removing the DEI component if it is not based on merit. The reality for us is, qualified individuals cannot compete as their small business is not financially able. This is where DBE's are an absolute necessity for some of us to survive. I work hard at my business, 12-16 hours a day. I want to succeed, but my competition will squash me without a DBE opportunity. Again, this doesn't give me a job, I still must be qualified and come in with a price that is lowest, but it does allow the opportunity to bid against others with similar restraints. This program should be expanded not taken away. I will be a very unhappy person with my elected politicians if they cannot grasp the importance of this. I am expecting a 100% common sense approach and this needs to be discussed with urgency. I would be more than happy to have a conversation with whomever would like to discuss this. My representative is Anna Paulina Luna and I am going to send this letter to her also. Florida-13th Congressional District.

Respectfully,

ANNA SAMARKOS

Anna Samarkos



Email: Info@AxiosIndustrialPainting.com Web site: AxiosIndustrialPainting.com



Ayoka, L.L.C. 2313 Brookhollow Plaza Drive Arlington, TX 76006



17 April 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

As a small business owner and Marine, I'm grateful to have created our Made in USA software development company based on the concept of "Commander's Intent". Because of the type of work we do, we compete with much larger firms. Without the DBE program, we could never get a chance to compete or even partner with a larger firm.

Our technology services company has approximately 30 employees. We exclusively hire Americans as employees, working out of a traditional office here in Arlington, Texas. Since leaving California to become a Texas company in 2004, we've operated a robust paid internship program where we hire and grow new talent in software; in the last 20 years, we've hired close 100 interns.

The DBE program has provided invaluable opportunities for us to compete, showcase our skills, and save our clients money with a small business that has low overhead. As a Republican supporter, I am grateful for President Trump and his business acumen. Free market competition in government contracting is opened up when big contractors are rewarded for making good faith efforts to find and invite qualified small businesses to the bid.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts!

Semper Fidelis,

Eknauth Persaud President Ayoka, LLC 817-210-4042

Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

I am a proud owner of a plumbing business; that has been in business for 19 years. We currently have two employees not including myself. We also use subcontractors sometimes for certain projects; whom some are DBE certified as well. We are located in an urban area. Being in business has given me the opportunity to employee and mentor many over the years. Losing the DBE program would affect our business tremendously. A great percent of our projects are DBE projects. We have been DBE certified since August 31, 2010. With this program we have been able to bid and win projects that we probably wouldn't have been considered for or even been knowledgeable that some exist without the program.

Bellman Schwartz L.C is a woman owned construction company. We have 3 full time employees and several contract employees and sub-contractors. Our business was established in December 2017. We service Southeast Michigan, which includes the Detroit metropolitan area. The DBE program has been a tremendous asset to our company, opening doors to government contracts, expanding our network and allowing us to compete on a more level playing field. It has provided vital opportunities for growth, job creation and long term sustainability. Without this program, our ability to participate in key public projects would be significantly reduced, threatening not only our revenue stream but also the progress we've made in building capacity and economic inclusion in under served communities. dismantling the DBE program would risk reversing these gains and undermining efforts to promote equity in the industry.



Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Lillian Stevenson, and I am one of 4 owners of Berrien Concrete LLC a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) located in Salem, OR. We have been in business for 5 years and currently employ 20 people. We operate in a urban community and have proudly participated in infrastructure projects funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

The DBE Program has been essential to our company's survival and growth. It has created opportunities for us to bid, win, and participate in federally funded projects that we otherwise would not have had access to due to long-standing barriers to entry in the construction industry.

Losing the DBE Program would be devastating for our company and others like us. We are already feeling the chilling effects of the **Mid-America vs. USDOT** injunction, which has created uncertainty and hesitation in awarding DBE work — even where goals are set. Without reauthorization and strong federal backing, many small and minority-owned businesses will be forced to lay off staff, reduce services, or close their doors entirely.

This is not just about my business — it's about the **500,000+ employees** working for over **50,000 DBEs nationwide**. The program encourages competition, helps keep taxpayer costs down, and levels the playing field. It is based on **good faith efforts**, not handouts, and supports a sector of the construction industry that is often ignored — the subcontracting arm.

The DBE Program has allowed me to contribute to my community, hire locally, and offer opportunities that didn't exist before. Without it, all of that is at risk.

I strongly urge you to **reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program** in the upcoming **2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill**. Our businesses, employees, and communities depend on it.

Sincerely,

Lillian Stevenson

Berrien Concrete LLC

503-567-1774



www.berrienconcrete.com

BUC Construction Supply, Inc. Lafayette, IN

Our Story

BUC Construction Supply, Inc has been in business for 7 years, with 4 employees, and located in Lafayette, Indiana (an urban city-ranked 11th in our state). We are a material supplier of flat work, road construction, and water utility materials and serve central and northern Indiana. The DBE program has been absolutely invaluable for "making the playing field fair" for our small business to compete on INDOT, City and State projects. As a material supplier, we're up against the multi-billion dollar, foreign or investment company-owned companies, like Core and Main, Ferguson Waterworks and White Cap. Due to their large buying power with American manufactures, we have only been able to establish relationships and receive credit terms with manufactures since we are a DBE and bid on INDOT projects. The DBE requirements are very stringent, following all the rules and regulations to continue our certification. In our 7th year of business, we have over \$2 million in revenue and offer insurance and selfemployed retirement plan to our employees and built a loyal customer base since we're small, detailedoriented and have excellent follow through. Since the lawsuit-Mid-America vs. US DOT, we have lost several bid opportunities on INDOT projects, since INDOT project make up a large percentage of our revenue. We pride ourselves on being small, locally-owned, American made and we are teaching the next generation about the construction industry. This lawsuit is hurting many other DBE American businesses in our county, over 50,000 DBE small companies that employ over 500,000 workers are all affected by this lawsuit. The DBE program is crucial for BUC Construction Supply to continue to grow and flourish and show our employees what it's takes to live the "American Dream" by starting a business. It also shows them that in America free enterprise breathes competition for the American small business and we can grow and thrive. Please review how the DBE program is just one facet to all CIB's (contract information book) on all US DOT contracts in each state. We want you to consider that the DBE program is just 1 aspect of the specifications, much like how the plans may call out domestic products, not imports or how union skilled workers are required, not non-union workers. DBE Spend Goals are also a just percentage that allows small locally-owned business an opportunity to bid, it does not guarantee a company will be utilized. The prime contractor holds the right to choose how to achieve DBE Spend Goal, not the DBE company. Last, but not least, the prime contractor has to be the lowest bidder. Therefore, they are many parts to the bid the contractor needs to put in to be the lowest bidder and obtain the award. Please consider all valid points mentioned in my proposal. I care very deeply for our company, employees, contractors and projects we have had the pleasure to work on over these last 7 years. Please keep the DBE program.

Thank you, Teresa Butler

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to you today as a concerned small business owner who is also a black woman. I own a small dump truck business based in Gwinnett County, Georgia. We have been in business 3 years and employ 5 people. We support infrastructure projects throughout North Georgia. As a small business, there continue to be systemic barriers that hinder the growth and success of my business and business like mine and the DBE program makes it possible for us to compete amongst competitors many times our size. The DBE program has allowed us to secure contracts with Prime contractors, which allows our trucks to work AND allows us to have other small dump truck businesses (some of them DBEs) work with us on these projects.

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program has been a vital tool in leveling the playing field, ensuring that businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals have access to federal contracting opportunities. However, recent executive actions have threatened to dismantle these programs, jeopardizing the progress we've made in fostering an inclusive economy.

The DBE program has been instrumental in providing minority-owned businesses with opportunities to compete for and secure federal contracts. In 2023, small disadvantaged businesses received over 12% of federal contract dollars. However, Black-owned businesses secured only a small portion—1.61%. This share dipped even further in 2024, with Black-owned firms receiving just 1.54% of the \$637 billion allocated for small business-eligible federal contracting. The lion's share of federal contracts continued to favor large corporations.

These statistics highlight the persistent disparities that minority-owned businesses face in accessing federal contracting opportunities. The DBE program has been a crucial mechanism in addressing these disparities, providing support and resources to help these businesses thrive.

The rollback of the DBE program would certainly lead to a decline in the number of contracts awarded to minority-owned businesses, stifling their growth and undermining the principles of fairness and equality that our nation stands for.

Reauthorizing the DBE program is a moral imperative. It is a commitment to ensuring that all entrepreneurs, regardless of their background or size, have an equal opportunity to succeed.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Tashena Butler

Butler Brothers Trucking

Tashena Butler



April 30, 2025

To whom it may concern,

Cable Communications, Inc (CCI) is a certified WBE and DBE in electrical and communications and a union contractor with Local #134 I.B.E.W. Women-owned and operated. We specialize in electrical construction and maintenance, as well as fire alarm, telephone, and fiber optic installation. We have 35 employees. My mother and I are active in WCOE (Women Construction Owners and Executives), Women's First, and FWC (Federation of Women Contractors), of which we've been members for over 25 years. My mother began her entrepreneurial venture single-handedly in 1987. She established a communications company on Chicago's South Side against many naysayers and skeptics. She grew her business into a successful electric contracting business within a powerful boys' club. It was not easy. She was not always well-received or welcomed. But she persevered and supported our family through her relentless tenacity and hard work.

I have since stepped into a leadership role within this legacy business, equipped with the understanding that it has not gotten easier. We still have issues securing funding. We live under the constant stress of making payroll while we wait for larger firms who have hired us but show no urgency in making their payment dates per our contracts. 30% of our jobs are DBE, 65% are WBE and 5% are private work. Private work does not require any DBE, WBE, or MBE participation. We can't be an MBE because we are white. This percentage has been consistent with Cable for 20-plus years. If we only have 5% private jobs, and these programs are dissolved, we would be in a dire situation. If the DBE folds and WBE & MBE are next, the gravity of the situation would be a significant amount of small business closures. The loss of the DBE Program for CCI would severely reduce our opportunities to work on federally-funded projects to 0. Therefore, we would have to cut staff and/or close our doors.

The DBE Program is critical to our organization's success. I implore you to ensure the continuation and strengthening of this program and others meant to give small businesses a fighting chance.

The DBE Program has been a vital lifeline for us as we continue to face significant discrimination and exclusion from opportunities in the marketplace. The DBE Program remedies some of these gaps.

The DBE Program allows us to bid on projects we would not commonly have the opportunity to do, expanding our job opportunities and fostering growth. Without the DBE Program, CCI could not compete for federally funded projects. I encourage additional support DBEs, including access to credit, performance bonds, and training programs to enhance their competitiveness. I promote the expansion of these programs to deepen their impact. By strengthening this program, we can ensure these businesses continue to thrive and contribute to our economy.

Sincerel

Melissa C. Nurley



Bridging the law & business of infrastructure Certified woman-owned firm Irene Schild Caminer
Brian F. Caminer

2612 W. Sunnyside Ave. Chicago, IL 60625 (773)263-4013 irene@caminerlaw.com brian@caminerlaw.com www.caminerlaw.com

April 28, 2025

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure U.S. House of Representatives

Re: Reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program

My name is Irene Caminer, and I own Caminer Law, LLC, located in Chicago, IL. **Caminer Law, LLC** is a certified woman-owned, small business law firm that assists in infrastructure, procurement, legislative, regulatory, certification, ethics initiatives, estate planning, and communications. Caminer Law delivers sound, thoughtful, and thorough business advice, legal judgment, general counsel, and management and support services. Founded in 2018, Caminer Law serves individuals, businesses, organizations, and government entities. Most importantly Caminer Law is a DBE certified law firm serving directly and indirectly clients in the construction sector. The attorneys at Caminer Law have experience and expertise in infrastructure, utility management, municipal procurement, workforce development, MWDBE, DEI, ethics, legislation and regulatory matters, and not-for-profit matters.

The DBE program is an economic development program designed to help foster and grow small businesses. A Disadvantaged Business Enterprise or DBE is a for-profit small business concern engaged in business activities (1) That is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged; and (2) Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it. The DBE program is similar but different from the SBA program.

The Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act requires the Department to establish minimum uniform criteria for use by State government agencies in certifying whether a concern qualifies as a small business concern. Applicants carry the initial burden of proof regarding their eligibility and must demonstrate that they meet all certification

requirements, expertise in their area of business, in addition to social and economic disadvantaged status. Certification agencies follow the recommendations from annual disparity studies conducted in their respective states - requirements found in 49 CFR Part 26 to certify or deny firm DBE status.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not the same as DBE. DEI refers to practices and policies intended to support people who come from varying backgrounds and give them the resources they need to thrive in the workplace. DEI frameworks take into account factors like race, gender, and sexual orientation, so teams can find ways to help employees from marginalized groups succeed. There is no burden of proof for individuals claiming diverse backgrounds.

Without the DBE program's safeguards, businesses owned by historically marginalized groups and women (like mine) will be at a significant disadvantage in competing for federal contracts, exacerbating economic disparities and undermining decades of policy efforts to promote fair competition. The DBE program drives competition, resulting in lower taxpayer costs.

My small business, and all small businesses, play a vital role in strengthening our local communities. There are more than 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing more than 500,000 people. It is based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field. We drive economic growth, create jobs, and provide essential goods and services tailored to the unique needs of our neighborhoods. Local businesses reinvest earnings into the community, supporting schools, public services, and other essential infrastructure. By supporting small enterprises, we not only enhance economic stability but also cultivate a sense of pride and identity within our communities.

I urge you to take immediate legislative action to reauthorize the DBE Program. I appreciate your attention to this pressing issue and look forward to your leadership in advocating for economic opportunity for all.

Best,

Irene Schild Caminer

Irene Schild Caminer Caminer Law, LLC



April 29, 2025

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit (H&T)
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

CDW Consultants, Inc. has been a women-owned engineering company since its founding in 1990. The original, congressionally enacted Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program gave opportunities for marginalized individuals to work in and support transportation and related fields.

At the beginning, the majority owner was unable to get bank financing to get the business started, a barrier than had to be overcome. She held a Masters Degree in Environmental Engineering and was a licensed Professional Engineer with years of prior experience. She attributed the denial of financing to her relatively young age and her female gender. It made starting and growing the business very challenging.

CDW has continued to hire the best and brightest engineers and environmental scientists in a service industry that continues to grow rapidly. We offer a small-business culture that rewards merit, curiosity and initiative with flexible work hours, good benefits, and upward career moves.

CDW operates out of 1 office in eastern Massachusetts. Our service areas in the transportation sector are environmental and civil site engineering, natural resources permitting, hazardous building materials, stormwater management, environmental compliance, and the management and remediation of contaminant releases. CDW employs 24 people and our 3-year average gross annual revenue is \$4.3 million.

Our history as a woman-owned business has continued to be complicated by challenges including restrictions on owners to build wealth similar to non-woman owned businesses. We are often ridiculed, resented, and sidelined whenever possible on contracts unless enforcement of contract terms that include our representation occurs. We endure onerous contract terms, excessive insurance requirements, and wait months to be paid, all of which results in added costs to the firm.



Many of the prime contractors that hire CDW feel that our engagement on federally funded contracts is a gift. We respectfully deny this. Like many women in traditionally maledominated fields, women have to work twice as hard to be noticed half the time. The primes that do appreciate our quality work and responsiveness know that CDW provides valuable, meaningful contributions to project teams and seek to work with our firm again and again.

Our rates and overhead are significantly lower than our large firm peers, resulting in cost savings to our clients, and the taxpayers. Yet we are unable to compete with non-women owned firms because the strong perception remains that competent women are not held in the same regard. Beyond our own continuous experiences over 35 years, discrimination due to gender, race, background, and age, whether real or implied, and regardless of qualifications or competency, is clearly still very present in the transportation industry. The DBE Program fosters **economic development** for disadvantaged small businesses. It drives **competition**, resulting in **lower taxpayer costs**. It is based on **good faith efforts** and **leveling the playing field**. The DBE Program **MUST be reauthorized** in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill.

Very truly yours,

CDW CONSULTANTS, INC.

2 Jany bell

Kathleen Campbell, PE, LSP, LEED AP, ENV SP

President/CEO

My name is Caroline Hughes and I am in my 13th year of owning and running CE Hughes Milling, Inc. which provides pavement milling, striping, and other construction related services. My company employs close to 50 people between my Southern Indiana location (Jeffersonville, IN) and North Central Indiana location (Rochester, IN). I am 4th generation in the road construction industry, and built my own business from the ground up. When I say ground up, I mean I went all in. I moved into my parents house, took my life savings and loans out to purchase a used milling machine that flipped off the side of a bridge and restored it so that I could begin to compete in a market that hadn't seen new competition in over 25 years. It was a daunting task that I may not have taken on had I known how much I would have to give up. Nonetheless when I started, I worked countless hours leaving my office after dark and at times in tears of exhaustion and mental stress. I had to pinch every penny I had, literally using both sides of printer paper, and not turning on the hot water heater to save money, and I was going without a paycheck at times. I was all in, and success or failure was up to me.

Prior to starting my business, I attended the College of Charleston in South Carolina and received a BS in Business Administration. From there I moved home, worked for the family business and earned an MBA on nights and weekends from Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY. I paid off my student loans, and became an active member of the Heavy Highway Construction Industry. I was taught throughout school that I was no better with my degrees than anyone I was going to work with, and quite frankly inferior in many way because the people I was going to work with had amassed years of experience. They were right, and when I started in the industry I had a wealth of knowledge to gain and years of hard work ahead of me. Our Industry is OLD and we need everyone to be a part of it, I may not look like most in this industry, but and I am helping build what will carry us into the future and we need the DBE program to facilitate subcontractor growth and competition in this industry.

I give background as a way of showing I had the pedigree, education, and drive to make my company successful, but if it hadn't been for the DBE program my company would not have flourished. There were plenty of road blocks and feeling of being alone as a woman in the industry. When I first went to work in our family business I had an uncle that drove me to a waste water treatment plant and took me in the building where the "solid waste" was processed. I will never forget the smell, and that he was trying to deter me from coming to work in the company because it was a "dirty business" I assured him that I worked around horses growing up and was used to cleaning up after them and it wouldn't be a problem. I started in the accounting department, and then worked my way to management at the milling company. Once there I continued to work hard, cut costs and make the company as profitable as I could. My boss was happy with my work and the things I was doing to improve the company. I had a meeting with the CEO of the company who was an uncle about my future and he told me (not for the first time) that this was a male dominated industry, and also that highest position I could attain was to be the CFO because of my gender. Nonetheless I grew up in a family of 5 girls, and my dad raised us that we could do or be anything we wanted as long as we put our mind to it. There were several occasions where my dad would put me in a piece of equipment and show me a few things and then said figure the rest out. At association meetings it was not uncommon to be the only female there. Throughout my time is business I can say for sure that women don't make up a large portion of this industry and it is seldom that I interact with other women in my role accept for accounting or clerical reasons. However in the DBE world I do have contact with several wonderful female business owners who add so much value to our industry.

Losing the DBE program would cost The United States big time. I am saying this from personal experience and as a women who believes in fiscal responsibility, job creation and small business support. We desperately need people in this industry and it lacks women. The USBLS says that in 2020 there were only 7.7% of women in management positions in construction. I have lived and breathed this industry for years and if I was starting my business today without the support of the DBE program I am not sure that I would do it. The DBE program gave me training and a community that I would not have known if it weren't for the program's exhistance. It connected me with other business owners who were starting up and growing their business and we were able to do it together. It gave me a seat at the table and a reason for a contractor to subcontract me on a job because my price was low. I was able to grow from 2 employees to almost 50 in 13 years. I am the American dream, and I am helping provide our taxpayers a service we all benefit from. USDOT did right by this program because it helped create competition in a market that had seen no changes for years.

The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has impacted me by losing work. Prime contractors that have their own milling machines and are starting to do more of their work in-house because they don't have a goal to meet, so I am losing work. Plaintiff's are claiming taxpayers are being ripped off but provide no backup of this proof. Meanwhile they can lower prices to drive out competition while relying on the profits of their sister companies. Plaintiff's claim they are low bid but are not bidding as a prime contractor but rather quoting as a subcontractor to a Prime Contractor who does not have to use a low bid subcontractor. The DBE program doesn't hand out money to DBE's. There is a 10% federal goal attached to jobs, where DBE's send out competitive bids. If we cannot do quality work or send a competitive bid, we aren't getting the work. I started 13 years ago and none of my competitors went out of business because of this program, if anything the taxpayers got a reduction in pricing because there was more competition.

The DBE program has benefited me because I am a proud small business owner who employs so many people who are contributing members of society. It has allowed me to grow my business and sharpen my leadership skills in this market. The education in the DBE program was far more impactful than my MBA, and not even comparable to the SBA classes I went to which were a total waste. I am being a good steward of the education I was given by volunteering my time helping introduce this industry to women and minorities who have not had the opportunity to be a part of this industry, and helping small businesses increase their business potential. I have been able to donate to our communities, and bolster the economy by doing business with several local businesses. This program is NOT a handout, and it is vital to our heavy highway industry. I implore whomever is reading this to reach out to me and talk about the importance of this program to stay alive. It is imperfect, but vital to our Country. I believe in cutting wasteful spending, but it is not here. This program matters for the future of The United States of America, please reach out to me for more information or clarity. I want to be a part of the solution and I think you must hear both sides of this before it's too late. Thanks for your time!

Shondra Watson-Wilson Manager, Diversity Programs Chicago Transit Authority 567 W. Lake Street, 4th Floor Chicago, IL 60661

RE: Do All The Work, Have No Fun and Don't Get Paid

Ms. Watson-Wilson:

It was great to speak with you on yesterday at the DBE outreach. As I told you I will be passing on that project but I wanted you to know why. First let me say that I really appreciate all that you and all the other diversity managers with CTA and all the other branch of government do to help keep us in the game, however what we need you to understand is that construction management companies have another agenda. They come to CTA and sell themselves as the great supports of diversity but they are not. I believe we all, meaning DBE's, MBE's and WBE's get it and understand that's part of their sales pitch, but what does it say when they have very little or no skin in the game. For the most part they don't have any skin in the GAME!

They have huge amounts of cash at their disposal but it us the subcontractor DBE's that are financing the project. They sell their safety, but the liability for safety is pushed on us. They talk about their efforts in the area of community hiring, again that falls to us, the DBE's. The ones with the least amount of funds on hand but with the most skin in the game.

I know from the outside looking in pre-bids seem like a great opportunity for DBE's, but is it. Yes it can be but we are totally at the mercy of the construction management companies. Right now, and this is not a CTA project but it could be, I have this project that was to have a 18 month schedule, it got held up about 6 months, the construction management company is pushing me to get done in 12 months. This means I have to have more people on the site and working overtime that is not in my bid. I should say with regard to the overtime they are telling me that they will pick up the premium on those overtime hours. Will I be able to recover this additional cost, I don't know, only time will tell.

What I do know is that I have invoiced over SIX MILLION and have only received just over Four Million. That's \$2,000,000.00 I'm carrying, the difference which more than likely won't catch up until this project is all but done and long after I will still be waiting for the retainage. This is the part that the B2G Now does not tell you. We are carrying huge debt that can keep us from starting a new project and at the same time trying to stay current with our vendors, payment to our banks, union benefits and so on and so on. Again, they the construction management company has more money and can wait, we have less and need to paid vendors and employees.

With regards to community hiring, the management company sell this as a great thing and they will reassure CTA that the goals set are the floor not the ceiling because they will exceed those goals. NO, we the DBE subcontractors will exceed those goals. If somehow the goals come up short and there are penalties, we the DBE subcontractors will have to pay not the construction management company. Also we have to somehow make the Davis Bacon Act work and stay within the guide lines of our respective union rules. This in a huge burden on DBE subcontractors. No one ask if this was doable, just get it done. I can only speak to my problem, for me as a signatory electrical contractor, all my employees have to come from the referral hall or the 134 apprenticeship program. Unfortunately there are nearly no 134 electrician that will qualify as low income. If we hire someone with a laborer card, now we are forced to sign with the labors union which is an added cost, that person still can't do electrical work per the electrical union so now I have a person that I'm paying almost \$73.00 an hour with nothing for that person to do. Here's the thing, the construction management company more than likely has this in their bid, but they will have us deal with this at our cost. Again, who has the most skin in the game?

Let's talk about payroll. I would say that any of the trade DBE subcontractor on any CTA project would be paying anywhere from two to three time more per employee in the field than the construction management company. What do they self-perform, with what unions are they signatory? Again, who has the most skin in the game?

Safety, yes that's on us the DBE subcontractor as well. A great many construction management companies are insisting that we as the subcontractor have a 40 hour a week safety person on the site. This person has to be OSHA certified and can do only safety, NO ELECTRICAL WORK at all in those 40 hours. This is an added cost of about \$120,000.00 for a 12 month project. This is not a problem for the DBE subcontractor as long as that cost is in our bid. The construction manager's

safety person is only there to make sure if anything goes wrong, they the construction management company is free and clear of all liability and all fingers point to yes, the DBE subcontractor. We have to have a site specific safety plan, we have to write plans and procedure, we have to check their site and report all unsafe conditions and so on and so on. Who has the most skin in the game?

Now with more and more project being design assist or design build, I see the DBE's being push more and more to the at risk side of things. I once made the mistake of asking what the engineer of record does? I was told he was there to make sure we got it right. The thing is he would not provide any input until whatever was being developed was in place. If it meets code and is to the owner's satisfaction we are good, if not, the install will have to be redesign and installed again at the DBE subcontractors cost. This is the reason for my question on yesterday. Who has the most skin in this game?

Now let's see, we have to do all the heavy lifting and we carry all the liability but they make most or in some cases all the money. I was talking with a construction attorney once and he told me a very interesting thing. Come to think of it, it was more of a statement. The construction management company that wins the bid are for the most part the low bidder, they have to push that cost that they lift on the table to someone and if they can't make it up in change orders, it's got be push on to someone, as much as possible so that they the construction manager don't have to lose. Who has more skin in the game?

All this and I didn't even break surface of what goes on. The most confusing for me is, they do nothing, don't know what we know and will work against us all day, every day. If we the DBE subcontractor know what we are doing, our trade, we are arrogant and will not take direction. If we make a mistake, oh god the project either has to start over or there is no way to meet the schedule dates.

Heard something funny one day, where can you do all the work, have no fun and not get paid, AS A DBE SUBCONTRACTOR!



Citi Concepts Inc dba Baron Tours

Mailing: P.O. Box 1662, Falls Church, VA 22041 Office Address: 6815 Coolridge Drive, Temple Hills, MD 20748 P) 202-449-9671 F) 866-546-8819

April 17, 2025

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit U.S. Capitol Room H154, Washington, DC 20515–6601

RE: 2025 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill

Greetings

My name is Claudine B. Halabi, and I am the President of Citi Concepts Inc, doing business as Baron Tours, a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) headquartered in Temple Hills, Maryland. Our company has proudly served the transportation industry since 1985 and has been under my management since 2010. We currently employ a dedicated team of professionals providing safe, reliable, and high-quality transportation services across Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and nationwide.

The DBE program has been absolutely critical to the survival and growth of small businesses like mine. It gives us a fighting chance when bidding against large corporations that have deeper financial resources, larger marketing budgets, and longstanding political connections. DBE certification does not hand us contracts — it ensures that we are not immediately pushed aside before we even have a fair opportunity to compete.

The recent Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already created disruption and uncertainty. Without the protection of the DBE program, companies like mine would face significant barriers to accessing federally funded opportunities, directly impacting our ability to sustain operations, retain employees, and continue contributing to our local economies.

I can point to real-world examples that show exactly how important the DBE program is. Through DBE participation, Baron Tours secured the opportunity to support inauguration transportation for the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department — a contract we otherwise would have never been able to compete for against much larger corporations. That work not only sustained our own employees but also allowed us to feed subcontract opportunities to other small businesses who helped us execute that monumental task.

Similarly, during the Pope's visit to the United States, we were able to serve as a subcontractor to a major corporation that was required to provide DBE participation. Without the DBE program,



Citi Concepts Inc dba Baron Tours

Mailing: P.O. Box 1662, Falls Church, VA 22041
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P) 202-449-9671 F) 866-546-8819

companies like ours — and the many small businesses we partner with — would never have had the chance to participate in such major events.

The DBE program doesn't just give small businesses an opportunity — it forces larger corporations to share the work, spreading economic opportunity and fueling growth across multiple layers of the economy. It ensures that every business, regardless of size, is given a fair chance to participate and succeed.

Eliminating or weakening the DBE program would devastate small businesses across the country. It would lead to fewer jobs, less competition, and a concentration of public contracts in the hands of a few mega-corporations, driving up taxpayer costs and reducing innovation.

DBEs collectively contribute billions of dollars to the American economy and embody the true spirit of entrepreneurship, resilience, and opportunity. Stripping away this program would not only harm individual businesses — it would undermine the economic diversity and competitiveness that keep our country strong.

I urge the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to reauthorize and strengthen the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill.

The DBE program is not about special treatment — it is about fair treatment. It ensures that businesses built through hard work, resilience, and expertise are given a real opportunity to bid, compete, and succeed.

Best Regards

Claudine Halabi

President

Citi Concepts Inc

I own a pavement marking company near Denver Colorado called Co Stripe LLC. We are dependent on the DBE program because we are small and family owned. Our business is expanding towards offering modified epoxy services which is about a one million dollar investment in equipment. We will utilize the DBE to help implement adding this service to our business successfully. By successfully expanding our business we will be creating more jobs that pay well above the minimum wage. The epoxy services are primarily being performed by very large companies (Corporations and Private Equity Companies) who are often the companies that we depend on to purchase epoxy from. Thus they are able to purchase materials at a drastically discounted price compared to what we would purchase them for. The DBE helps to level the playing field for Co Stripe in the transportation industry.

Thank you,

--

Amber Lefever
Owner
Co Stripe, LLC
m: (720) 495-1556

Analyzer International Inc Letter

Organization Name: Cogito, LLC

Contact Name: Ron Teninty Title: Company Manager

Email: ron@cogitopartners.com Phone Number: (154) 953-9064

Statement

Cogito, LLC is a Public Involvement business. We have been in operation since 2010 providing public involvement services as a DBE for state, county, and local governments, and the private sector. We specialize in bringing the public into sophisticated dialogue about transportation, land use, and economic issues. Creative methods for conveying complex information, ability to clearly articulate differences in perspectives, and decades of experience negotiating workable solutions characterize our public engagement strategies. Based in Lane County, we are a local partnership of two women who hold 60 years of combined experience in the fields of land use, transportation, and economics.

We are used by our clients mostly because of our outstanding service and solving problems before they become points of litigation. Our clients also use us to satisfy their DBE requirements. The DBE program drives competition, resulting in lower taxpayer costs. The program is also based on good faith efforts to level the playing field. We have been a successful small business with three women partners and no employees. Our work has provided a solid income for three different families.

Additional Information

- All
- Transportation
- Planning
- Policy and Facilitation
- Construction



Golden Gardens Park Master Plan



Link Lane Transit Plan







RIORITIES



Downtown Priorities and Projects



Lane County Stabilization Center



McKenzie Disaster Recovery Collaboration



Eugene Town Square



Building a Justice System for Benton County



Bolton Sports Complex



Middle Housing Code Changes



Housing and Community Development Plan



Lane County Bicycle Master Plan



Active Transportation for East 30th



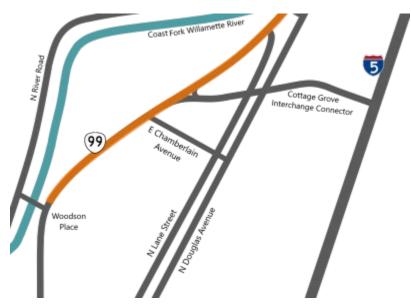
ODOT Eugene Area Construction Outreach



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene NEPA Study



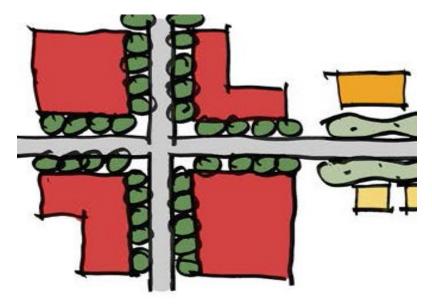
Lane County Justice Center



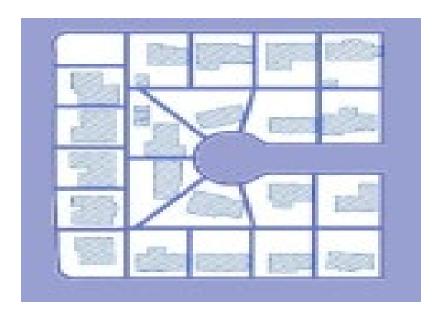
OR 99: Cottage Grove Urban Upgrades



Franklin Boulevard Transformation



River Road Corridor Study



Clear and Objective Housing Criteria



Safe Routes to School



The Dalles Downtown Visioning



Central Eugene In-Motion



Neighborhood Planning



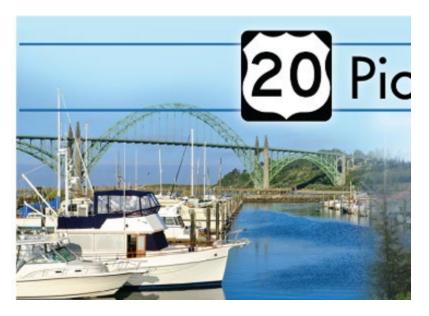
U.S 101 Bridges Repair and Protection



Salem Congestion Relief Task Force



Eugene Downtown Riverfront Park



Pioneer Mountain Eddyville ODOT



Public Outreach Lane Transit District



Franklin Boulevard Springfield



Wilsonville Transit Master Plan



<u>Transportation Options Plan ODOT</u>



Eugene Airport Master Plan



Main Street Vision Plan Springfield



ConnectOregon VI Facilitation ODOT



Delta Highway to River Road Improvements

Beltline Highway Planning ODOT



Downtown Riverfront Planning Eugene



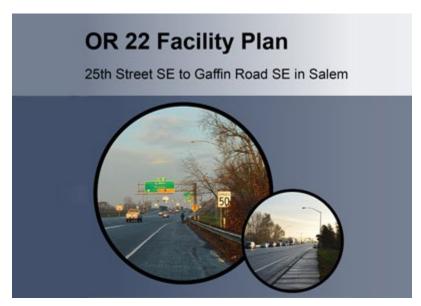
Eugene City Hall Master Plan



South Willamette Street Plan



Transportation Plan Albany Region



Highway 22 Facility Plan Salem

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DBE Reauthorization Story

Thank you for the opportunity to share why reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program is vital to small businesses like mine. My name is Arianna Barrios and I am the owner and Chief Operating Officer (CEO) of Communications LAB, a small business based in Orange, CA. Our firm has found success, growth, and sustainability as a certified DBE agency.

Communications LAB was founded 13 years ago through an acquisition. At that time, I was an independent consultant, with a growing book of contractual business when I was approached by another business owner about acquiring their public relations and community outreach clients and employees. Transforming from a lone consultant into a full-fledged businessowner and employer is an enormous step in the life of an entrepreneur, one that is both anxiety-inducing and exciting.

As I stepped into this next phase of my business's growth, I worked hard to learn everything I could about business ownership, corporate accounting, business scaling, human resources, marketing my new company to build a sustainable business. In fact, many of these trainings were provided at no cost through my local Small Business Development Center which is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration and a wonderful resource to start-ups like mine. It was at this juncture that I first learned of the DBE program and the contract opportunities available to certified companies. This was of particular interest given that so many of the contracts and clients I had just acquired were government issued.

Once we became a DBE-Certified, which is not a simple endeavor, a host of opportunities opened to our firm. Not only did the certification make us competitive in the highly competitive government contracting space, it also allowed us to build valuable partnerships with larger firms in our professional space and also with large engineering and construction firms seeking to build multidisciplinary teams for large-scale public infrastructure projects. The benefits of our DBE certification are many and have allowed me to grow my business tenfold since our inception in 2013, both in revenue and employees. Although I am confident we would have found a measure of success without DBE certification, our growth would not have had the same strong trajectory it has enjoyed without it, nor maintain a workforce of 20-22 team members.



DBE and SBE certification, and the public agency policies that support such firms in government procurement has made the contracting environment accessible, transparent and more competitive over the years that I have been a businessowner. It has allowed smaller, creative firms such as mine to thrive and compete against firms 10 times our size and win on an even playing field – and/or partner and build teams where all boats rise.

On a final note, the success that DBE certification has allowed us to achieve also has intangible benefits that are important to enumerate. As strong, thriving business in our local community, both myself, my company, and my staff have found a myriad of ways to give back. This includes charitable giving and sponsorships, serving on local nonprofit boards and professional associations, and maintaining a robust internship and mentorship program for high school and college students. The ability to share our accomplishments with the local community has been one of the most truly rewarding aspects of my professional life and our DBE certification is fundamental to our continued success.

The DBE Certification Program has allowed 50,000 business owners like me to provide employment opportunities and achieve success in all regions of the U.S. because it is a powerful tool supporting small businesses and entrepreneurship. I urge you with the strongest possible plea to Reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Thank you,

Arianna Barrios, Owner & CEO

Communications LAB

Orange, CA

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Stephanie M. Duncan, and I am the President of Crossroads Highway Products, LLC, a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Woman Business Enterprise (WBE). I founded my business in July 2019, became DBE-certified in August 2020, and have since expanded my certification to 32 additional states. My office and warehouse are located in Central Indiana, where I proudly stock and supply infrastructure materials to contractors across the region.

Before obtaining my DBE certification, breaking into the industry was nearly impossible. As a small business, I was competing against manufacturers who sold directly to contractors and large suppliers with far greater purchasing power. In my first year, I had zero sales. It was only through persistence and leveraging relationships with contractors—built through my husband's company, Mooresville Welding, Inc.—that I secured my first contract in 2020.

During the pandemic, I applied for DBE certification. The process was rigorous, requiring tax records, corporate documents, and an on-site INDOT inspection via Zoom to verify my legitimacy. But it was worth it. My sales that year jumped to \$471,088.61.

With DBE and WBE certifications opening doors, I proved my value through reliability, quality service, and a commitment to stocking materials that no other supplier in Indiana carried. My sales grew steadily:

2021: \$330,542.72
2022: \$1,299,770.54
2023: \$1,512,576.04
2024: \$1,445,231.40

My dedication to this industry was recognized when Watson Bowman Acme appointed me as the exclusive stocking supplier for their expansion joint materials in Indiana. This shift not only made my pricing more competitive but also allowed contractors to meet DBE goals without paying a premium. I further expanded my offerings by becoming a stocking supplier of Sika USA infrastructure products, increasing opportunities for both my business and the contractors I serve.

Then, on October 3, 2024, I learned of the injunction on the DBE program. I immediately reached out to INDOT for clarification. The response I received was vague and alarming: contracts involving MAMCO and Buckshaw Trucking would have no DBE goals. That was it—no prior notice, no chance to advocate for the businesses like mine that would be devastated by this decision.

I was terrified. What would happen to my business, my employees, my investments? Would Watson Bowman Acme and Sika USA still need me, or would they revert to selling directly, leaving me out? With DBE goals vanishing from every contract I bid on, I had no choice but to seek certification in other states in hopes of survival.

Since the injunction, I have not secured a single contract from the October 2024, November, December, or January 2025 lettings. I have connected with other DBEs facing similar struggles—some have already lost supplier relationships, while others are on the verge of closing their doors.

If this injunction remains in place, I do not see a future for my business. I will default on my business line of credit. I will lose my car. My reputation, my credit, my livelihood—all at risk. The American Dream I worked so hard to build will be shattered.

This injunction is not just hurting businesses—it is destroying them. I hate to think what will happen to the over 50,000 small, women and minority owned businesses across the country if the DBE program is not reauthorized in the upcoming infrastructure and transportation bill.

My story is just one of many, and I urge those in power to recognize the irreversible damage being done currently and that which could devastate our economy if the DBE program is not reauthorized.

Respectfully, Stephanie M. Duncan President, Crossroads Highway Products, LLC



CURBS, ETC., INC.

3528 S. DuPont Blvd. • Smyrna, DE 19977 • (302) 653-5041 • (302) 653-3511 • FAX (302) 653-5429

DA: April 29, 2025

TO: COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

I, Carol Ewing, have been in the highway construction industry in Delaware since 1976. I am writing this letter to stress the importance of the Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. Hopefully, you will understand how beneficial this Program is to myself and the 50,000 other DBE's depending on the opportunity to continue competing for work on federally assisted construction projects.

In 1980 Ewing Farms, Inc. was certified as a "Women Owned Business" with the Delaware Dept. of Transportation (DelDOT), and with Maryland DOT & City of Baltimore in 1985. The company performed Seeding, Mulching, and Landscaping items on DelDOT, City of Baltimore and Commercial projects.

September, 1988: After women were added to the DISADVANTAGED ENTERPRISE PROGRAM, Ewing Farms, Inc. received a letter from DelDOT stating I should "show cause" why Ewing Farms should not be decertified. After attending a hearing and appealing the decision to USDOT, Ewing Farms, Inc. was decertified by the very same DelDOT agency that had originally certified it in 1980. I know what it is like not to be given the same opportunities to compete. Without DBE certification, the phone calls from prime contractors requesting prices stopped. Contractors only sub out items they are not interested in completing and what is necessary to obtain DBE goals. On private commercial projects, it's usually who you know and not necessarily based on being low bid. Ewing Farms survived by completing contracts that had been procured before the decertification, and scaled down from to 6-8 employees.

August, 1989: Formed my concrete construction company, Curbs, Etc., Inc., It was DelDOT DBE certified to do curb, sidewalk and other misc. concrete items in November, 1989. In 1991, I merged both my companies, Ewing Farms, Inc. & Curbs, Etc., Inc. The merger allowed Curbs, Etc. Inc. to quote both concrete and seeding work. Within a year, Curbs, Etc., Inc. was unjustly decertified after getting three contracts on 41 miles of the new Route 1 DelDOT projects. The reason given for the decertification? "Ms. Ewing does the hiring, firing, bidding, banking, accounting and legal work. It is doubtful Ms. Ewing possesses the operational and managerial expertise to control the company."

1988-1995: Many hearings and appeals to prove my company should have DBE status. I now contemplated filing bankruptcy. I worked out agreements with suppliers for 90-day credit terms and mortgaged my house to stay afloat. Legal fees to fight DelDOT for those 7 years were more than \$300,000.00. I had lost several millions of dollars in contracts when low bid simply because I did not have the DBE status. Any profit realized during that time was used to pay legal fees. I also owed the IRS for withholding taxes and was unable to purchase much needed equipment. When the IRS threatened to auction off my equipment, my sister came to my rescue with a loan to satisfy them.

June, 1995: Curbs, Etc., Inc. regained DBE status after DelDOT Deputy Atty. Gen. overruled DelDOT's decertification. Once again I was given the opportunity to get enough contracts to keep my employees working. I met with my bank to consolidate equipment loans to save \$4,000 a month, however, my request was denied. The loan officer justified his decision by telling me "If you had not decided to fight for your DBE status, you would not be in this position. I don't understand how DBE designation helps you get additional work. Your recent Corporate tax returns show losses and you will be unable to pay back any loan." Yet, I had always managed to pay the higher rate loans on time throughout my ordeal. I then went to a small Delaware Bank and discussed my need with someone I knew. He was willing to give me a chance and granted Curbs a loan using property I owned as collateral. I was able to get enough work to increase my employees to 7 salaried full time and 10-15 hourly workers.





April 29, 2025 Page 2 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Being centrally located in Delaware allows Curbs, Etc., Inc. to work in all three counties throughout the State. Living and working in such a small state is interesting, and it does have its drawbacks – gossip about others being the biggest problem. Even though I have worked in construction all these years does not mean discrimination regarding women working in a non-traditional industry no longer exists. It never goes away. It just takes different forms. Below are several examples to illustrate my point.

After procuring a large project in 2014, a Prime Contractor requested a meeting due to the anticipated rapid schedule. I was informed three people would attend: the VP, the project manager, and another person. When I arrived, there were SEVEN men sitting around a conference table, including the owner of the company, ready to bombard me with questions. Since I do not schedule the concrete work, I had a male employee who does stop in to attend the meeting, much to their surprise. When we left, he asked what that was all about. It was obvious by their questions they were there to check me out to see if I really knew my business.

Recently, a Project Manager asked another male employee, "Since Carol's husband died, you are in charge, right?" This P.M. has never had contact with me in any capacity but has worked with my company for many years. My employees in the field are constantly told how lucky we are to get contracts handed to Curbs, Etc. due to being a DBE. In 2016, I hired a woman, recently retired from DelDOT, who had been responsible for writing and revising DelDOT construction specifications. I warned her how she would now see a different side of construction. As soon as others from DelDOT knew she worked for me, she was met with opposition by many of them. Even though she is an expert regarding the specifications, her knowledge was constantly questioned. In 2021, she chose to depart from my company due to experiencing disrespect and discrimination for more than four years. She rejoined my team in 2024 and observed not much had changed. She has now become resilient to their comments and finally recognizes their bad behavior is not caused by anything she does. Those people are obviously intimidated by intelligent women like her who does her job well and stands up for herself when she is correct. I think I have finally convinced her she is not the cause of the their attitudes, it is their prejudices. She is responsible for making sure the specifications are followed, as well as measuring and verifying quantities with Inspectors so that we are paid correctly.

I called a Prime Contractor about one of his on-site Project Managers who absolutely REFUSED to communicate with ME. He was reprimanded and was later overheard talking to another employee from his company saying "What can I do, I have to use her company. I don't understand why we give our work to a DBE." He continues to communicate by going through one of my employees and not me to get answers. This arrangement is better than my having to deal with him.

Even with the DBE Program in place, some Prime Contractors manipulate contracts to ensure they do not subcontract any more than the percentage of participation required. They accept my quoted prices, then eliminate items or quantities so they will not go over the needed DBE dollar amount. Or, since all quantities are approximate, when the total dollar amount is attained on an ongoing project, others have finished my contracted work items with their own forces. Some insist that <u>every</u> item quoted is the lowest price given by all DBE's that quote those same items on that project before they will write a subcontract. My prices are based on the total package, win on some, break even or lose on others. Many times not all items quoted appear on my contract.

Some Primes are very indignant and not quiet about stating they are "forced to give away" work to a DBE because they can complete the entire contract themselves. They already get 90%, but they want 100%. Using my company is optional and NO ONE HAS EVER USED MY COMPANY UNLESS I AM LOW BID. We get work based on low bid, take responsibility for our work, and are excellent at what we do. Because of this reputation and the DBE Program, Curbs, Etc., Inc. can quote otherwise unavailable work.

Without the DBE Program small specialty contractors, such as I and the 50,000 other DBE's, would never be able to compete against these large companies. We could not grow and would face the real possibility of having to shut down completely. Although I am a registered Republican and vote Republican, due to personal experience, I vehemently disagree when it is said that the DBE Program unfairly benefits undeserving companies over Prime Contractors.

April 29, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:



Please ensure that Americans in every one of our communities continue to benefit from the good and faithful work of DBE companies and their employees – by reauthorizing the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

I've owned my transportation planning consulting business ever since I stopped working as a Master Certified Auto Mechanic in 2005. My firm has been DBE-certified since 2016. My company has worked on projects across Maine and also in New Hampshire, two of the most rural states in the country, with some of the oldest populations in the United States. Cushman Transportation Consulting, LLC's efforts have helped make it safer for people in our towns to drive, walk, bicycle and ride public transportation, in order to reach their jobs and to access essential services. Losing the DBE program would be devastating not only for my business and others', but also for the quality of the infrastructure built on the ground and the wellbeing of the folks we serve in local communities

The access to the opportunity for my firm *simply to compete* for projects (much less be awarded them) changed significantly when I became a DBE. And the amount of work Cushman Transportation Consulting has been able to do increased considerably. The private sector, government, and non-profit professionals with whom I've contracted and subcontracted have shared how important my firm's contributions have been for various community transportation efforts. However, they would have been less likely to contract with my company (or wouldn't have even have considered me as an option) before I was a DBE. Our family has benefitted from my DBE business income, and frankly the program has helped me proudly show my teenage daughter, and our goddaughter who lives with us, what can be accomplished if they work hard, even in an industry that has traditionally gone back to the same big male-dominated firms over and over for contracts.

I also know for a fact that my firm has helped save taxpayers' costs, because the program drives competition and has kept my and other firms' fees lower. Even with the DBE program helping level the playing field, we work hard to compete. In addition, DBE companies often advance transportation projects further than might otherwise occur - because we are generally smaller, lighter on our feet, and more able to move quickly and innovate. Many DBE firms are also linchpin supports for the subcontracting arm of construction. Finally, I've seen how the DBE program contributes not only to the economic development of the DBE firms themselves, but to broader economic development - through providing jobs, purchasing goods and services, and serving as small business leaders in our communities. Because we can't do everything in-house, we are pushed to build relationships across the industry and even other sectors – so we're often knitting together different economic entities to work more efficiently and spur development, etc.

Thank you very much for listening, for your thoughtful discernment on this critical issue, and for doing what's best for *all* the people of America. Reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cushman, Owner

Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

I have been in business since January 2011. I own four dump trucks and employ four employees. Three of these dump trucks cost over \$190,000 dollars. I have spent a lot of money to have good quality trucks and by doing so I have helped our economy. But with that comes the dump trucks payments I need to make to the bank.

I became DBE certified October 2024. Prior to becoming DBE certified my company did not have near the purchase orders. I relied on being a broker truck for companies. By becoming DBE certified I have been able to obtain my own jobs.

I live in a very small rural community that is also in a HUD zone so the work around here is just not available as it is in larger communities. I need the DBE program to continue so my company can continue to grow, and my employees have secure job positions.



PROVIDING CIVIL ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS SINCE 1926

TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC / SAFETY

FACILITY / SITE DEVELOPMENT

SURVEY

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

April 30, 2025

To Whom is may concern:

Reauthorization of the DBE program is very important to DGL Consulting Engineers. We are a civil engineering firm in Maumee, OH with 65 employees. DGL started in 1926 and we evolved from primarily a transportation firm to also offering survey, civil, structural and inspection. Since becoming a DBE in 2020, we have grown from approximately 40 employees to today's 65.

The loss of the DBE program would severely impact our business. Our revenue has nearly doubled in the last 5 years as a DBE. As a DBE, DGL is able to team with larger firms and learn new skills. We have a full palette of civil engineering abilities and can offer flexibility for prime consultants. Even with this full palette of skills, we are always learning something to advance our firm. DGL has been able to increase the number of DBE eligible owners over the past 5 years. We have three women owners and one black male owner along with 5 additional owners.

The DBE program allows for more opportunities for DBE firms, which fosters economic growth. In our current world of mergers and acquisitions, the smaller are disappearing. These small firms help drive the engineering field, foster cooperation between firms, and supports those under represented in the engineering field - namely women and minorities.

Sincerely,

DGL Ownership Group

Laurie Adams, Ahmed Hamid, Amy Zimmerman, Corrinne Lochtefeld Scot Morehouse, Josh O'Neil, RJ Lumbrezer, Nick Lake, Kyle Layton

Maumee, Ohio 419.535.1015

Dublin, Ohio 614.356.7150

Independence, Ohio 440.387.4113

Port Clinton, Ohio 419.635.7541

Wauseon, Ohio 419.330.1360

dgl.ltd.com



3501 N. 16th Street • Zion, IL 60099 Office: **847.537.2280**

doetschcontractors.com

My name is Belle and I own and operate a union-signatory earthwork contracting company in the highly-competitive Chicago construction market. I started my business in 2012 with 2013 being our first season. My company has grown from 1 semi truck and driver to over 12 employees, a fleet of 10 excavators, many trucks and additional equipment. We have worked on projects at iconic Chicago locations: O'Hare airport, the Shedd Aquarium and Lincoln Park Zoo. We did the earthwork for the M2 Tollway Maintenance building utilizing our DBE certification.

The DBE certification has opened doors for me and my company in a market that would typically be next to impossible to compete in. A common misconception is that work is 'handed' to DBEs instead of non-certified firms -- this is simply not true. Every job that my company is a part of we have to win with a competitive bid. What the DBE program does do is require the large contractors to invite and review pricing from subcontractors that they may not typically consider.

Without this opportunity, the larger contractors can continue to work with their preferred subs and continue allowing only the larger trade companies to participate. In essence, doing away with the DBE program shelters the larger trade subcontractors from competition as opposed to having the DBE program in place to encourage greater competition, better pricing and opportunities for all.

IDOT programs have already been pulled in our work area and re-issued for bid without DBE requirements. As a result, my company has seen a drastic decrease in bid invitations from larger contractors who pursue IDOT work Prime. If work in this market remains unattainable for my company, I will likely need to lay off employees. As a single mother raising two kids entirely on my own, the loss of revenue has an immediate impact on my ability to support my family.

Sincerely, Isabelle Harlow, President

➤ Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

My name is Dominica Robinson, and I'm the owner of D'Signs Notary Services, a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). I operate a small but growing business based in California that offers mobile notary services, government contract fulfillment, training programs, and subcontracted services like courier work, translation, and mystery riding. We currently have a team of four and support additional subcontractors depending on project scope. I've proudly built this business from the ground up over the last 5 years, navigating the complexities of entrepreneurship as a Black woman in a male-dominated contracting space.

We operate in an urban area, serving communities that are often overlooked in both public and private investments. The DBE program has been instrumental in my company's ability to compete. Without it, opportunities would be limited to large firms with greater access, capital, and networks—putting small, disadvantaged businesses like mine at a severe disadvantage.

The recent injunction in the Mid-America vs. USDOT case has already created confusion and delays in awarding contracts where DBE participation was expected. We've seen opportunities stall or be redirected, causing us to hold off on hiring and scale back services in some areas. The uncertainty is already impacting my ability to grow and plan for the future.

The DBE program gave me a seat at the table—something that wouldn't have happened without federal intervention to level the playing field. Because of this program, I've been able to employ others in my community, offer mentorship to other women and minority-owned businesses, and provide services that help underserved neighborhoods thrive.

Let me be clear: removing or weakening this program would not only hurt my business—it would take away opportunities from the communities that rely on small DBEs to deliver quality, affordable services. The DBE program fosters competition, reduces taxpayer costs, and ensures equity in how public funds are distributed. There are over 50,000 DBEs nationwide supporting more than 500,000 jobs. That's not just a statistic—it's livelihoods, families, and futures at stake.

We need this program not only reauthorized—but protected and expanded. It represents good faith, fairness, and economic justice.

Sincerely,
Dominica Robinson
Owner, D'Signs Notary Services
Elk Grove, California

I started by business in 2003. I was getting ready to retire from Clark County Division of Air Quality and saw a need for someone to prepare dust control permits for the construction company or individual who was limited on time and resources. My mom and I started a partnership to help out these individuals and businesses.

We are a company of two and we are located in Logandale, Nevada which is a rural community, however, we do dust control permits for all of Clark County Nevada, which is huge. We have also done dust control permits in Nye County Nevada and in Maricopa, Arizona.

I believe I would not get the business I do, if not for the DBE/SBA program because it causes large companies to use our services.

It is a headache to have to recertify every year. I could see doing it every three to five years.

I am a staunch supporter of conservative values and am thrilled to see our country getting back on track to support business and MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN.

ENTCO International, Inc. Letter

Contact Name: Terry Quick

Title: President

Organization Name: ENTCO International, Inc.

Email: TERRYQ@ENTCO.COM

Phone Number: (425) 670-0888

Statement

ENTCO International, Inc. was established in 1987.

I am the owner and President. I am an honorably discharged Vietnam Veteran of the USAF Security Service.

At it's peak ENTCO employed 22 and managed all types of corporate meetings, conferences and public events worldwide.

DBE made it possible for ENTCO to compete equitably and secure contracts on state and federal government projects that we were otherwise blocked from even bidding on because of our small size.

We average citizens, regardless of party affiliation, must recognize the current administration is going far beyond politics to establish a dictatorship. This is not "Trump's County"... it is "OUR COUNTY" and I am stepping up to maintain the democracy all citizens regardless of political party enjoyed until January 2025.

Unless we step up now, all future government projects will be assigned by the Administration to their cronies and none of us will have the opportunity to participate.

Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

Environmental Consulting Services (ECS), a women-owned small business based in Denver, Colorado, strongly supports the reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. ECS, operating since 2018 with 12 employees, provides environmental compliance and consulting services for transportation and construction projects, primarily in urban areas.

The DBE Program has been instrumental in leveling the playing field, enabling ECS to secure subcontracting opportunities that drive economic growth. It has supported job creation, skill development, and community investment, directly benefiting our team, their families, and the Denver metro area. The program fosters competition, reducing taxpayer costs while empowering over 50,000 DBEs and 500,000+ employees nationwide.

Losing the DBE Program would severely limit ECS's ability to compete for federal contracts, threatening our sustainability and workforce. The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already created uncertainty, delaying project approvals and increasing administrative burdens.

Reauthorizing the DBE Program in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill is critical to sustaining economic development for disadvantaged businesses. ECS urges lawmakers to prioritize this program to ensure continued inclusion and opportunity.

Environmental Design International inc. (EDI), a minority woman-owned Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, was founded in 1991 and recently celebrated its 34th anniversary. Headquartered in Chicago, IL, EDI provides a broad range of environmental and engineering services to public and private clients in the infrastructure, transportation, and utilities sectors. EDI currently employs 65 professionals in our Chicago and Joliet, IL, offices with expertise in: civil and construction engineering; environmental engineering and consulting; industrial hygiene consulting; professional land surveying; and computer-aided drafting and design (CADD) services.

EDI's ability to continue to provide outstanding professional services to our clients would be negatively impacted by the loss of the DBE Program we participate in. As a small, family-owned business it is extremely challenging to compete with the large, publicly-traded, multinational engineering firms that dominate our industry. Without the DBE incentive for these major companies to consider smaller firms like EDI, they will rely exclusively on inhouse services or advantageous partnerships with other large companies. This will result in reduced competition, higher costs to clients, and less innovation in the critical areas EDI supports.

The DBE Program has helped EDI to be seriously *considered* for opportunities to provide excellent, innovative services to our clients. Nothing has been granted because of the DBE Program, EDI's services must be of the highest caliber at competitive prices. However, without the DBE Program, EDI would struggle even more to gain the attention of our clients and partners. Once that vital attention is gained with the help of the DBE Program, EDI will continue to provide high quality, professional jobs in both Chicago and Joliet, greatly benefiting those communities. EDI employs, mentors, and trains people from all backgrounds, and emphasizes merit-based promotions and professional growth. The benefits EDI provides to our clients, employees, and communities would be greatly reduced due to significantly less competition if the DBE Program was eliminated.



Civil Engineering - Construction Management - Program/Project Management

As a woman owned civil engineering company, the DBE program is the only way I could have grown to what my company is now. I have six full time employees and am growing thanks to the requirements of the DBE program. It drives competition, resulting in lower taxpayer costs. There are over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing 500,000+ people. It is based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field. The DBE Program fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses. I'm a registered Republican and believe the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program needs to be reauthorized.

513 N. Lucas St. West Columbia, SC 29169

April 30, 2025

Stephanie Duncan President/DBE's of America

To whom all this may concern:

Subject: Support for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and Its Role in Our Success

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the efforts to abolish the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. As the owner of Grant Electrical Contracting, LLC, a small electrical contracting business established 15 years ago, I can confidently attest to the critical role this program has played in fostering fair opportunities, sustaining small enterprises, and promoting diversity in the industry.

Grant Electrical Contracting, LLC began with a vision to provide high-quality electrical services while creating stable jobs for the community. We are located in the suburbs; however, we service/complete jobs in the suburbs and rural areas Over the years, we have grown to employ 12 dedicated professionals—each contributing to our success and the local economy. As a certified DBE, we have had the chance to compete for contracts that would have otherwise been dominated by larger firms. This program has leveled the playing field, enabling businesses like ours to thrive and contribute meaningfully to broader economic growth.

Eliminating the DBE Program would have a devastating impact not only on businesses like mine but also on the diverse communities, these enterprises support. It would dismantle an important mechanism designed to ensure equity and opportunity in sectors that are often challenging for small and disadvantaged businesses to penetrate.

I urge you to consider the broader implications of ending this program. The DBE Program is not merely a business support mechanism; it is a pathway to empowerment, inclusion, and economic sustainability. I respectfully request that you advocate for the continuation of this invaluable initiative.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am happy to provide additional insights into the positive impacts the DBE Program has had on Grant Electrical Contracting, LLC and many other enterprises like ours.

Yours sincerely,

Quency E. Grant, Jr.

President
Grant Electrical Contracting, LLC
grantelectricalcontracting@yahoo.com/ (803) 936-0071

Great Lakes Metals Corp.

8920 S. Octavia Bridgeview, IL 60455 Voice: (708) 430-0500 Fax: (708) 430-0505 WBE/DBE / FBE Certified – State of IL WBE / DBE Certified – State of IN WDBE Certified – State of WI DBE Certified – State of TN

www.greatlakesmetals.com

April 21, 2025

TO: US House of Representatives Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

FROM: Great Lakes Metals Corporation – Donna M. Herpich, President

RE: Disadvantaged Business Program

To Whom It May Concern

We are a WBE/DBE certified steel supplier in the State of Illinois. We have been in business for 31 years. To my knowledge, we are the ONLY WBE steel supplier in the States of Illinois and Kentucky.

We are a small business with only 5 employees who depend on us to support their families. The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has caused us quite a loss in business. We have not been awarded any IDOT, INDOT, WIDOT, etc. jobs in 2025, which we rely on to run our business.

The DBE Program supports the subcontracting arm of construction and gives contractors a credit for using our company. Without this program, we are in fear of losing our business, as I am sure many companies are.

We are quite proud of certifications and are sure to follow all of the rules and regulations put forth by the DOT. We do not feel it is fair to hardworking companies to be losing revenue due to this issue.

Please consider our interests when making your decision regarding the DBE/WBE Programs.

Sincerely,

Great Lakes Metals Corporation





GRIFFIN CONSULTING & CONTRACTING, LLC

2112 GLENDALE DR. DECATUR, GA 30032 PHONE: (770) 912–4859, EMAIL: HOLLIS@GRIFFINCC.NET

Re: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

Griffin Consulting & Contracting, LLC (GCC) is a distinguished company within the construction industry. Established in 2016 and located in the urban section Decatur, Georgia, GCC specializes in commercial, residential, and industrial construction services. We have five employees and over twenty subcontractors working in various sectors of the industry. GCC has performed services on significant projects such as the Atlanta Airport, City of Atlanta, and DeKalb County, including project management and renovation. GCC has collaborated with leading businesses and property developers to bring their visions to fruition.

GCC can boast such capabilities due to our association with the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. DBE has created opportunities for our company that would have been challenging for a small, socially, and economically disadvantaged company like ours to participate and compete with major companies for federally funded projects. The DBE program has increased market access and contract opportunities for us while fostering networking collaborations between prime contractors and DBE organizations.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds broadband access, clean water, and electric grid renewal, in addition to transportation and road proposals. These programs are beneficial to our communities, and organizations like ours play a critical role in making these initiatives a reality. Removing such a program will leave the people in these communities at a disadvantage, increasing risks such as poor health, homelessness, and limited transportation options. With the act and the opportunity to bid with general contractors, GCC and other small, disadvantaged organizations can contribute to community building. Without the DBE, this goal remains unattainable.

The loss of the DBE program will impact all disadvantaged organizations by reducing opportunities to bid on major projects, potentially leading to downsizing or going out of business. This would strain government resources, requiring support for employees through unemployment benefits or Family and Children services. A downward spiral of homelessness, major health issues due to lack of medical coverage, food, and clothing could ensue without the DBE program, which allows disadvantaged organizations to participate in projects alongside major companies that have greater financial capacity. Such factors were highlighted in the Mid-America vs. USDOT case.

Ten percent of contracting projects are allocated to state and local entities like the DBE, while the remaining ninety percent—historically awarded federal contracts—argued that these allocations disadvantage them and are unconstitutional. The Mid-America vs. USDOT case impacts minorities, as it opposes giving recognized DBE organizations opportunities that level the playing field for federal

contract work. This practice may lower income, causing businesses like ours to go out of business, undermining equality.

The DBE supports the equality of the subcontracting arm of construction, drives competition to lower taxpayer costs, and fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses. Over 500,000 people registered with the DBE are given the opportunity to thrive. What will happen to these individuals if the program is revoked? How will the government support them, or are we prepared to see them resort to begging? Small businesses like ours need a governing body that believes in equality and fairness. The DBE has proven its commitment by providing the leverage needed to participate effectively.

Hollis Griffin, President

The Importance of the DBE Program to Small, Family-Owned Construction Businesses

We are a family-owned and operated general contracting firm based in Olympia Fields, Illinois. GWO Inc. specializes in federal, municipal, and commercial construction projects. Our work spans both urban and rural areas across the country. Founded in 2013, originally focused on trucking, we expanded into construction in 2018. Today, we operate with a small, experienced team focused on project management, operations, and administration. The success of our company directly supports our families and employees, making the stability of the business critical to the people who depend on it.

The DBE Program has been central to our company's ability to access and compete for work. Approximately 90% of our revenue has come from DBE and other set-aside programs. Without these opportunities, access to projects would be significantly more limited, and large firms would dominate more of the available work. The DBE Program supports the subcontracting arm of construction, allowing small businesses to participate meaningfully in larger projects. It drives competition across the industry, leading to lower costs for taxpayers, and it prevents local monopolies from forming by opening doors to a broader range of contractors.

For our company, the DBE Program has not only provided direct contract opportunities but has also opened doors to relationships with companies that otherwise would not have considered working with us. In many cases, these introductions evolved into longer-term partnerships that extended well beyond the DBE program itself. Even when we did not receive immediate awards, the relationships formed through DBE opportunities often led to future work. The program has been just as important in building visibility and credibility as it has been in creating revenue.

The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already created disruption in the marketplace. We have seen delays in contract awards and greater hesitation from both agencies and prime contractors to engage DBEs. This uncertainty impacts our ability to plan and pursue work. It also threatens broader economic stability, as more than 50,000 DBEs across the United States employ over 500,000 people. Instability in the program risks undermining the businesses, families, and communities that rely on the opportunities it creates.

The DBE Program is built on good faith efforts and the principle of leveling the playing field. It creates a fairer, more competitive marketplace by giving disadvantaged businesses a real opportunity to build sustainable operations, create jobs, and contribute to the economy. For our business, it has been the foundation for growth and long-term stability. It has allowed us to build a company that supports families and reinvests in local communities. Without the DBE Program, businesses like ours would lose critical access points. Competition would shrink, costs would rise, and the broader benefits that come from a diverse and growing contractor base would be lost.



P.O. BOX 1890 MILTON, WA 98354 253.952.3905

APRIL 29, 2025

Dear White House Administration,

We respectfully write to urge your continued support of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program.

Hi Grade Asphalt & Seal Coat Inc. (Hi Grade) is a small, woman- and minority-owned asphalt construction company based in Western Washington. Founded in 1988, we are led by siblings Angelica and Anthony Duncan and employ approximately 16 people each construction season.

The DBE program is critical to our ability to compete. Larger asphalt construction companies typically own their own asphalt plants, giving them a significant price advantage per ton. Hi Grade does not have this capacity, making it difficult—if not impossible—to compete on cost alone for public works projects without DBE support.

When DBE goals are mandatory, we see meaningful opportunities to participate. However, when goals are voluntary or absent, small firms like ours are often overlooked. The DBE program ensures a more level playing field, helping businesses like Hi Grade secure public contracts, grow sustainably, and contribute to local infrastructure development.

Because of DBE-supported opportunities, we are able to offer prevailing wage jobs to our employees—creating pathways to greater financial stability. Our employees benefit from working in a close-knit environment where they are valued, supported, and given real chances to advance their skills and careers.

The DBE program promotes not only fairness, but also economic growth, community investment, and diversity in the construction industry. We respectfully ask that you continue to support and strengthen this vital program so that small, disadvantaged businesses have the chance to succeed and contribute meaningfully to our nation's infrastructure.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

ANGÉLICA DUNCAN, PRESIDENT 253.334.9453

ANGELICAD@HIGRADEASPHALTINC.COM

April 25, 2025

From: Donna Beasley, Director, Illinois APEX Accelerator at the WBDC

Reauthorize the DBE Program

In my role as center director of the Illinois APEX Accelerator at the WBDC, I advise small businesses on how to do business with the government. The transportation and logistics clients I work with often have challenges with finding work even when they are preapproved to work with the Department of Defense prime contractor. The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program is essential for fostering equal opportunities in federally-assisted transportation projects. By ensuring that small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals can compete fairly, the DBE program helps to combat discrimination, and its lingering effects. Reauthorizing the DBE program is crucial because it continues to address significant barriers that minority-and women-owned businesses face in the transportation sector .

Without this program, many of these businesses would struggle to gain access to contracts and opportunities that are vital for their growth and success. DBE firms frequently compete against larger, more established companies, making it difficult to win contracts and establish a foothold in the market.

Reauthorizing the DBE program is crucial to addressing these challenges and ensuring that disadvantaged businesses continue to have access to opportunities that promote economic growth and diversity in the transportation sector.

Donna Beasley

Center Director,

Illinois APEX Accelerator @WBDC

Email: dbeasley@wbdc.org

A Call to Protect DBE Programming: A Lifeline for Small, Minority-Owned Businesses

As the owner of a small signs and graphics company in Tacoma, WA, with over 21 years of service to our community, I can say with absolute certainty that our success and growth have been deeply tied to the opportunities created through the DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) and MBE (Minority Business Enterprise) programs.

These certifications didn't just help us get our foot in the door—they opened doors we may have never accessed otherwise. Through DBE programming, we've been able to compete on a fairer playing field, secure contracts, and expand our offerings to better serve our clients. Most importantly, it's allowed us to grow our team and provide meaningful employment in our local community.

DBE programs aren't handouts—they are investments. Investments in economic equity. Investments in entrepreneurship. Investments in the future of small businesses that often face systemic barriers to entry in competitive markets. Eliminating these programs would not just harm businesses like ours—it would slow economic growth, reduce job creation, and reverse years of progress toward equity and inclusion.

We urge policymakers, community leaders, and the public to understand what's at stake. DBE programs **work**, and their impact is real. Now more than ever, we need to strengthen—not dismantle—programs that foster opportunity, innovation, and economic development for disadvantaged businesses.

Let's keep building a future where small businesses can thrive. Let's keep DBE programming alive.

My name is Dr.Karen Bridges, and I am the proud owner of INKBLLC, based in Elk Grove, CA. My company employs 2 hardworking individuals, and we are one of thousands of American small businesses that depend on the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation, to remain competitive in the transportation and infrastructure sectors.

>

I am speaking to you today not just as a business owner, but as a representative of countless minority- and women-owned businesses across the country whose economic futures are directly tied to this program. Without the DBE Program, many of us would never have had the opportunity to access federally funded contracts, participate in public infrastructure projects, or grow into viable contributors to our local economies.

>

The DBE Program is not a handout—it is a tool for equity, competition, and economic inclusion. It ensures that small, disadvantaged businesses have a fair opportunity to compete in an industry that has long been dominated by larger, well-established firms. It helps build generational wealth in underserved communities, creates jobs for Americans from diverse backgrounds, and strengthens the resilience of our national supply chain by diversifying the pool of qualified contractors.

>

In my own experience, DBE participation has enabled my company to secure contracts we would not have otherwise had access to. That work has allowed me to employ local residents, reinvest in my community, and grow a sustainable business that contributes to both state and national economic health.

>

Eliminating the DBE Program would not only undo decades of progress in supplier diversity and economic equity, it would also send a chilling message to entrepreneurs from historically marginalized communities: that there is no place for them at the table.

>

I respectfully urge each member of Congress, particularly those serving on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, to preserve this vital program. Please add your support to reauthorize the DBE Program through the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Portal.

>

America's infrastructure future must reflect the full breadth of American talent. That future includes us.

>

Thank you.

>

>

- > Karen Bridges
- > INKB LLC
- > 818-600-1592

April 17, 2025

Office of Civil Rights U.S. Department of Transportation 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

Dear Sir or Madam,

On behalf of Iron Horse Architects, Inc., I am writing to express our strong support for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. As a small, woman-owned architectural firm committed to equitable development and community advancement, we see firsthand the profound impact this program has on shaping economically strong, more robust economy.

The DBE program plays a critical role in leveling the playing field for small businesses that have historically faced systemic barriers to opportunity in transportation and infrastructure projects. It provides essential access to public contracts and fosters a competitive marketplace where businesses are evaluated based on quality, innovation, and dedication—not on longstanding disparities in access to capital or networks.

Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy. They account for nearly half of all employment in the United States and represent a vital source of innovation and community identity. The DBE program supports these enterprises by creating fair opportunities that not only help them survive—but thrive. In doing so, it directly contributes to local economic development, employment, and wealth-building in local communities.

From a taxpayer perspective, the program also drives down public costs by encouraging local competition. When local DBEs are empowered to bid on transportation projects, it breaks monopolistic tendencies, reduces overhead, and ensures that public funds are used efficiently and responsibly. The infusion of local business participation leads to better project accountability, timelier delivery, and reinvestment within the community.

At Iron Horse Architects, we have experienced the value of collaborating with DBE-certified partners across disciplines. These partnerships bring unique insights, cultural awareness, and grassroots engagement strategies that improve design outcomes and community acceptance of public infrastructure.

In closing, we respectfully urge the Department to continue its strong support and investment in the DBE program. It is a critical tool for economic equity, community resilience, and taxpayer value—and an investment in the enduring American values of opportunity, entrepreneurship, and fairness.

Sincerely,

Virginia McAllister, AIA

CEO | Principal

Iron Horse Architects, Inc.



Date: April 18, 2025

To: DBE's of America RE: DBE Program

To whom it may concern:

The following is a list of DBE projects for CalTrans that we have participated in and the estimated contract amount. Each one was critical in establishing and growing our business:

- 1. 07-2W0604 2015-2016 \$1,000,000
- 2. 08-0R3504 2019-2022 \$4,000,000
- 3. 11-430444 2023-2024 \$8,000,000

Each one brought us to the next level in sales volume.

The designation of being a DBE required some very difficult people to work with us in a more fair manner. With all of the regulation there is, any individual representing the State or Fed could decide to put us out of business. To be honest, if every regulation was implemented no project could get done. Out of the infinite number of over-bearing restrictions and requirements, it seems ridiculous to eliminate one that is truly helping disadvantaged businesses.

Many of the companies we work with are DBE's. In my opinion, this is a critical program for the industry.

Thank you,

Diana Hanna President

Mail: 16197 Krameria Ave., Riverside, CA 92504 951.776.9100

Jedi Corridors is a professional services business specializing in building automated grade control models for construction equipment. Since our founding in 2021, we've grown steadily and currently operate with two part-time employees. We are proud to be part of a niche industry that supports smarter, more efficient construction processes—helping contractors save time, improve accuracy, and lower costs.

DBE operate on a smaller scale, which allows us to keep overhead low and foster a close-knit, family-like team culture. This structure not only improves morale and productivity but also enables us to offer high-quality services with greater flexibility and care.

The DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) Program has played a pivotal role in our success. It has connected us with contractors, provided access to critical networks, and offered invaluable soft skills training and education. These resources have helped us grow professionally and personally—while also allowing us to make meaningful contributions to the construction industry.

The support we've received from the DBE Program is not just about contracts—it's about survival and long-term sustainability. Losing this program would mean losing visibility and access to opportunities, especially in an industry where large companies dominate. Without the DBE program, we risk being pushed out of the market entirely and potentially having to dissolve the business altogether.

The DBE Program is essential to maintaining a diverse, competitive, and fair construction landscape. It supports the subcontracting arm of construction, where small businesses like ours thrive. By driving competition, it results in lower taxpayer costs and better project outcomes. It is rooted in good faith efforts—not quotas—and helps level the playing field in a traditionally unequal industry.

With over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing more than 500,000 people, the DBE Program is a powerful engine for economic development and opportunity. It empowers small, disadvantaged businesses to grow, compete, and contribute to their communities in meaningful ways.

We are deeply grateful for the support we've received through the DBE Program, and we hope to see it protected and strengthened so that small businesses like ours can continue to succeed, innovate, and serve the industry.



May 30, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

I understand that you are serving on the Federal Transportation Committee, and I am requesting your help on a matter dear to my heart, success, and my livelihood.

I am the Owner of a DBE Certified Construction Material Retail store located in Sacramento, California.

There has been a lawsuit filed against the Federal DBE program, and it affects many Firms in our State including mine.

The DBE program is an <u>economic development program</u> and has helped many small businesses and minority businesses (including disabled-veteran, women and ethnic groups) get started and grow in the construction industry and on Federally Funded projects. <u>This is not a DEI program</u>. If the suit is successful, it only serves to make the large companies bigger and eliminate smaller companies.

This program is NOT discriminatory as white males can be certified if they can prove economic disadvantage or are a disabled veteran.

Please listen to my story. I am a single, mother in a high demand, fast-paced, industry, predominately run by men. Being a woman and a small business, many cards were stacked against me. Manufacturers would not open us up with an account because we were small; and sometimes big corporations would strong-arm the manufacturers and tell them not to sell to us. It took years to get noticed and trusted by manufacturers, eventually most started selling to us, now we have a full-service retail/hardware store.

This program has helped me compete in the industry and grow my company. Contractors on federally funded projects are required to find and utilize DBE Certified companies for a portion of their work. This gave me an edge to get my foot in the door and talk to contractors. Once I was given the opportunity to be heard, then contractors began allowing me to bid work. If I was competitive, I would often get awarded the project with the DBE goal. Without the requirement to search for and use DBE or small businesses, many contractors would not have given me or my company the opportunity. Contractors started to notice our customer service, experience and competitive nature. They began using us for more and more projects. I know we would have been overlooked to bid these projects if there was no requirement. I know this because I was targeting many of the same contractors for years, prior to them finally giving us an opportunity to help them meet the DBE goals.

This industry is very hard to compete in. In addition, the construction industry is facing a shortage of nearly 500,000 employees. Continuing the DBE development program will breed new businesses and more employees.

This program does not give me money or the contractor money, it requires Contractors to expand from the "big box" name and use an under-utilized DBE business in the industry for their subcontracts and materials and other items they will have to buy. It provides an opportunity for small, underutilized businesses an opportunity to prove (or not) prove themselves. If the DBE business performs well, it gives contractors another resource for competitive, competent companies to work with. With any program there can be misuse, but I am a good example of success, it can bring a small business.

I started as a one-person operation 15 years ago and now I employ 20 people from diverse backgrounds, many who have had their own set of struggles. I have been able to provide them with stability and opportunities for growth and advancement. Our team gives back to our community by volunteering and donating to local charities. I am a successful women able to provide for my family. All this would not have been possible without the DBE program.

Please, I need help from the Transportation Committee to continue funding this program. The injunction eliminates ALL DBE goals and is already harming our business even though the <u>suit has not been heard or won</u>. This affects over 50,000 DBE companies nationwide including all their employees. Most are locally owned and operated so this could have a major economic impact on our nation, which was founded on the "American Dream."

PLEASE VOTE TO CONTINUE THE DBE PROGRAM.

Sincerely.

Tracy Loveland President

916-804-4631 Cell Phone 11400 White Rock Road Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

TRACY LOVELAND





97 Newkirk St, Office X Jersey City, NJ 07306 732-718-0536

Date 04/17/2025

Subject: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

As a young minority professional in the construction industry, the DBE program has opened numerous doors for both myself and my business. Our firm is based in the NYC area, where large-scale infrastructure projects are common. Typically, these opportunities are dominated by a few larger firms, limiting access for smaller businesses like ours.

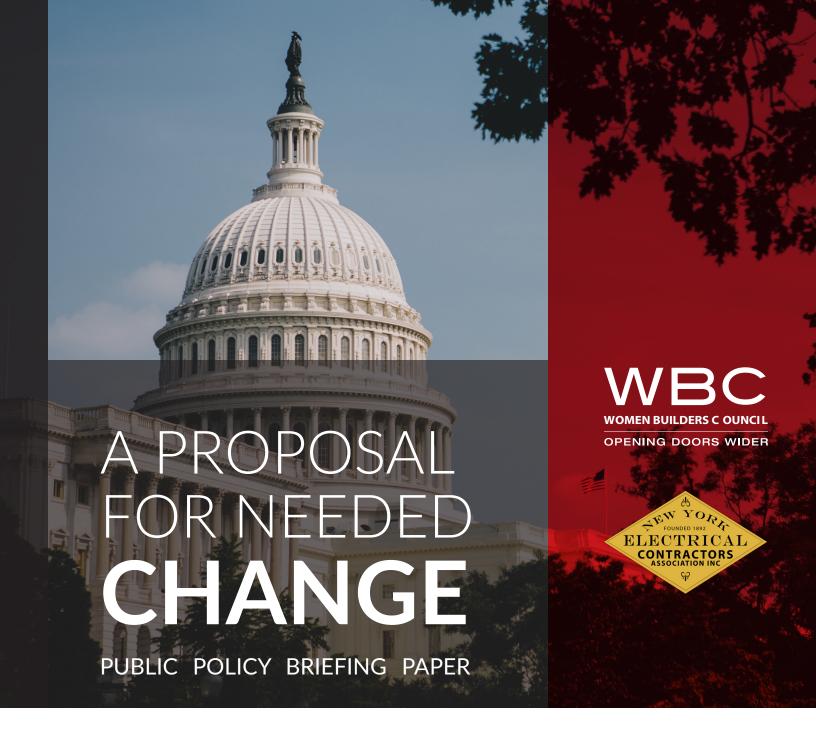
However, the DBE program has enabled us to compete and participate in these major projects, demonstrating that we have the talent, expertise, and capacity to deliver. As a result, we are now generating over seven figures in revenue and employ five full-time staff members. Today, clients return to us not just because of our DBE status, but because of the value we bring—saving both the city and our clients taxpayer dollars.

None of this would have been possible without the opportunities provided through the DBE program.

Sincerely,

Devan Naik Devan Naik, P.E.

President



Adjust SBA and US DOT Low Gross Revenue Size Standards and Personal Net Worth Caps for Small Business



About the WBC

Women Builders Council (WBC) is New York's leading advocacy organization representing women and minorities in their effort to create a fair and equal playing field for contract opportunities at the local, state and Federal levels. Founded in 2004, the organization is one of the strongest voices supporting the growth and development of small businesses in New York State and the region.

Editorial Development

Women Builders Council, Inc.

Renee Sacks, WBC Executive Director Lorraine D'Angelo, WBC Senior Policy Advisor Jayne Czik, WBC Public Policy Chair New York Electrical Contractors Association Kristine DeNapoli, President Edwin Lopez, Executive Secretary Peter Rescigno, Assistant Executive Manager & Government Relations





WBC, along with supporting organizations, submits the following recommendations to determine more appropriate size standard gross revenue and personal net worth caps than what is currently in place by the Small Business Administration in the area of construction and construction-related services.

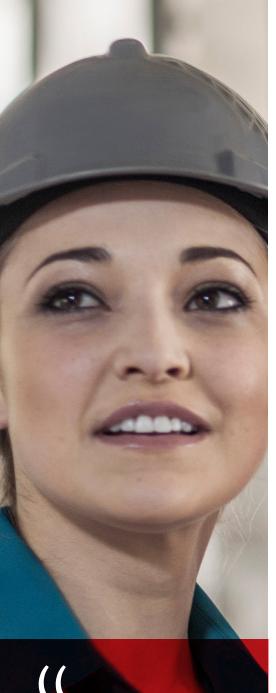
((

Low gross revenue size standards and personal net worth caps threaten DBE and other small business growth in high cost construction regions."

The US Department of Transportation (DOT) has proposed averaging the size standard over five years instead of its current three- year-size standard. However, further changes are necessary to this proposed rule to ensure that DBE firms are provided with a fair and equitable opportunity in the program.

The existing Size Standards and Personal Net Worth disproportionately and negatively impact small businesses from participating in government contracting. Presently, low gross revenue size standard caps do not consider the cost of doing business in a specific region and impede the ability of a company to continue to participate in DBE programs. Similarly, low Personal Net Worth caps discourage the growth of businesses by prematurely evicting them from the program. This is particularly true in high cost construction areas such as New York, Boston, San Francisco, among other urban centers, in which construction drives the economy as well as new job creation.

If the cost of business is four times higher in these cities, generally the gross revenues of that business will need to be four times higher for that business to be competitive and sustainable. In cities such as New York where 30 percent MWBE utilization goals is now the standard for all public construction projects, the pace at which a construction firm is growing is quickly exceeding the SBA size standards than are other businesses in other parts of the country for the same output of work. The higher gross revenues do not correlate to profits or higher earnings because the cost of doing business in these areas is high. Firms are pushed out of the program before they are a sustainable small business, thus thwarting capacity building efforts.



This proposal recommends the consideration of using a transparent multiplier to enhance the current SBA small business size standards to reflect the marketing conditions of the region in which the SBE or DBE is operating."

A Proposal: Apply a Transparent Multiplier

This proposal recommends the consideration of using a transparent multiplier to enhance the current SBA small business size standards to better reflect the market conditions of the region in which the SBE or DBE business is operating. Specifically, for this proposal, prevailing labor rates, obtained from the Wage Determinations by city and/or region according to the Federal Davis Bacon Act have been used. More specifically we have attached the data nationwide by state for the specialty trades of electricians, plumbers and mechanics to demonstrate the disparity in the cost of doing business nationwide as well as what applying this multiplier would look like to better reflect and determine appropriate gross revenue caps.

The national federal small business size standard currently imposed for these trades and many other service/specialties trades is \$19 million average annual gross revenue cap over a three- year: \$48 million in total over three years (See Attachment 1: NAICS Codes summary). It is imposed, regardless of whether the small business is doing business in New York City or in Boise, Idaho.

The examples below are based on prevailing labor rates alone, for the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical trades, not including payroll taxes or the staggering cost of insurance in New York, and they are compared to the lowest rates elsewhere in the country:

ELECTRICAL TRADE

- For the electrical trade in New York City, the prevailing rate is \$120.81/hour:
- For the electrical trade in Wake, North Carolina, the prevailing rate is \$21.66/hour

The increased cost delta for New York electrical labor as to compared to Wake, North Carolina electrical labor is 456%. With that and by default, to be a viable business, the New York State electrical contractor will generally need to bill revenues approximately 415% higher than Wake, North Carolina electrical contractors for the same hours of labor.

See Attachment 2: Electrician: Electrician-Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act (https://www.wdol.gov) 10-11-22

PLUMBING TRADE

- For the plumbing trade in New York City, the prevailing rate is \$113.95/hour;
- For the plumbing trade in Wake, North Carolina, the prevailing rate is \$21.78/hour

The increased cost delta for New York plumbing labor as to compared to Wake, North Carolina plumbing labor is 423.2%. With that and by default, to be a viable business, the New York State plumbing contractor will generally need to bill revenues approximately 369% higher than the Wake, North Carolina electrical contractors for the same hours of labor.

(See Attachment 3: Plumber-Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act (https://www.wdol.gov) 10-11-22



MECHANICAL TRADE

- For the mechanical trade in New York, the prevailing rate is \$117.39/hour
- For the mechanical trade in Ada, Idaho, the prevailing rate is \$18.90/hour

The increased cost delta for New York mechanical labor as compared to Minnehaha, South Dakota mechanical labor is 648%. With that and by default, to remain a viable business, the New York State mechanical contractor will generally need to bill revenues approximately 648% higher than the Minnehaha, South Dakota mechanical contractors for the same output of work.

See Attachment 4: Mechanic: Mechanic-Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act (https://www.wdol.gov) 10-13-22

As can be clearly determined from these examples, imposing a national one-size-fits all, current SBA size standard is inappropriate for the current Federal SBA and USDOT programs in high cost construction areas.

SOME EXAMPLES

The attached examples demonstrate that if the prevailing rate multiplier were adopted, what the average annual gross revenue caps for the electrical, plumbing and mechanical trade contractor would be to be more aligned to the cost of business in New York State versus the rest of the country.

- The comparable average annual gross receipts for a New York City electrical contractor using this multiplier would be \$91.8.1 million, or \$275.4 million over three years. (See Attachment 2)
- The comparable average annual gross receipts for a New York City plumbing contractor using this multiplier would be \$86.3 million, or \$259 million over three years. (See Attachment 3)
- The comparable average annual gross receipts for a New York City mechanical contractor using this multiplier would be \$102.4 million, or \$307 million over three years. (See Attachment 4)

... imposing a national one-size-fits all, current SBA size standard is inappropriate for the current Federal SBA and USDOT programs in high cost construction areas."



We recommend applying either a prevailing rate, or possibly a Consumer Price Index (CPI), both transparent multipliers."

Personal Net Worth Caps

The Federal Government must consider modification of the Personal Net Worth to reflect the cost of doing business in select states. We recommend applying either a prevailing rate, or possibly a Consumer Price Index (CPI), both transparent multipliers. Prevailing rates, which we propose, would still be more appropriate as they better reflect industry specifics. For example, the prevailing rates of electricians far exceeds the prevailing rates of painters in New York. A

Consumer Price Index multiplier, in this case, although better than using no multiplier, might cause a large incomparable within and between industries.

For example, effective January 1, 2020, New York State has adopted a Personal Net Worth Cap (PNW) of \$15 million from the prior \$3.5 million PNW of the past decade. New York State recognized that in select industries such as construction access to capital and a company's ability to secure bonding often depends heavily on a company owner's personal net worth.

Additional Data Supporting Higher Personal Net Worth Caps

Examples provided in Attachments 5, 6, and 7 support the case for Adjusted Annual Personal Net Worth caps by trade. The data is based on DOT PNW cap of \$1.6 million as a base modified by regional prevailing rate differentials as a multiplier to reflect economic conditions of the region.

The data in these attachments demonstrate that if the prevailing rate multiplier were adopted, what the average annual Personal Net Worth Caps for the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical trade contractor would be to be better aligned to the cost of doing business in New York State versus the rest of the country using the current DOT \$1.6 million Personal Net Worth Cap as a base.

Attachment INDEX

Attachment Index

CURRENT RATES, AS OF 10.13.2022

Attachment 1

Summary of NAICS Codes

Attachment 2

Electrician: Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act

Attachment 3

Plumber: Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act

Attachment 4

Mechanic: Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacon Act

ADJUSTED RATES

Attachment 5

Electrician: Adjusted: Personal Net Worth Caps per Federal Davis Bacon Act

Attachment 6

Plumber: Adjusted: Personal Net Worth Caps per Federal Davis Bacon Act

Attachment 7

Mechanic: Adjusted: Personal Net Worth Caps per Federal Davis Bacon Act

Source: http://wdol.gov

[redirected to: https://sam.gov/content/wage-determinations]

NAICS Codes	NAICS Industry Description	Size standards in millions of dollars	Size standards in number of employees
238190	Other Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	\$19.0	
238210	Electrical Contractors and Other Wiring Installation Contractors	\$19.0	
238220	Plumbing, Heating, and Air Conditioning Contractors	\$19.0	
238290	Other Building Equipment Contractors	\$22.0	
238310	Drywall and Insulation Contractors	\$19.0	
238320	Painting and Wall Covering Contractors	\$19.0	
238330	Flooring Contractors	\$19.0	
238340	Tile and Terrazzo Contractors	\$19.0	
238350	Finish Carpentry Contractors	\$19.0	-
238390	Other Building Finishing Contractors	\$19.0	
238910	Site Preparation Contractors	\$19.0	
238990	All Other Specialty Trade Contractors	\$19.0	
238990 (Exception)	Building and Property Specialty Trade Services ¹³	\$19.0	

Sector 31 – 33 – Manufacturing

NAICS Codes	NAICS Industry Description	Size standards in millions of dollars	Size standards in number of employees
311111	Dog and Cat Food Manufacturing		1,250
311119	Other Animal Food Manufacturing		650
311211	Flour Milling		1,050
311212	Rice Milling		750
311213	Malt Manufacturing		500
311221	Wet Corn Milling and Starch Manufacturing		1,300
311224	Soybean and Other Oilseed Processing		1,250
311225	Fats and Oils Refining and Blending		1,100
311230	Breakfast Cereal Manufacturing		1,300
311313	Beet Sugar Manufacturing		1,150
311314	Cane Sugar Manufacturing		1,050
311340	Nonchocolate Confectionery Manufacturing		1,000
311351	Chocolate and Confectionery Manufacturing from Cacao Beans		1,250

ATTACHMENT 2: ELECTRICIAN								Proposed Adjusted Annual Revenue
Electrician-Current Wa (http:	ge Determir s://www.wo	% increase over lowest rate	Caps using SBA size standards of current \$19,000,000 annual cap as base					
<u>STATE</u>	<u>WAGES</u>	<u>\$ Fringe</u>	Additional % Fringe	<u>Total</u> <u>Fringe</u>	Tot	tal Wage & Fringe		differentials as a multiplier to reflect economic conditions of the region
California- San Francisco	\$ 83.25	\$ 40.07	3%	\$ 42.56	\$	125.81	480.9%	\$ 110,361,842
New York- New York	\$ 59.00	\$ 16.25	76.73%	\$ 61.52	\$	120.52	456.4%	\$ 105,717,325
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia	\$ 60.27		62%	\$ 37.07	\$	97.34	349.4%	\$ 85,382,500
New Jersey-Essex/Newark	\$ 59.82	\$ -	62.50%	\$ 37.39	\$	97.21	348.8%	\$ 85,269,737
Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex	\$ 58.28	\$ 35.47		\$ 35.47	\$	93.75	332.8%	\$ 82,236,842
Washington-King County	\$ 65.72	\$ 26.87		\$ 26.87	\$	92.59	327.5%	\$ 81,219,298
Illinois- Cook	\$ 52.05	\$ 39.12		\$ 39.12	\$	91.17	320.9%	\$ 79,973,684
California- Los Angeles	\$ 55.05	\$ 29.37	3%	\$ 31.02	\$	86.07	297.4%	\$ 75,501,316
Hawaii -Honolulu	\$ 53.55	\$ 30.69		\$ 30.69	\$	84.24	288.9%	\$ 73,894,737
Oregon-Portland	\$ 53.85	\$ 26.54		\$ 26.54	\$	80.39	271.1%	\$ 70,517,544
Connecticut- Fairfield	\$ 41.00	\$ 9.31	67%	\$ 36.67	\$	77.67	258.6%	\$ 68,127,368
Delaware- New Castle	\$ 43.00	\$ 33.26		\$ 33.26	\$	76.26	252.1%	\$ 66,894,737
Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis	\$ 50.00	\$ 25.24		\$ 25.24	\$	75.24	247.4%	\$ 66,000,000
Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas	\$ 52.50	\$ 22.15		\$ 22.15	\$	74.65	244.6%	\$ 65,482,456
Alaska-Anchorage	\$ 42.44	\$ 28.22	3%	\$ 29.49	\$	71.93	232.1%	\$ 63,099,298
Michigan- Wayne/Detroit	\$ 45.17	\$ 26.01		\$ 26.01	\$	71.18	228.6%	\$ 62,438,596
Maryland- Montgomery	\$ 50.00	\$ 20.49		\$ 20.49	\$	70.49	225.4%	\$ 61,833,333
Virginia-Fairfax	\$ 50.00	\$ 20.49		\$ 20.49	\$	70.49	225.4%	\$ 61,833,333
California- San Diego	\$ 53.61	\$ 14.88	3%	\$ 16.49	\$	70.10	223.6%	\$ 61,489,737
Wisconsin-Milwaukee	\$ 44.39	\$ 25.67		\$ 25.67	\$	70.06	223.5%	\$ 61,456,140
Rhode Island- Providence	\$ 45.86	\$ -	52.71%	\$ 24.17	\$	70.03	223.3%	\$ 61,432,286
Missouri- St. Louis	\$ 40.61	\$ 27.06		\$ 27.06	\$	67.67	212.4%	\$ 59,359,649
Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City	\$ 43.29	\$ 23.97		\$ 23.97	\$	67.26	210.5%	\$ 59,000,000
Kansas- Johnson	\$ 41.79	\$ 23.67		\$ 23.67	\$	65.46	202.2%	\$ 57,421,053
Indiana- Marion	\$ 38.20	\$ 25.56		\$ 25.56	\$	63.76	194.4%	\$ 55,929,825
Maryland- Baltimore	\$ 42.75	\$ 16.94	5.25%	\$ 19.18	\$	61.93	185.9%	\$ 54,328,399
West Virginia-Kanawha	\$ 38.50	\$ 22.19		\$ 22.19	\$	60.69	180.2%	\$ 53,236,842
Ohio- Franklin	\$ 36.50	\$ 23.15		\$ 23.15	\$	59.65	175.4%	\$ 52,324,561
Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha	\$ 41.60	\$ 17.98		\$ 17.98	\$	59.58	175.1%	\$ 52,263,158
Iowa- Polk	\$ 40.40	\$ 19.00		\$ 19.00	\$	59.40	174.2%	\$ 52,101,754
New Hampshire-Hillsborough	\$ 32.80	\$ 21.68		\$ 21.68	\$	54.48	151.5%	\$ 47,789,474
Kentucky- Jefferson	\$ 34.60	\$ 19.57		\$ 19.57	\$	54.17	150.1%	\$ 47,517,544
Utah-Salt Lake City	\$ 36.09	\$ 16.26	1.30%	\$ 16.73	\$	52.82	143.9%	\$ 46,332,605
Colorado- El Paso	\$ 34.90	\$ 17.25		\$ 17.25	\$	52.15	140.8%	\$ 45,745,614
ldaho- Ada	\$ 34.90	\$ 14.60	6%	\$ 16.69	\$	51.59	138.2%	\$ 45,257,895
Oklahoma- Oklahoma	\$ 36.05	\$ 8.60	17.25%	\$ 14.82	\$	50.87	134.9%	\$ 44,621,601
North Dakota-Cass/Fargo	\$ 33.85	\$ 12.44	11.50%	\$ 16.33	\$	50.18	131.7%	\$ 44,019,956
New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque	\$ 35.20	\$ 12.56		\$ 12.56	\$	47.76	120.5%	\$ 41,894,737
South Dakota-Minnehaha	\$ 30.83	\$ 13.32	9.50%	\$ 16.25	\$	47.08	117.4%	\$ 41,297,237
Tennessee-Shelby	\$ 31.05	\$ 14.96		\$ 14.96	\$	46.01	112.4%	\$ 40,359,649
Louisiana- New Orleans	\$ 32.25	\$ 13.75		\$ 13.75	\$	46.00	112.4%	\$ 40,350,877
Arizona- Maricopa	\$ 32.55	\$ 13.13		\$ 13.13	\$	45.68	110.9%	\$ 40,070,175
Tennessee-Davidson/Nashville	\$ 31.55	\$ 14.08		\$ 14.08	\$	45.63	110.7%	\$ 40,026,316
Texas-Harris	\$ 33.20	\$ 10.37		\$ 10.37	\$	43.57	101.2%	\$ 38,219,298
Georgia- Fulton	\$ 33.00		31.00%	\$ 10.23	\$	43.23	99.6%	\$ 37,921,053
South Carolina-Greenville	\$ 29.23	\$ 8.30	16%	\$ 12.83	\$	42.06	94.2%	\$ 36,895,307
North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte	\$ 29.23	\$ 8.30	16%	\$ 12.83	\$	42.06	94.2%	\$ 36,895,307
Maine- Cumberland	\$ 26.68	\$ 12.85		\$ 12.85	\$	39.53	82.5%	\$ 34,675,439
Florida- Miami-Dade	\$ 29.60	\$ 9.38		\$ 9.38	\$	38.98	80.0%	\$ 34,192,982
Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish	\$ 26.64	\$ 12.30		\$ 12.30	\$	38.94	79.8%	\$ 34,157,895
Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings	\$ 28.15	\$ 10.59		\$ 10.59	\$	38.74	78.9%	\$ 33,982,456
Mississippi-Jackson	\$ 29.20	\$ 6.68	9.50%	\$ 9.45	\$	38.65	78.5%	\$ 33,907,018
Arkansas- Pulaski	\$ 24.55	\$ 12.23		\$ 12.23	\$	36.78	69.8%	\$ 32,263,158
Vermont-Windsor	\$ 26.10	\$ 7.70	9.25%	\$ 10.11	\$	36.21	67.2%	\$ 31,766,886
Mississippi- Hinds	\$ 23.40	\$ 8.02		\$ 8.02	\$	31.42	45.1%	\$ 27,561,404
Wyoming- Laramie	\$ 25.24	\$ 2.17		\$ 2.17	\$	27.41	26.5%	\$ 24,043,860
Texas-Dallas	\$ 21.51	\$ 3.69		\$ 3.69	\$	25.20	16.3%	\$ 22,105,263
Alabama- Autauga	\$ 19.43	\$ 4.35		\$ 4.35	\$	23.78	9.8%	\$ 20,859,649
North Carolina- Wake	\$ 18.48	\$ 3.18		\$ 3.18	\$	21.66	0.0%	\$ 19,000,000

ATTACHMENT	3: PLUN	0/	Proposed Adjusted Annual Revenue Caps		
		%	using SBA size standards of current		
Plumber-Current Wage Determin	-	increase	\$19,000,000 annual cap as base modified by		
Act (https://www.v	10-11-22		over	regional prevailing rate differentials as a	
			Total Wage &	lowest	multiplier to reflect economic conditions of
<u>STATE</u>	<u>WAGES</u>	<u>FRINGES</u>	<u>Fringe</u>	rate	the region
California- San Francisco	\$ 82.00	\$ 48.18	\$ 130.18	497.7%	\$ 113,563,820
New York- New York	\$ 72.50	\$ 41.45	\$ 113.95	423.2%	\$ 99,405,418
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia	\$ 62.32	\$ 38.73	\$ 101.05	364.0%	\$ 88,151,974
New Jersey-Essex/Newark	\$ 58.29	\$ 39.90	\$ 98.19	350.8%	\$ 85,657,025
Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex	\$ 61.79	\$ 34.66	\$ 96.45	342.8%	\$ 84,139,118
Washington-King County	\$ 66.21	\$ 28.88	\$ 95.09	336.6%	\$ 82,952,709
Delaware- New Castle	\$ 53.93	\$ 36.03	\$ 89.96	313.0%	\$ 78,477,502
Illinois- Cook	\$ 52.50	\$ 34.67	\$ 87.17	300.2%	\$ 76,043,618
California- San Diego	\$ 59.68	\$ 26.26	\$ 85.94	294.6%	\$ 74,970,615
Oregon-Portland Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis	\$ 50.68 \$ 52.48	\$ 31.16 \$ 28.72	\$ 81.84 \$ 81.20	275.8% 272.8%	\$ 71,393,939 \$ 70,835,629
Connecticut- Fairfield	\$ 45.83		\$ 79.33	264.2%	\$ 69,204,316
Rhode Island- Providence	\$ 47.89	\$ 33.50 \$ 31.40	\$ 79.33	264.2%	\$ 69,169,421
Hawaii -Honolulu	\$ 50.13	\$ 29.05	\$ 79.18	263.5%	\$ 69,073,462
California- Los Angeles	\$ 53.51	\$ 25.28	\$ 79.18	261.8%	\$ 68,733,242
Kansas- Johnson	\$ 51.28	\$ 23.29	\$ 74.57	242.4%	\$ 65,051,882
Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas	\$ 50.25	\$ 24.05	\$ 74.30	241.1%	\$ 64,816,345
Wisconsin-Milwaukee	\$ 48.50	\$ 25.29	\$ 73.79	238.8%	\$ 64,371,442
Missouri- St. Louis	\$ 45.10	\$ 27.85	\$ 72.95	234.9%	\$ 63,638,659
Michigan- Wayne/Detroit	\$ 35.24	\$ 37.44	\$ 72.68	233.7%	\$ 63,403,122
Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City	\$ 51.28	\$ 21.39	\$ 72.67	233.7%	\$ 63,394,399
West Virginia-Kanawha	\$ 38.40	\$ 31.08	\$ 69.48	219.0%	\$ 60,611,570
Alaska-Anchorage	\$ 41.32	\$ 27.62	\$ 68.94	216.5%	\$ 60,140,496
Maryland- Montgomery	\$ 48.00	\$ 20.75	\$ 68.75	215.7%	\$ 59,974,747
Virginia-Fairfax	\$ 48.00	\$ 20.75	\$ 68.75	215.7%	\$ 59,974,747
Maryland- Baltimore	\$ 42.62	\$ 22.77	\$ 65.39	200.2%	\$ 57,043,618
Iowa- Polk	\$ 37.65	\$ 22.25	\$ 59.90	175.0%	\$ 52,254,362
Arizona- Maricopa	\$ 41.90	\$ 17.40	\$ 59.30	172.3%	\$ 51,730,946
Indiana- Marion	\$ 38.82	\$ 20.31	\$ 59.13	171.5%	\$ 51,582,645
Kentucky- Jefferson	\$ 35.22	\$ 23.63	\$ 58.85	170.2%	\$ 51,338,384
Tennessee-Davidson/Nashville Wyoming- Laramie	\$ 38.75	\$ 18.05	\$ 56.80	160.8% 156.1%	\$ 49,550,046
North Dakota-Cass/Fargo	\$ 34.47 \$ 38.19	\$ 21.31 \$ 17.42	\$ 55.78 \$ 55.61	155.3%	\$ 48,660,239 \$ 48,511,938
Ohio- Franklin	\$ 38.19	\$ 16.98	\$ 55.43	154.5%	\$ 48,351,938
Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings	\$ 35.21	\$ 20.16	\$ 55.37	154.2%	\$ 48,302,571
Utah-Salt Lake City	\$ 40.50	\$ 14.62	\$ 55.12	153.1%	\$ 48,084,481
Colorado- El Paso	\$ 37.70	\$ 16.69	\$ 54.39	149.7%	\$ 47,447,658
Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha	\$ 35.74	\$ 17.11	\$ 52.85	142.7%	\$ 46,104,224
Oklahoma- Oklahoma	\$ 34.50	\$ 16.18	\$ 50.68	132.7%	\$ 44,211,203
New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque	\$ 36.40	\$ 13.90	\$ 50.30	130.9%	\$ 43,879,706
Georgia- Fulton	\$ 33.68	\$ 16.11	\$ 49.79	128.6%	\$ 43,434,803
Texas-Harris	\$ 36.83	\$ 11.71	\$ 48.54	122.9%	\$ 42,344,353
South Dakota-Minnehaha	\$ 32.71	\$ 15.50	\$ 48.21	121.3%	\$ 42,056,474
Texas-Dallas	\$ 34.48	\$ 13.07	\$ 47.55	118.3%	\$ 41,480,716
South Carolina-Greenville	\$ 31.66	\$ 12.69	\$ 44.35	103.6%	\$ 38,689,164
Louisiana- New Orleans	\$ 30.70	\$ 13.45	\$ 44.15	102.7%	\$ 38,514,692
Florida- Miami-Dade	\$ 30.78	\$ 13.14	\$ 43.92	101.7%	\$ 38,314,050
Alabama- Autauga	\$ 30.45	\$ 12.56	\$ 43.01	97.5%	\$ 37,520,202
Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish	\$ 27.29	\$ 15.69	\$ 42.98	97.3%	\$ 37,494,031
North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte	\$ 29.35	\$ 12.41	\$ 41.76	91.7%	\$ 36,429,752
Arkansas- Pulaski	\$ 30.08	\$ 11.56	\$ 41.64	91.2%	\$ 36,325,069
Tennessee-Shelby	\$ 26.86	\$ 10.40	\$ 37.26	71.1%	\$ 32,504,132
Mississippi-Jackson	\$ 27.11 \$ 23.97	\$ 10.02 \$ 9.68	\$ 37.13 \$ 33.65	70.5% 54.5%	\$ 32,390,725 \$ 29,354,913
New Hampshire-Hillsborough Vermont-Windsor	\$ 23.97	\$ 9.68	\$ 33.65	43.0%	\$ 29,354,913 \$ 27,165,289
Idaho- Ada	\$ 23.33	\$ 5.40	\$ 27.90	28.1%	\$ 24,338,843
Maine- Cumberland	\$ 22.30	\$ 3.88	\$ 27.30	17.0%	\$ 22,227,732
Mississippi- Hinds	\$ 19.78	\$ 2.14	\$ 21.92	0.6%	\$ 19,122,130
North Carolina- Wake	\$ 19.35	\$ 2.43	\$ 21.78	0.0%	\$ 19,000,000

36.89 \$ 275.2% 71,285,185 \$ 34.02 70.91 West Virginia-Kanawha \$ 40.21 29.30 69.51 267.8% 69,877,778 Connecticut- Fairfield Maryland- Baltimore \$ 42.62 22.77 65.39 246.0% 65,735,979 California- Los Angeles \$ 40.95 23.61 64.56 241.6% 64,901,587 California- San Diego \$ 40.95 23.61 64.56 241.6% 64,901,587 Indiana- Marion \$ 41.57 18.99 60.56 220.4% 60,880,423 \$ 37.65 22.25 lowa- Polk 59.90 216.9% 60,216,931 17.40 \$ Arizona- Maricopa \$ 41.90 59.30 213.8% 59,613,757 Kentucky- Jefferson \$ 35.22 23.63 \$ 58.85 211.4% 59,161,376 Florida- Miami-Dade \$ 40.78 15.80 \$ 56.58 199.4% 56,879,365 \$ 40.13 Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha 16.10 \$ 56.23 197.5% 56,527,513 \$ 34.47 21.31 195.1% 56,075,132 55.78 Wyoming- Laramie 17.42 55,904,233 \$ 38.19 55.61 194.2% North Dakota-Cass/Fargo Ohio- Franklin \$ 38.45 16.98 55.43 193.3% 55,723,280 Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings \$ 35.21 20.16 55.37 193.0% 55,662,963 Utah-Salt Lake City \$ 40.50 14.62 55.12 191.6% 55,411,640 Colorado- El Paso \$ 37.70 16.69 54.39 187.8% Ś 54,677,778 \$ 34.50 16.18 50.68 168.1% 50,948,148 Oklahoma- Oklahoma 13.90 \$ 36.40 50.30 166.1% 50,566,138 New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque Georgia- Fulton \$ 33.68 16.11 \$ 49.79 163.4% 50,053,439 Texas-Harris \$ 37.03 12.56 \$ 49.59 162.4% 49,852,381 South Dakota-Minnehaha \$ 32.71 15.50 \$ 48.21 155.1% 48,465,079 Texas-Dallas \$ 34.48 13.07 \$ 47.55 151.6% 47,801,587 South Carolina-Greenville \$ 31.66 12.69 \$ 44.35 134.7% 44,584,656 Louisiana- New Orleans \$ 30.70 13.45 44.15 133.6% 44,383,598 Alabama- Autauga \$ 29.00 15.11 44.11 133.4% 44,343,386 Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish \$ 29.90 13.29 43.19 128.5% 43,418,519 12.41 Tennessee-Shelby \$ 29.54 41.95 122.0% 42,171,958 \$ 29.35 12.41 41,980,952 41.76 121.0% North Carolina- Wake 12.41 41,980,952 North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte \$ 29.35 41.76 121.0% Arkansas- Pulaski \$ 30.08 11.56 41.64 120.3% 41,860,317 Mississippi- Hinds \$ 27.11 10.57 \$ 37.68 99.4% 37,879,365 New Hampshire-Hillsborough \$ 25.17 \$ 11.87 \$ 37.04 96.0% 37,235,979 Mississippi-Jackson \$ 26.51 9.27 \$ 35,969,312 35.78 89.3% Ś \$ 25.35 5.79 31,304,762 Vermont-Windsor 31.14 64.8% Maryland- Montgomery \$ 22.51 6.47 28.98 53.3% 29,133,333 Maine- Cumberland \$ 20.14 2.29 22.43 18.7% 22,548,677 daho- Ada \$ 17.10 1.80 18.90 0.0% 19,000,000

Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City \$ 51.43 23.35 74.78 295.7% 75,175,661 28.08 Missouri- St. Louis \$ 46.60 74.68 295.1% 75,075,132 \$ 50.25 24.05 74.30 293.1% 74,693,122 Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas Ś 31.25 \$ 42.91 74.16 292.4% \$ 74,552,381 Alaska-Anchorage \$ 49.98 22.95 \$ 72.93 Kansas- Johnson 285.9% 73,315,873 Delaware- New Castle \$ 39.60 32.65 \$ 72.25 282.3% 72,632,275 Virginia-Fairfax \$ 47.98 23.12 \$ 71.10 276.2% 71,476,190 \$ 41.60 29.35 \$ 70.95 275.4% 71,325,397 Michigan- Wavne/Detroit

STATE

California- San Francisco

Pennsylvania- Philadelphia

New Jersey-Essex/Newark

Washington-King County

Rhode Island- Providence

Oregon-Multnomah

Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Hawaii -Honolulu

Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis

Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex

Illinois- Cook

New York- New York

ATTACHMENT 4: MECHANIC

Mechanic-Current Wage Determinations per Federal Davis Bacor

Act (https://www.wdol.gov) 10-13-22

WAGES

\$ 82.00

\$ 59.05

\$ 62.32

\$ 53.60

\$ 66.21

\$ 53.00

\$ 45.36

\$ 50.68

\$ 47.89

\$ 50.13

\$ 50.00

\$ 50.50

\$ FRINGES

48.18

58.34

38.73

44.49

28.88

37.62 \$

36.93 \$

31.16 \$

31.40 \$

29.05

28.93

27.67

Proposed Adjusted Annual Revenue Caps

using SBA size standards of current

\$19,000,000 annual cap as base modified by

regional prevailing rate differentials as a

multiplier to reflect economic conditions of

the region

130,868,783

118,011,111 101,584,656

98,608,995

95,593,122

91,099,471

82,725,397

82,273,016

79,709,524

79,598,942

79,347,619

78,583,598

Ś

\$

increase

over

lowest

rate

588.8%

521.1%

434.7%

419.0%

403.1%

379.5%

335.4%

333.0%

319.5%

318.9%

317.6%

313.6%

Total Wage

& Fringe

130.18

117.39

101.05

98.09

95.09

90.62

82.29

81.84

79.29

79.18

78.93

78.17

10 11

ATTACHMENT 5: ELECTRICIAN-ADJUSTED PNW CAPS								Proposed Adjusted Annual Personal Net			
Electrician-Current Wage (https:	Determir	% increase over lowest rate	Worth Caps using Current Proposed DOT PNW cap of \$1,600,000,000 as base								
STATE	WAGES	\$ Fringe	Additional % Fringe	_	otal inge	Total Wage, Fringe, Tax & Insurance		Fringe, Tax &		Tate	modified by regional prevailing rate differentials as a multiplier to reflect economic conditions of the region
California- San Francisco	\$ 83.25	\$ 40.07		\$	42.56	\$	125.81	480.9%	\$ 9,293,629		
New York- New York	\$ 59.00	\$ 16.25		\$	61.52	\$	120.52	456.4%	\$ 8,902,512		
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia	\$ 60.27			\$	37.07	\$	97.34	349.4%	\$ 7,190,105		
New Jersey-Essex/Newark	\$ 59.82	\$ -		\$	37.39	\$	97.21	348.8%	\$ 7,180,609		
Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex	\$ 58.28	\$ 35.47		\$	35.47	\$	93.75	332.8%	\$ 6,925,208		
Washington-King County	\$ 65.72	\$ 26.87		\$	26.87	\$	92.59	327.5%	\$ 6,839,520		
Illinois- Cook	\$ 52.05	\$ 39.12		\$	39.12	\$	91.17	320.9%	\$ 6,734,626		
California- Los Angeles	\$ 55.05	\$ 29.37		\$	31.02	\$	86.07	297.4%	\$ 6,358,006		
Hawaii -Honolulu	\$ 53.55	\$ 30.69		\$	30.69	\$	84.24	288.9%	\$ 6,222,715		
Oregon-Portland	\$ 53.85	\$ 26.54		\$	26.54	\$	80.39	271.1%	\$ 5,938,319		
Connecticut- Fairfield	\$ 41.00	\$ 9.31		\$	36.67	\$	77.67	258.6%	\$ 5,737,042		
Delaware- New Castle	\$ 43.00	\$ 33.26		\$	33.26	\$	76.26	252.1%	\$ 5,633,241		
Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis	\$ 50.00	\$ 25.24		\$	25.24	\$	75.24	247.4%	\$ 5,557,895		
Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas	\$ 52.50	\$ 22.15		\$	22.15	\$	74.65	244.6%	\$ 5,514,312		
Alaska-Anchorage	\$ 42.44	\$ 28.22		\$	29.49	\$	71.93	232.1%	\$ 5,313,625		
Michigan- Wayne/Detroit	\$ 45.17	\$ 26.01		\$	26.01	\$	71.18	228.6%	\$ 5,257,987		
Maryland- Montgomery	\$ 50.00	\$ 20.49		\$	20.49	\$	70.49	225.4%	\$ 5,207,018		
Virginia-Fairfax	\$ 50.00	\$ 20.49		\$	20.49	\$	70.49	225.4%	\$ 5,207,018		
California- San Diego	\$ 53.61	\$ 14.88		\$	16.49	\$	70.10	223.6%	\$ 5,178,083		
Wisconsin-Milwaukee	\$ 44.39	\$ 25.67		\$	25.67	\$	70.06	223.5%	\$ 5,175,254		
Rhode Island- Providence	\$ 45.86	\$ 25.07		\$	24.17	\$	70.03	223.3%	\$ 5,173,245		
Missouri- St. Louis	\$ 40.61	\$ 27.06		\$	27.06	\$	67.67	212.4%	\$ 4,998,707		
Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City	\$ 43.29	\$ 27.00		\$	23.97	\$	67.26	210.5%	\$ 4,968,421		
Kansas- Johnson	\$ 41.79	\$ 23.67		\$	23.67	\$	65.46	202.2%	\$ 4,835,457		
Indiana- Marion	\$ 38.20	\$ 25.56		\$	25.56	\$	63.76	194.4%	\$ 4,709,880		
Maryland- Baltimore	\$ 42.75	\$ 16.94		\$	19.18	\$	61.93	185.9%	\$ 4,575,023		
West Virginia-Kanawha	\$ 38.50	\$ 22.19		\$	22.19	\$	60.69	180.2%	\$ 4,483,102		
Ohio- Franklin	\$ 36.50	\$ 23.15		\$	23.15	\$	59.65	175.4%	\$ 4,406,279		
Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha	\$ 41.60	\$ 17.98		\$	17.98	\$	59.58	175.1%	\$ 4,401,108		
Iowa- Polk	\$ 40.40	\$ 19.00		Ś	19.00	\$	59.40	174.2%	\$ 4,387,516		
New Hampshire-Hillsborough	\$ 32.80	\$ 21.68		\$	21.68	\$	54.48	151.5%	\$ 4,024,377		
, ,	\$ 34.60	\$ 19.57		\$	19.57	\$	54.17	150.1%			
Kentucky- Jefferson	\$ 36.09	\$ 16.26		۶ \$	16.73	\$	52.82	143.9%			
Utah-Salt Lake City Colorado- El Paso	\$ 34.90	\$ 17.25		۶ \$	17.25	\$	52.62	140.8%	\$ 3,901,693		
	1	'			16.69	\$	51.59	138.2%	\$ 3,852,262		
Idaho- Ada	\$ 34.90	\$ 14.60		\$	14.82	Ś	50.87	134.9%	\$ 3,811,191 \$ 3,757,608		
Oklahoma- Oklahoma	\$ 36.05	\$ 8.60				*			' '		
North Dakota-Cass/Fargo	\$ 33.85	\$ 12.44		\$	16.33	\$	50.18	131.7%	\$ 3,706,944		
New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque	\$ 35.20	\$ 12.56		\$	12.56	ш	47.76	120.5%	\$ 3,527,978		
South Dakota-Minnehaha	\$ 30.83	\$ 13.32		\$	16.25	\$	47.08	117.4%	\$ 3,477,662		
Tennessee-Shelby	\$ 31.05	\$ 14.96		\$	14.96	\$ ¢	46.01	112.4%	\$ 3,398,707		
Louisiana- New Orleans	\$ 32.25	\$ 13.75		\$	13.75	\$ ¢	46.00	112.4%	\$ 3,397,969 \$ 3,374,331		
Arizona- Maricopa	\$ 32.55	\$ 13.13		خ	13.13	\$	45.68	110.9%			
Tennessee-Davidson/Nashville	\$ 31.55	\$ 14.08		\$	14.08	\$ ¢	45.63	110.7%	\$ 3,370,637		
Texas-Harris	\$ 33.20	\$ 10.37		\$	10.37	\$	43.57	101.2%	\$ 3,218,467		
Georgia- Fulton	\$ 33.00	A 0.0-		\$	10.23	\$	43.23	99.6%	\$ 3,193,352		
South Carolina-Greenville	\$ 29.23	\$ 8.30		\$	12.83	\$	42.06	94.2%	\$ 3,106,973		
North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte	\$ 29.23	\$ 8.30		\$	12.83	\$	42.06	94.2%	\$ 3,106,973		
Maine- Cumberland	\$ 26.68	\$ 12.85		\$	12.85	\$	39.53	82.5%	\$ 2,920,037		
Florida- Miami-Dade	\$ 29.60	\$ 9.38		\$	9.38	\$	38.98	80.0%	\$ 2,879,409		
Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish	\$ 26.64	\$ 12.30		\$	12.30	\$	38.94	79.8%	\$ 2,876,454		
Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings	\$ 28.15	\$ 10.59		\$	10.59	\$	38.74	78.9%	\$ 2,861,681		
Mississippi-Jackson	\$ 29.20	\$ 6.68		\$	9.45	\$	38.65	78.5%	\$ 2,855,328		
Arkansas- Pulaski	\$ 24.55	\$ 12.23		\$	12.23	\$	36.78	69.8%	\$ 2,716,898		
Vermont-Windsor	\$ 26.10	\$ 7.70		\$	10.11	\$	36.21	67.2%	\$ 2,675,106		
Mississippi- Hinds	\$ 23.40	\$ 8.02		\$	8.02	\$	31.42	45.1%	\$ 2,320,960		
Wyoming- Laramie	\$ 25.24	\$ 2.17		\$	2.17	\$	27.41	26.5%	\$ 2,024,746		
Texas-Dallas	\$ 21.51	\$ 3.69		\$	3.69	\$	25.20	16.3%	\$ 1,861,496		
Alabama- Autauga	\$ 19.43	\$ 4.35		\$	4.35	\$	23.78	9.8%	\$ 1,756,602		
North Carolina- Wake	\$ 18.48	\$ 3.18		\$	3.18	\$	21.66	0.0%	\$ 1,600,000		

Plumbor Current Wago Detarm	inations =	or Endoral	% increase	Worth Caps using Current Proposed DOT	
Plumber-Current Wage Determ	-		over lowest	PNW cap of \$1,600,000 as base modified by	
Act (https://www.	waoi.gov)	10-11-22		rate	regional prevailing rate differentials as a
_			Total Wage &		multiplier to reflect economic conditions or
STATE WAGE		FRINGES	<u>Fringe</u>	407.70/	the region
California- San Francisco	\$ 82.00	\$ 48.18	\$ 130.18	497.7%	\$ 9,563,269
New York- New York	\$ 72.50	\$ 41.45	\$ 113.95	423.2%	\$ 8,370,983
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia New Jersey-Essex/Newark	\$ 62.32 \$ 58.29	\$ 38.73 \$ 39.90	\$ 101.05 \$ 98.19	364.0% 350.8%	\$ 7,423,324 \$ 7,213,223
Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex	\$ 61.79	\$ 34.66	\$ 96.45	342.8%	\$ 7,213,223
Washington-King County	\$ 66.21	\$ 28.88	\$ 95.09	336.6%	\$ 6,985,491
Delaware- New Castle	\$ 53.93	\$ 36.03	\$ 89.96	313.0%	\$ 6,608,632
Illinois- Cook	\$ 52.50	\$ 34.67	\$ 87.17	300.2%	\$ 6,403,673
California- San Diego	\$ 59.68	\$ 26.26	\$ 85.94	294.6%	\$ 6,313,315
Oregon-Portland	\$ 50.68	\$ 31.16	\$ 81.84	275.8%	\$ 6,012,121
Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis	\$ 52.48	\$ 28.72	\$ 81.20	272.8%	\$ 5,965,106
Connecticut- Fairfield	\$ 45.83	\$ 33.50	\$ 79.33	264.2%	\$ 5,827,732
Rhode Island- Providence	\$ 47.89	\$ 31.40	\$ 79.29	264.0%	\$ 5,824,793
Hawaii -Honolulu	\$ 50.13	\$ 29.05	\$ 79.18	263.5%	\$ 5,816,713
California- Los Angeles	\$ 53.51	\$ 25.28	\$ 78.79	261.8%	\$ 5,788,062
Kansas- Johnson	\$ 51.28	\$ 23.29	\$ 74.57	242.4%	\$ 5,478,053
Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas	\$ 50.25	\$ 24.05	\$ 74.30	241.1%	\$ 5,458,219
Wisconsin-Milwaukee	\$ 48.50	\$ 25.29	\$ 73.79	238.8%	\$ 5,420,753
Missouri- St. Louis	\$ 45.10	\$ 27.85	\$ 72.95	234.9%	\$ 5,359,045
Michigan- Wayne/Detroit	\$ 35.24	\$ 37.44	\$ 72.68	233.7%	\$ 5,339,210
Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City	\$ 51.28	\$ 21.39	\$ 72.67	233.7%	\$ 5,338,476
West Virginia-Kanawha	\$ 38.40	\$ 31.08	\$ 69.48	219.0%	\$ 5,104,132
Alaska-Anchorage	\$ 41.32	\$ 27.62	\$ 68.94	216.5%	\$ 5,064,463
Maryland- Montgomery	\$ 48.00	\$ 20.75	\$ 68.75	215.7%	\$ 5,050,505
Virginia-Fairfax	\$ 48.00	\$ 20.75	\$ 68.75	215.7%	\$ 5,050,505
Maryland- Baltimore	\$ 42.62	\$ 22.77	\$ 65.39	200.2%	\$ 4,803,673
owa- Polk	\$ 37.65	\$ 22.25	\$ 59.90	175.0%	\$ 4,400,367
Arizona- Maricopa	\$ 41.90	\$ 17.40	\$ 59.30	172.3%	\$ 4,356,290
ndiana- Marion	\$ 38.82	\$ 20.31	\$ 59.13	171.5%	\$ 4,343,802
Kentucky- Jefferson	\$ 35.22	\$ 23.63	\$ 58.85	170.2%	\$ 4,323,232
Tennessee-Davidson/Nashville	\$ 38.75	\$ 18.05	\$ 56.80	160.8%	\$ 4,172,635
Wyoming- Laramie	\$ 34.47	\$ 21.31	\$ 55.78	156.1%	\$ 4,097,704
North Dakota-Cass/Fargo	\$ 38.19	\$ 17.42	\$ 55.61	155.3%	\$ 4,085,216
Ohio- Franklin	\$ 38.45	\$ 16.98	\$ 55.43	154.5%	\$ 4,071,993
Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings	\$ 35.21	\$ 20.16	\$ 55.37	154.2%	\$ 4,067,585
Utah-Salt Lake City	\$ 40.50	\$ 14.62	\$ 55.12	153.1%	\$ 4,049,219
Colorado- El Paso	\$ 37.70	\$ 16.69	\$ 54.39	149.7%	\$ 3,995,592
Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha	\$ 35.74	\$ 17.11	\$ 52.85	142.7%	\$ 3,882,461
Oklahoma- Oklahoma	\$ 34.50	\$ 16.18	\$ 50.68	132.7%	\$ 3,723,049
New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque	\$ 36.40	\$ 13.90	\$ 50.30	130.9%	\$ 3,695,133
Georgia- Fulton	\$ 33.68	\$ 16.11	\$ 49.79	128.6%	\$ 3,657,668
Texas-Harris	\$ 36.83	\$ 11.71	\$ 48.54	122.9%	\$ 3,565,840
South Dakota-Minnehaha	\$ 32.71	\$ 15.50	\$ 48.21	121.3%	\$ 3,541,598
Texas-Dallas	\$ 34.48	\$ 13.07	\$ 47.55	118.3%	\$ 3,493,113
South Carolina-Greenville	\$ 31.66	\$ 12.69	\$ 44.35	103.6%	\$ 3,258,035
Louisiana- New Orleans	\$ 30.70	\$ 13.45	\$ 44.15	102.7%	\$ 3,243,343
Florida- Miami-Dade	\$ 30.78	\$ 13.14	\$ 43.92	101.7%	\$ 3,226,446
Alabama- Autauga	\$ 30.45	\$ 12.56	\$ 43.01	97.5%	\$ 3,159,596
Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish	\$ 27.29	\$ 15.69	\$ 42.98	97.3%	\$ 3,157,392
North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte	\$ 29.35	\$ 12.41 \$ 11.56	\$ 41.76	91.7% 91.2%	\$ 3,067,769 \$ 3,058,953
Arkansas- Pulaski	\$ 30.08 \$ 26.86	\$ 11.56 \$ 10.40	\$ 41.64 \$ 37.26	71.1%	\$ 3,058,953 \$ 2,737,190
Tennessee-Shelby Mississippi-Jackson	\$ 26.86	l '		71.1%	\$ 2,737,190 \$ 2,727,640
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		l '		70.5% 54.5%	
New Hampshire-Hillsborough Vermont-Windsor	\$ 23.97 \$ 25.35	\$ 9.68 \$ 5.79	\$ 33.65		
vermont-windsor daho- Ada	\$ 25.35 \$ 22.50	l '	\$ 31.14 \$ 27.90	43.0% 28.1%	
dano- Ada Maine- Cumberland	\$ 22.50	\$ 5.40 \$ 3.88	\$ 27.90 \$ 25.48	28.1% 17.0%	\$ 2,049,587 \$ 1,871,809
Mississippi- Hinds	\$ 21.60	\$ 3.88	\$ 25.48	0.6%	\$ 1,610,285
North Carolina- Wake	\$ 19.78	\$ 2.14	\$ 21.92 \$ 21.78	0.6%	\$ 1,610,285

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ATTACHMENT 7: MECHAI Mechanic-Current Wage Determ Act (https://www.	inations po	er Federal I	% increase over lowest rate	Proposed Adjusted Annual Personal Net Worth Caps using Current Proposed DOT PNW cap of \$1,600,000,000 as base modified by regional prevailing rate			
			Total Wa		Total Wage	1410	differentials as a multiplier to reflect
STATE WAGES		\$ FRINGES	<u>& Fringe</u>		economic conditions of the region		
California- San Francisco	\$ 82.00	\$ 48.18	\$ 130.18	588.8%	\$ 11,020,529		
New York- New York	\$ 59.05	\$ 58.34	\$ 117.39	521.1%	\$ 9,937,778		
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia	\$ 62.32	\$ 38.73	\$ 101.05	434.7%	\$ 8,554,497		
New Jersey-Essex/Newark	\$ 53.60	\$ 44.49	\$ 98.09	419.0%	\$ 8,303,915		
Washington-King County	\$ 66.21	\$ 28.88	\$ 95.09	403.1%	\$ 8,049,947		
Illinois- Cook	\$ 53.00	\$ 37.62	\$ 90.62	379.5%	\$ 7,671,534		
Minnesota- Hennepin/Minneapolis	\$ 45.36	\$ 36.93	\$ 82.29	335.4%	\$ 6,966,349		
Oregon-Multnomah	\$ 50.68	\$ 31.16	\$ 81.84	333.0%	\$ 6,928,254		
Rhode Island- Providence	\$ 47.89	\$ 31.40	\$ 79.29	319.5%	\$ 6,712,381		
Hawaii -Honolulu	\$ 50.13	\$ 29.05	\$ 79.18	318.9%	\$ 6,703,069		
Wisconsin-Milwaukee	\$ 50.00	\$ 28.93	\$ 78.93	317.6%	\$ 6,681,905		
Massachusetts-Boston/Middlesex	\$ 50.50	\$ 27.67	\$ 78.17	313.6%	\$ 6,617,566		
Missouri- Clay/ Kansas City	\$ 51.43	\$ 23.35	\$ 74.78	295.7%	\$ 6,330,582		
Missouri- St. Louis	\$ 46.60	\$ 28.08 \$ 24.05	\$ 74.68	295.1%	\$ 6,322,116		
Nevada-Clark/Las Vegas	\$ 50.25		\$ 74.30 \$ 74.16	293.1% 292.4%	\$ 6,289,947 \$ 6,278,095		
Alaska-Anchorage	\$ 42.91 \$ 49.98			292.4%			
Kansas- Johnson	\$ 39.60	\$ 22.95 \$ 32.65	\$ 72.93 \$ 72.25	282.3%			
Delaware- New Castle Virginia-Fairfax	\$ 47.98	\$ 32.05	\$ 72.25	276.2%	\$ 6,116,402 \$ 6,019,048		
Michigan- Wayne/Detroit	\$ 41.60	\$ 29.35	\$ 70.95	275.4%	\$ 6,006,349		
West Virginia-Kanawha	\$ 34.02	\$ 36.89	\$ 70.91	275.2%	\$ 6,002,963		
Connecticut- Fairfield	\$ 40.21	\$ 29.30	\$ 69.51	267.8%	\$ 5,884,444		
Maryland- Baltimore	\$ 42.62	\$ 22.77	\$ 65.39	246.0%	\$ 5,535,661		
California- Los Angeles	\$ 40.95	\$ 23.61	\$ 64.56	241.6%	\$ 5,465,397		
California- San Diego	\$ 40.95	\$ 23.61	\$ 64.56	241.6%	\$ 5,465,397		
Indiana- Marion	\$ 41.57	\$ 18.99	\$ 60.56	220.4%	\$ 5,126,772		
Iowa- Polk	\$ 37.65	\$ 22.25	\$ 59.90	216.9%	\$ 5,070,899		
Arizona- Maricopa	\$ 41.90	\$ 17.40	\$ 59.30	213.8%	\$ 5,020,106		
Kentucky- Jefferson	\$ 35.22	\$ 23.63	\$ 58.85	211.4%	\$ 4,982,011		
Florida- Miami-Dade	\$ 40.78	\$ 15.80	\$ 56.58	199.4%	\$ 4,789,841		
Nebraska-Douglas/Omaha	\$ 40.13	\$ 16.10	\$ 56.23	197.5%	\$ 4,760,212		
Wyoming- Laramie	\$ 34.47	\$ 21.31	\$ 55.78	195.1%	\$ 4,722,116		
North Dakota-Cass/Fargo	\$ 38.19	\$ 17.42	\$ 55.61	194.2%	\$ 4,707,725		
Ohio- Franklin	\$ 38.45	\$ 16.98	\$ 55.43	193.3%	\$ 4,692,487		
Montana- Yellowstone/ Billings	\$ 35.21	\$ 20.16	\$ 55.37	193.0%	\$ 4,687,407		
Utah-Salt Lake City	\$ 40.50	\$ 14.62	\$ 55.12	191.6%	\$ 4,666,243		
Colorado- El Paso	\$ 37.70	\$ 16.69	\$ 54.39	187.8%	\$ 4,604,444		
Oklahoma- Oklahoma	\$ 34.50	\$ 16.18	\$ 50.68	168.1%	\$ 4,290,370		
New Mexico-Bernalillo/Albuquerque	\$ 36.40	\$ 13.90	\$ 50.30	166.1%	\$ 4,258,201		
Georgia- Fulton	\$ 33.68	\$ 16.11	\$ 49.79	163.4%	\$ 4,215,026		
Texas-Harris	\$ 37.03	\$ 12.56	\$ 49.59	162.4%	\$ 4,198,095		
South Dakota-Minnehaha	\$ 32.71	\$ 15.50	\$ 48.21	155.1%	\$ 4,081,270		
Texas-Dallas	\$ 34.48	\$ 13.07	\$ 47.55	151.6%	\$ 4,025,397		
South Carolina-Greenville	\$ 31.66	\$ 12.69	\$ 44.35	134.7%	\$ 3,754,497		
Louisiana- New Orleans	\$ 30.70	\$ 13.45	\$ 44.15	133.6%	\$ 3,737,566		
Alabama- Autauga	\$ 29.00	\$ 15.11	\$ 44.11	133.4%	\$ 3,734,180		
Louisiana- East Baton Rouge Parish	\$ 29.90	\$ 13.29	\$ 43.19	128.5%	\$ 3,656,296		
Tennessee-Shelby	\$ 29.54	\$ 12.41	\$ 41.95	122.0%	\$ 3,551,323		
North Carolina- Wake	\$ 29.35 \$ 29.35	\$ 12.41 \$ 12.41	\$ 41.76 \$ 41.76	121.0% 121.0%	\$ 3,535,238 \$ 3,535,238		
North Carolina-Mecklenburg/Charlotte Arkansas- Pulaski	\$ 29.35	\$ 12.41	\$ 41.76	121.0%	\$ 3,535,238 \$ 3,525,079		
Mississippi- Hinds	\$ 30.08	\$ 10.57	\$ 37.68	99.4%	\$ 3,189,841		
New Hampshire-Hillsborough	\$ 27.11	\$ 10.37	\$ 37.08	96.0%	\$ 3,135,661		
Mississippi-Jackson	\$ 26.51	\$ 9.27	\$ 35.78	89.3%	\$ 3,028,995		
Vermont-Windsor	\$ 25.35	\$ 5.79	\$ 31.14	64.8%	\$ 2,636,190		
Maryland- Montgomery	\$ 22.51	\$ 6.47	\$ 28.98	53.3%	\$ 2,453,333		
Maine- Cumberland	\$ 20.14	\$ 2.29	\$ 22.43	18.7%	\$ 1,898,836		
Idaho- Ada	\$ 17.10	\$ 1.80	\$ 18.90	0.0%	\$ 1,600,000		



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14 www.wbcnyc.org





Monique Jackson, CEO & Founder of L&F Project Management, a women-minority-owned project management firm. L&F Project Management was built on the idea that effective project management isn't just about delivering results — it's about creating opportunities.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

L&F Project Management trains and employs certified project managers focusing on women from underrepresented communities. We've trained five women through our flagship summer internship program and aim to reach 25 within the next two years. Beyond training, we currently employ 10 individuals in Los Angeles and anticipate doubling our workforce to 20 employees by the end of 2025.

GROSS REVENUE & TAXES

L&F Project Management earned \$335K in 2024 and is projected to reach \$1.6M in 2025, driven by three new DBE subcontractor contracts. With our recent focus on aviation, transportation, and infrastructure development, we strive to collaborate and have an impact at the local level. We paid \$22K in taxes in 2023 and expect to exceed \$50K in 2025.

MARKET CHALLENGES

- Limited Funding for Workforce **Development:** Difficulty securing public and private funding to expand our programs, limiting our ability to train and employ underrepresented communities.
- Market Entry Challenges: Difficulty competing with established firms that hold long-standing government contracts at federal, state, and local levels.
- Access to Capital and Financing: Limited capital prevents operational growth and the ability to scale effectively.

CALL TO ACTION

- Expand DBE Set-Asides: Strengthen DBE set-aside programs to increase access to federal and state contracts for small and minority-owned businesses.
- Encourage Partnerships with Small Firms: Require large firms to collaborate with small businesses through set-asides, ensuring fair market competition.
- Invest in Workforce Development Grants: Allocate funding to train and employ individuals from underrepresented communities, building a diverse, skilled workforce.

Each project creates a pathway to economic mobility, empowering individuals from underrepresented communities with meaningful career opportunities. Supporting policies to help businesses like ours would create impact from the individual level to the broader economy. We urge lawmakers to champion equitable policies that foster growth, job creation, and opportunity for small and minority-owned businesses.

Monique Jackson, Founder & CEO



(424) 352-7788



mjackson@lfprojectmanagement.com



www.lfprojectmanagement.com



1601 N. Sepulveda Blvd. #823 Manhattan Beach, CA 90266



















May 23, 2025

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Re: 2026 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill – U.S. DOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

Dear Committee Members,

My company, Lanham Engineering, is a nine-person traffic engineering consulting company located in a suburb of Central Ohio that has been in business since 2013. We prepare studies and design plans for many types of transportation projects around Ohio to help ODOT and other municipalities deliver their critical infrastructure program.

The DBE program helps level the playing field for smaller woman-owned companies like us to compete with larger companies with privileged owners and deeper pockets. It also helps many smaller companies employ local talent and keep the state's tax dollars within their own state, instead be spent wherever huge corporations are located. We are a 100% remote company that focuses on quality of life and flexibility, which larger dominant companies do not provide their employees. An unintended consequence of the destruction of the DBE program would be workforce reductions. Many employees of small companies will not work for a large company and leave for another industry. There is already a lack of engineers in this country, and this would further that problem and cause delays to important infrastructure needs.

The potential destruction of the DBE program would hurt thousands of small businesses who provide great jobs to many engineers. This not only hurts those individuals but will make the overall infrastructure program weaker. Those small businesses will close or be sold to larger companies and contract the market. Larger companies will take on more contracts previously held by smaller companies, and have fewer subconsultants to assist with delivering those projects. They will be overworked and start producing worse quality and charge higher prices to the taxpayers due to lack of competition and create a trickledown effect that causes serious unintended consequences.



An attack on the DBE program is an attack on your neighbors, your community, and the well-being of the travelling public. I urge lawmakers to reauthorize the DBE program to ensure the best possible outcomes for all users and contributors to our national infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Joy M. Lanham, PE, PTOE

President/CEO

LESHNER PLANNING

April 21, 2025

Re: Reauthorize the DBE Program

To the US House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

As the owner of a woman-owned, micro small business based in suburban/rural West Sonoma County, California, I strongly support reauthorizing the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program as part of the 2025 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

I operate as a single-member LLC with no employees and have been in business for three years. I'm preparing to grow my firm to include 2–4 employees over the next year, but uncertainty around the future of the DBE program has stalled those plans.

The DBE program plays a critical role in supporting small businesses like mine by encouraging large firms to include us on project teams. This not only helps grow local businesses and create jobs—it also strengthens project delivery by incorporating local knowledge and diverse perspectives. In my region, many transportation projects are awarded to large firms with little local presence. DBE incentives help ensure that small, community-based firms are part of the conversation, leading to more thoughtful and effective outcomes.

Losing the DBE program would significantly limit opportunities for my business to grow and contribute to projects in our region. I urge Congress to reauthorize and strengthen this essential program.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Leshner

Owner & Principal Planner

Eleanon Jehner

Leshner Planning

eleanor@leshnerplanning.com

415-684-8988

Name: CASEY LEWIS-JONES

Company Name: Lewis Jones, Inc.

Address: 8898 Navajo Road, Suite C-342, san diego, CA 92119, United States

Email: casey@lewisjonesco.com

Phone: (619) 354-7259

Website: http://www.lewisjonesco.com

Purpose: Email Updates, Webinar Updates, Share Information

Message: Hi, I see that you requested stories:

I have a small DBE certified firm in San Diego, CA. We have 3 full time employees and 3 part time employees. We are highly qualified to support large Prime's on Caltrans A&E contracts with over 100 years of Caltrans experience combined, however if it weren't for the DBE program, we would not be utilized. Prime's do not like to give away any work that they don't have to, even if they trust you and know you can produce high quality deliverables on time and under budget. My firm employees 3 full time employees who would otherwise be unemployed. One was unemployed for several months before I hired him. Due to our size, it does not make sense nor is it possible for us to pursue these contracts as a Prime Consultant. The DBE program has helped me grow this company to where we are now and without it, it would be extremely difficult for our firm to continue.

My name is Keith Keppler, and I own Maestas & Associates LLC located in San Antonio and Houston, Texas. We are a Civil Engineering, Land Surveying, and Subsurface Utility Engineering company that employs 51 people and have been in business for over 35 years. We have been fortunate to grow in the last 5 years by an average of 8% each year, increasing our work force by 43 people and are looking at continuing that growth with focus on our Houston office into the future. The DBE program has been a vital part of our success giving us opportunities to work on projects that enhance our roadways and drainage infrastructure helping us serve our communities in Bexar County that we would not have otherwise been a part of. All our employees, myself included, have been fortunate to benefit from this program by giving us the opportunity to continue to better our immediate and surrounding communities. By losing the DBE program, we would risk losing up to 25% of our current workload thereby forcing us to reduce our workforce accordingly, losing good people that we have worked so hard to find and have enjoyed working with. Please preserve the DBE program and reauthorize the DBE program in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Portal.

Thank you,

Keith Keppler, RPLS | Vice President | Survey & S.U.E. Division

8122 Datapoint Drive, Suite 840 | San Antonio, TX 78229

P: 210.366.1988 | F: 210.366.1980 | C: 210.863.1260

TBPE No. F-333 | TBPLS No. 10194506 | www.MAESCE.com

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April 18, 2025

Re: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

To whom it may concern,

Mantra Services, LLC, a minority/woman DBE certified construction firm located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. We are a family-owned small business with over twenty years of experience that specializes in the installation of Sidewalks, ADA wheelchair ramps, concrete curbing, sewer and drain manhole Inverts, and utility structures adjustments. We have the privilege and are blessed to have a great team of eight experienced and respectful workers who take pride in their hard work and strive for excellence.

Losing the DBE program will take a huge toll. Its primary effect would be the loss of potential government contracts, especially in federally funded transportation projects, as DBE participation goals would likely be removed or significantly reduced. This could lead to reduced revenue, job losses, and overall economic hardship for DBE-certified businesses. Taking this program away will affect not just my company but our employees and their families' financial stability, and as a result it will impact the community.

DBE certification has expanded the opportunities for my firm to participate in federally funded projects, including those related to transportation, as described in the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT). Thanks to this program we were able to hire competent laborers within our community and help families with their economic stability.

The program also provides resources and support to help DBE firms like mine grow our capacity and improve our ability to compete in the transportation industry. The Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRCs) offer market research, training, certification, and procurement assistance.

Please do not take away the DBE program!

Gladys D. Da Rosa - Owner







Ph: 978-227-4056

email: mantrasvcs@gmail.com

21 Charlton St-Fitchburg, MA 01420

PROPOSAL

We are General Certified Contractors certified as DBEs since 2024 and we have been operating since 2008. Our home office is in an urban location but we execute projects along Florida and other states. We have performed projects as DBEs for FDOT.

Losing the DBE program will impact our ability to compete with Medium and Large corporations that count with lots of resources to compete and provide aggressive proposals that we cannot compete. At least the DBE program protects somehow a portion of the market for companies like ours that are very small and that are trying to maintain afloat in such a competitive environment.

If the goals for DBEs are reduced or eliminated, then we'll be highly impacted as we won't have a program that back us up to get more contracts and therefore provide for the families that our company represent.

The DBE program has provided us with additional opportunities to compete in areas where before we hadn't even considered participating. In addition, this program helps us differentiate from medium and large construction companies that are very aggressive to compete against.

We have always believed that this is the country for freedom and opportunities and being able to have a chance to compete as a disadvantaged business, is a great privilege that very few countries can talk about. We ask your support to reauthorize the DBE program and keep helping small disadvantaged companies like ours to contribute to build a great country.



547 W. Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, IL 60661 • 312-322-6900

metra.com



The Honorable Sam Graves Chairman House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen Ranking Member House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Washington, D.C., 20515

April 28, 2025

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen,

Thank you for supporting our nation's commuter rail network. Commuter rail is essential for countless Americans who rely exclusively on the service to access essential employment, education, and urgently needed health and basic services. As Congress develops the next comprehensive surface transportation reauthorization bill to fund critically important federal highway and public transportation programs, including commuter rail, I write to urge your support for Metra's priorities that will help connect Americans to critical resources and opportunities.

As one of the largest commuter rail systems in the country, Metra appreciates your continued support. With our 11 rail lines, 242 stations, 1,155 miles of track, and 488 route miles, Metra provides about 300,000 passenger trips in northeast Illinois each weekday and is an invaluable component of our nation's transportation network.

It is in this context that we submit our surface transportation reauthorization priorities for your consideration:

Commuter Rail Bridge Funding Grant Program

Metra supports the creation of a new grant program funded at \$1.5 billion/year to provide capital assistance for maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation needs of 100+ year/old bridges owned by commuter rail authorities. If formula funded, the program would be administered by the Federal Transit Agency (FTA) which already administers transit formula funded programs such as Section 5307 (Urbanized Area) and 5337 (State of Good Repair). If competitive, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) would administer the program as it currently administers discretionary rail programs like the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program and the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program.

Metra, like other legacy commuter rail systems, inherited the responsibility of maintaining and improving rail bridges at its inception. In 1893, Chicago issued an ordinance to elevate all railroad tracks, resulting in the construction of hundreds of bridges at once. Many of these

bridges remain in service today, deteriorating at the same rate. Metra owns 446 bridges of which more than half are over a century old. While all of Metra's trains and bridges continue to operate in safe working conditions, it is no secret that more than 200 Metra-owned bridges are in dire need of capacity improvements to meet the desired modern-day standards of efficiency and reliability. The simple fact of the matter is that the older the infrastructure, the higher the maintenance cost and reduced reliability, which impacts the system and reduces the performance that passengers need and deserve.

Unfortunately, dedicated federal funding opportunities to meet this challenge are currently inadequate. Currently, there are scores of grant programs administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation to address deteriorating bridge infrastructure (for highways) and transit mode-specific programs (ferries, low-no emission buses, bus facilities, etc.). Additionally, while the CRISI program benefits intercity passenger rail and Class II and III railroads, commuter rail is largely ineligible.

Unlike buses, ferries, highways, and other transportation modes, there are no programs that provide funding specifically for commuter railroads, especially their aging infrastructure, such as the rail bridges. For commuter railroads that have infrastructure and rail bridges that were originally built over 100 years ago, such as Metra, the cost to maintain these bridges is unsustainable and inefficient for local agencies to bear entirely by themselves.

Creating a dedicated federal funding program for commuter rail bridges is a necessary step to ensure the safety and reliability of these critical transportation networks. A new formula or discretionary grant program would provide commuter railroads with the essential funding needed for the maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation of bridges that have served our communities for over a century. Beyond the benefits of improved safety and reliability for passengers, this investment would create high-quality jobs and spur economic growth across the nation's transportation construction industry.

Maintain Existing USDOT Programs and Continue to Provide Sustained Formula Funds for Transit

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (P.L. 117-58) made historic investments in our nation's public transportation infrastructure, including more than \$108 billion for public transit over five years. For every \$1 billion invested in public transportation, nearly 50,000 jobs are created or sustained across the entire economy, including in non-transit industries. ¹

While federal formula funding is the bedrock that allows for long-term planning for capital projects, discretionary grants have allowed Metra to complete projects of regional and national significance that would otherwise be impossible under its current budgetary limitations.

Metra has benefited from multiple USDOT discretionary grant programs, and we believe these competitive grants create opportunities for the best transportation projects in the country with to be funded when resources may be limited. The infusion of funds provided by programs such as the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program, Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Program, Rail Vehicle Replacement Program,

¹ APTA, Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment—2019 Update (February 2020). Public transportation can also enhance the productivity of industries not directly associated with transit, such as the technology industry.

Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (RCE), All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP), and the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) program allow for transit agencies across the nation to fund and initiate projects faster, more cost-effectively, and spend resources on other critical projects in the planning pipeline. This is why we urge your support for these programs.

Enhancing and Protecting the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

In 1983, Congress enacted the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program to foster the formation and growth of small businesses. The program has been successfully reauthorized in every surface transportation bill since then in a largely bipartisan fashion.

The DBE program's primary goal is to remedy ongoing discrimination and its effects in USDOT-funded projects. DBEs are defined as small businesses where socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own at least 51 percent interest in the firm and control management and daily business operations. The program provides contracting opportunities on federally funded highway, transit, and airport projects for these small businesses. Since 1983, we have seen great strides and progress made through this program. Over the last 40 years since its inception, we have seen a leveling of the playing field that allows for the most qualified contractors to engage on federally funded projects, regardless of economic or social status. However, recent court decisions and other developments could adversely impact the very existence of the DBE program as we know and turn back the clock on this progress.

Protecting the DBE program is critical, and we have an opportunity to strengthen and improve it. We need to provide more opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses, which have faced significant structural and historical challenges to start and grow businesses in the transportation and infrastructure industry, to thrive.

With this in mind, for the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, we strongly encourage Congress to strengthen the DBE program to withstand future legal challenges and further improve it to meet the needs of the current landscape.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of commuter rail and strengthening the national network. We look forward to continued collaboration throughout the surface transportation reauthorization process to improve the commuter experience.

Sincerely,

Jim Derwinski

CEO/Executive Director

I own a small family business that employs 6 dedicated workers who greatly contribute to the success of supporting an operational venture that provides an essential service to our customers throughout our community. I started my family business in 2006 in support of obtaining a long-desired dream of owning a meaningful venture that serves a purpose throughout my community. At the time I started my business in 2006, my town was at a population of 10,000. Fast forward to the year 2025, the town that I still live in has grown to a population of 30,000. I live in the town of Wildomar, CA. This area of southern California has immensely grown due to families that are drawn to the equestrian style living in a suburban town. Many of our neighbors continue to commute into the city, whether it's a long commute into San Diego or Los Angeles. But nevertheless, the business that I started 20-years ago, was built with purpose. A purpose to serve my neighbors, my community and local business owners.

It is with deep regret; I am alongside of many small business owners who have justifiably qualified of becoming a Disadvantaged Business Owner that are now faced with an eminent threat of having our certification revoked. Being DBE Certified has allowed my small business to compete on governmental projects that otherwise I would not have been considered or invited to apply for, if it wasn't for a DBE Certification. With this certification, I am considered as a third-party vendor for prime contractors that are contractually obliged by the Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) to hire DBE Certified small businesses. Although, I have been fortunate to secure customers outside of the governmental body of the State of California, but a DBE Certification has allowed my business to grow and hire more employees to help in caring for our customers.

A revocation of the DBE Certification Program is an affront to minority owned business owners. This Program has allowed many minorities to establish an opportunity of obtaining a life-long dream of prosperity, legacy and securing a future that otherwise was not tangible until the DBE Certification Program was instituted in 1983. A revocation of the DBE Certification Program will tragically force minority owned businesses to layoff employees, which will otherwise affect communities and demographics in the most profound and negative manner. Resulting in a rise of unemployment, governmental assistance, homelessness, and increased crime rates. My small business alongside other business owners will undoubtedly experience diminished opportunities in serving a wider range of customers, and possibly leading to an unfortunate decision of downsizing, ending services and regrettably, being faced with the dastardly decision of having to close a business due to diminished opportunities.

In retrospect, the DBE Certification Program has been instrumental in providing opportunities for business venture minded minorities. This program was enacted for viable reasons, which otherwise current circumstances has lessoned the opportunities for minority owned businesses to capitalize on governmental contracts or as third-party contractors under a prime contractor. Although the decision, such as in the case of Mid-America, a DBE business was awarded a governmental contract in contrast to a non-DBE bidder that alleges they submitted a lower price for the project. I can understand the fallacy of this decision, but on the other hand, the lowest bidder does not necessarily mean that they are the best suited candidate for the project. By revoking DBE Certification retracts this country's decision to fundamentally ensure that every constituent is treated fairly and equally in the pursuit of prosperity, freedom and entrepreneurship. The DBE Certification Program is a gateway for minorities of becoming successful business owner in an otherwise monopolized field. Which has systemically hindered monetary growth to minorities by decision makers providing preference to non-minorities.

In closing, I am happy to give testimony that the DBE Certification Program has aided me, my family and small business in several ways.

The DBE Certification Program has provided me with the opportunity to grow as an entrepreneur and I have gained confidence in life, as a neighbor and as a constituent. Knowing that I am generously contributing to my community and society.

Secondly, the DBE Certification Program as aided me in having my business recognized across the state, which in turn, has provided me with the opportunity to gain opportunities to grow monetarily. Resulting in improving the quality of life for my family.

Lastly, the DBE Certification Program has put my small business on the map, which is recognized by prime contractors across the state and locally. My small business is growing exponentially because of the DBE Certification Program, and I implore each State Representative, Senator and our current Executive Branch to rescind the decision of abolishing this program.

Respectfully,

Jeff Padilla



April 29, 2025

RE: 2025 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill

To whom this may concern,

We've been in business for 10 years and have been members of the DBE program for the past 5 years, starting in the middle of 2020. Becoming a member of the DBE program helped to maintain and grow our business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, we were able to keep all our staff, not having to reduce any pay of employees or reduce staff hours during the pandemic. With our ability to partner with larger firms we've been able to participate in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts (IIJA) projects that have increased our expertise, aided in leveling the playing field and helped foster great relationships for future project opportunities. The economic development from the DBE program for small businesses cannot be understated, it makes a huge, huge difference. It also helps to ensure more local tax paying businesses can work on projects in their local communities. Furthermore, we've been able to sponsor STEM and other engineering related community projects with organizations like COMTO and work with local schools on the importance of infrastructure and employment opportunities for civil engineers based on our work with the DBE program. The DBE program is necessary as it benefits local communities, aids in keeping local tax dollars local and aids local firms' ability to give back to their local communities.

Yours truly,

David A. Moody, Ph.D. President and CEO

Moody Engineering, LLC

dmoody@moody-eng.com

614-280-9355





Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

Dear Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,

On behalf of the National Association of Minority Contractors Washington Chapter (NAMC WA), we respectfully submit this letter urging the reauthorization and continued support of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program.

NAMC WA is a non-profit trade association representing Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) across Washington State. For over 50 years, we have worked to advocate for the economic growth, stability, and empowerment of minority and woman contractors, many of whom depend on the DBE Program to build and sustain viable businesses. Our membership includes firms operating across the construction, professional services, and supply chain sectors, located primarily in urban and suburban communities throughout Washington State.

The DBE Program has been vital in creating opportunities that level the playing field for historically underrepresented businesses. Without the protections and goals provided by the program:

- Small businesses would lose critical access to federally funded contracting opportunities.
- Minority communities would suffer economically, as many DBE firms serve as significant local employers and economic drivers.
- Workforce development efforts, including apprenticeships and training programs for underrepresented populations, would sharply decline.

We have already witnessed the negative impacts of legal uncertainty stemming from the Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction. The resulting confusion has disrupted the project pipeline, decreased the availability of DBE goal-oriented solicitations, and caused significant anxiety among our member businesses. Any further instability risks compounding these harms, undermining decades of effort toward building an inclusive and competitive contracting environment.

The DBE Program not only fosters entrepreneurship and job creation, but also drives competition. Across the nation, DBEs employ over 500,000 individuals and contribute meaningfully to the economic health of countless communities. In Washington State, the DBE Program has been instrumental in ensuring that federally funded infrastructure investments reflect the diversity and entrepreneurial spirit of our population.

We firmly believe that the reauthorization of the DBE Program is critical to ensuring fair access to opportunity, promoting economic development, and strengthening our national infrastructure through inclusion and innovation.

We urge you to prioritize the reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program in the upcoming Transportation and Infrastructure Bill and stand firmly with the thousands of small businesses who rely on its protections to compete and thrive.

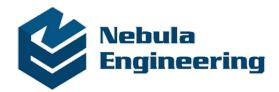
Thank you for considering our perspective and for your commitment to equitable economic opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Armstead

President National Association of Minority Contractors – Washington Chapter (NAMC WA) PO Box 53513 Bellevue, WA 98015-3513 (877) 626-2927

rcarmstead@gmail.com https://namcwa.com



Executive Summary

As the owner of a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) engineering consulting firm based in New York, I respectfully submit this proposal urging the continuation and strengthening of the federal DBE program as part of the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization. My firm, which has operated for [number] years and currently employs three part-time professionals, has directly benefited from the DBE program's support and opportunities.

Background

Located in an urban area, my company provides specialized engineering consulting services for infrastructure projects, with a unique focus on traction power systems-a critical and niche skill in the rail and transit sector. The DBE program has enabled us to participate in significant, large-scale projects as a specialized expert, collaborating with larger firms that value our expertise. Without the DBE program, opportunities to contribute our niche skills to these major projects would be extremely limited for a small business like mine. This participation has allowed us to grow, create jobs, and support our families and community.

Economic Benefits

The DBE program is a powerful driver of economic growth. By opening doors for small businesses to compete for federally funded contracts, the program stimulates local economies, supports entrepreneurship, and creates jobs. My own business is a testament to this: thanks to the DBE program, I have been able to hire employees, reinvest in my company, and contribute to the local tax base. On a national scale, the program supports more than 50,000 DBEs and over 500,000 jobs, multiplying its positive impact across communities and states.

Efficiency and Cost Savings

The DBE program increases efficiency and value in public contracting. By expanding the pool of qualified bidders, it encourages competition, which leads to better pricing and innovative solutions. This benefits taxpayers through lower project costs and ensures that public funds are used effectively. The program's good faith effort requirements ensure that contracts are awarded based on merit, capability, and value, not just size or connections.

Community Building

Perhaps most importantly, the DBE program helps build stronger communities. When small, local businesses like mine succeed, we are able to hire locally, provide stable employment, and invest in our neighborhoods. Our projects improve infrastructure, enhance quality of life, and foster pride in our communities. The relationships built through DBE participation-between contractors, suppliers, and clients-create lasting networks that support ongoing community development.



Recognition of Recent Improvements

I would also like to applaud the Department of Transportation's recent administrative efforts to modernize and improve the DBE program. Streamlining certification, reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, and clarifying eligibility requirements have made the program more accessible and effective for small businesses like mine.

Consequences of Program Loss

Should the DBE program be discontinued or weakened, my business would face significant barriers to accessing contracts. This would threaten our operations, jeopardize jobs, and negatively impact the families and community members who rely on us. The loss would also diminish competition, reduce efficiency, and slow economic growth in countless communities.

Proposal

I respectfully propose that the Committee:

Continue and strengthen the DBE program as part of the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization.

Maintain and expand recent administrative improvements to ensure the program remains accessible and efficient for small businesses.

Recognize the vital role DBEs play in supporting economic growth, efficient project delivery, and community development nationwide.

Conclusion

The DBE program is a proven catalyst for economic vitality, efficient public spending, and strong, resilient communities. I urge you to ensure its continuation and enhancement so that firms like mine can continue to contribute to our nation's infrastructure and prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration. I am confident that, with your continued leadership and commitment, the DBE program will remain a powerful force for growth, opportunity, and community success across the country.

We are a small architectural lighting design firm based in San Francisco, with just three employees. We started our company from scratch, investing our own savings and years of dedication to carve out a space for ourselves in a highly competitive industry.

As a certified DBE, we've been able to pursue public infrastructure work that would otherwise have been inaccessible to a firm our size. Most recently, we were selected as part of a design team for a major state infrastructure project—an opportunity that allowed us to contribute meaningfully to the public realm, employ local talent, and help ensure that design excellence isn't limited to only the largest firms. Without the DBE program, we likely would not have had this opportunity.

Programs like DBE support the subcontracting side of construction and design, where smaller firms often have the expertise but lack access to procurement networks. It helps drive competition, which ultimately benefits taxpayers through better pricing and more diverse solutions. It's not a handout—it's a structure that allows good-faith efforts to be recognized, and it levels the playing field in an otherwise uneven system.

There are over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing over 500,000 people. That's a significant part of our economy. In our case, the program has helped us sustain our small team, build long-term careers, and continue contributing to both our local economy and the broader built environment.

We urge Congress to reauthorize and strengthen the DBE program—not just for us, but for the thousands of small, skilled businesses across the country that rely on fair access to public opportunities to survive and grow.

To whom it may concern,

My company is one of the few electronic security company that is operated by minority individuals being black and woman owned. I have 4 employees and have been an actual business since 2020. The DBE program is so important to me because I didn't start getting business until I got my DBE certification in 2024. Ever since then, we have been turning profits that I never could have imagined. My company operates out of North Fort Worth but have been doing business for companies' nationwide. Losing the DBE program would affect not only opportunities to gain partnerships that I normally would not have had a chance to receive, but it will also affect business that don't get the opportunities to be exposed to smaller companies that can offer better services than some of the bigger companies as we can offer an experienced more tailored and personable, avoiding commercialized processes and doing things based on the "numbers". The DBE program serves as a marketing mechanism for us smaller businesses by giving us opportunities to show major companies what we can do. The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already caused some worry with some of my customers as they are worried that our relationship may be negatively influenced as they may be in subjection to use other companies.

If anything, please understand that I also have children that look to benefit from the success of my company. The DBE program has helped make this a reality and can help our younger generation as they grow and enter the world of entrepreneurship.

Please Keep DBE in place.

Concerned Business Owner

Gavin Brown



2620 n. figueroa st. los angeles ca 90065 (323) 352-8982 www.office42.com

April 24,2025

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for the continuance of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. As the owner of office42 architecture, a women-owned architecture and interior design firm based in Cypress Park, Los Angeles, I have seen firsthand the transformative impact of the DBE program on our business, our employees, and the communities we serve.

The DBE certification has been instrumental in leveling the playing field for our small business, enabling us to compete for larger projects and form partnerships with established organizations—opportunities that would otherwise be inaccessible to a firm of our size. This access is not merely symbolic; it translates directly into real contracts, professional growth for our diverse team, and the ability to deliver high-quality design services for affordable and low-income housing projects, which are critical to our urban community.

Our growth from just a handful of employees to a team of 15 is a direct result of the business opportunities made possible by the DBE program. This growth has increased economic equity for our staff—who represent a range of ethnicities and backgrounds—and has allowed us to reinvest in both our Echo Park neighborhood, the Cypress Park area, and the Greater Los Angeles area. The DBE program's support for the subcontractors we work with in construction further amplifies its positive impact, as it fosters a more inclusive and equitable competitive marketplace where small, disadvantaged firms can thrive alongside larger entities.

The DBE program is not only a tool for remedying historic inequities; it is a proven driver of economic development and community uplift. Without it, the barriers facing women- and minority-owned businesses would persist, and the diversity of perspectives and expertise that enrich public projects would be diminished. The continued implementation of the DBE program is essential for ensuring fair access to government contracts, promoting innovation, and supporting the economic vitality of small businesses like mine.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to equity and opportunity in federal contracting.

Thank you,

Stephanie Ragle Principal Architect office42 architecture

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My name is (Torino Woods), I own (Out Of The Woods Industries LLC) in (TX), I have (4 of employees) and my business depends on the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program administered by the US Department of Transportation. Please preserve the DBE Program by adding your support to reauthorize the DBE Program in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Portal.

Pioneer Concrete Proposal Letter

Contact Name: Gerardo Avila

Title: Owner

Organization Name: Pioneer Concrete

Email: buffaloconcretetexas@gmail.com

Phone Number: (214) 903-3679

Statement

Introduction

The construction industry is inherently capital-intensive. Whether it's heavy machinery, a fleet of trucks, or skilled labor, the upfront and ongoing expenses are significant. This reality places smaller or newer firms at a distinct disadvantage compared to established, large-scale contractors who can spread costs across multiple projects and asset bases.

Economies of Scale and Purchasing Power

- Insurance and Bonds: Large contractors often secure fleet insurance and performance bonds at substantially reduced premiums because insurers recognize the diversified risk across many projects and vehicles.
- Equipment Acquisition & Maintenance: Purchasing dozens of earth-moving machines, mixers, or cranes grants bulk discounts not available to a firm buying just one or two units. Likewise, maintenance contracts for hundreds of machines command lower hourly service rates than those for a handful of units.
- Financing & Credit: Established companies typically enjoy better credit terms and lower interest rates for loans, leases, or lines of credit—factors that further reduce their effective cost of capital.

Barriers to Entry for Emerging Firms

• Cash Flow Constraints: Because smaller outfits must pay higher per-unit costs for essential services and equipment, their margins are thinner. This limits their ability to reinvest earnings in growth or to bid competitively.

• Competitive Disadvantage: When bid estimates heavily factor in fixed costs, large firms can undercut prices while still protecting their margins. Newer entrants struggle to match those figures without eroding their financial stability.

Role of DBE Programs

A Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification or similar set-aside program acts as a critical gateway:

- 1. **Access to Projects:** Many publicly funded infrastructure and municipal contracts include DBE participation goals. Meeting these goals often requires primes to subcontract a percentage of work to certified small or minority-owned firms.
- 2. **Level Playing Field:** By earmarking work for DBE firms, the industry fosters competition and diversity, mitigating the natural tilt toward large incumbents.
- 3. **Capacity Building:** Early engagement on smaller scopes under these programs gives emerging firms vital experience, bonding capacity, and references prerequisites for larger, more lucrative contracts.

Risks of Monopolization

- Market Control: When a handful of giants dominate the field, they effectively set price ceilings. With little competition, there is a higher likelihood of price inflation across the board.
- **Reduced Innovation:** Smaller firms are often more agile, able to pilot novel materials or processes. Monopolistic markets can stifle such experimentation in favor of established norms.
- Taxpayer Burden: As government agencies face inflated bids from large primes, public spending on infrastructure rises. Over time, this translates into higher taxes or deferred maintenance due to budget constraints.

Conclusion

Without mechanisms like DBE programs to democratize access, construction procurement risks ossifying into a playground for incumbents alone. Ensuring that small and minority-owned firms can bid, win, and perform work safeguards healthy competition, encourages innovation, and ultimately keeps project costs and taxpayer burdens in check.

PJR & Associates, Inc.

Jaime Lodge, President

PO Box 9 Campbell Hill, Illinois 62916 Phone (618) 426-3325 Fax (618) 426-3713

PJR & Associates, Inc. is a Union Ironworker Female owned business. We have been incorporated since 1989. The business started in 1989 by Patricia J. Reiman. In 2016, Jaime Lodge purchased the business from her grandmother Patricia. This makes PJR a female owned and operated business for over 35 years. PJR is in a very rural area in the lower eastern part of Jackson County in Southern Illinois, boarding up to southern Indiana and Western Kentucky. Over 12 % of Jackson county's population live in poverty. The hometown that the company is in is Campbell Hill, population of 304. The local school district is made up of 5 small communities that reach over 100 square miles. The school district is made up of 58% low-income students with a Chronic Absenteeism of 26%. PJR employees many families within the five communities. I am proud to say that we still have employes working with us since 1989. Now their children are employed with PJR.

The Mid-America, Bagshaw injunction has impacted me directly. In November 2024, the day before the letting, I found out that several of the jobs that I was bidding on in IDOT letting were withdrawn. This cost me time and money. We put in several hours estimating and preparing to bid on those items. We also lost out on the opportunity to be subcontractors on the projects, resulting in income loss and work on the books for next year for employees of PJR. Since November we have had three more lettings resulting in amendments to serval items, dropping the DBE Goal to 0. Once again time and money spent on the bidding process and the possibly of less work for PJR's employees and income put back into the community.

The DBE Program preserves the specialty/subcontracting arm of the construction industry. Because of competition, the DBE Program results in lower prices for our taxpayers. According to USDOT, there are 50,000 DBEs in the United States. There are over 500,000 people employed by DBE companies. The DBE Program is founded on and implemented in good faith efforts. The DBE Program is an economic development program for disadvantaged small businesses. Without it, they would be unable to compete against large and medium-sized contractors and the chances of the large contractors performing more and more of the work without subcontractors. Within our area over the last few years, I have witnessed large firms buying out other contractors resulting in only a few companies leaving, receiving all the projects.

Jaime Lodge



PRADO & RENTERIA CPAS – DBE PROGRAM STORY

Prado & Renteria CPAs, Prof. Corp. (P&R) is a Chicago-based public accounting firm that is the largest Hispanic women-owned CPA firm in the state of Illinois. We have over thirty-five years of experience providing services in the Chicagoland area, the State of Illinois, and the national arena as well at the international level. We are comprised of an average of thirty-five professionals with experience in audit, accounting, and management consulting services.

We're appreciative towards the DBE program as it was instrumental in creating visibility and a platform for the firm to explore direct business relationships with local government entities. The program has been instrumental in our firm's success,—by providing a platform for the firm to create business relationships which have led to an increase of professional services and firm's overall growth. Programs such as the DBE provide an opportunity for firms like P&R to demonstrate its capabilities and qualifications. Through this exposure, the firm has developed relationships and increased its visibility with numerous agencies within the transportation industry. The firm's journey began with valuable subcontracting opportunities with METRA, and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). This foundation and our familiarity with transportation industry programs, policies and procedures empowered the firm to compete and win contracts as a prime contractor with Metra, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) – Audit Services Division, to name a few.

P&R's mission is to create value and engagement opportunities for organizations and individuals to fulfil their purpose. For thirty-five years, P&R has delivered value and engagement opportunities for organizations and individuals to fulfill their purpose. The DBE program has been instrumental in creating that platform from which the firm became visible to organizations which otherwise would not have dealt with P&R in any way. The rest of the way was carved by the firm's initiative to explore potential opportunities to continue to fulfill its mission.

The firm's prime contracts engagements have included:

 Illinois Department of Transportation, Funds Control Agent for DBE Revolving Loan Fund.

P&R provided both managerial and detailed technical assistance to DBE firms certified in the Illinois Unified Certification Program, to apply for a low-interest loan

for eligible expenses on Agency awarded construction contracts. Serving as the FCA for the DBE Loan Program for the Illinois Department of Transportation. As the Fund Control Agent, P&R directed the Escrow Agent to disburse escrow funds to the Borrower for eligible expenses in accordance with written directive from the Borrower and as supported by borrower's contracts. P&R also determined re-payment amounts based upon the completed work-in-place for which partial payment was made.

Illinois Department of Transportation, Overhead Rate Audits of Engineering Contractors.

P&R was engaged to conduct FAR compliant overhead and project cost audits to determine the actual costs of IDOT projects ensuring that the State has not been overbilled. All audit work is conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards and Generally Accepted Auditing Standards to ensure compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

North Dakota, Department of Transportation, Audit Services Division, Review of CPA Audits of Consulting Engineers' Indirect Cost Rates

P&R conducted reviews of other CPA firm audits of consulting engineering firms' indirect cost rates. Emphasis of the review(s) was placed on the following:

- 1. Internal Controls
- 2. Billing systems and controls (including computerized systems)
- 3. Support for direct charges
 - a. Labor
 - b. Travel
 - c. Other expenses such as computer-aided design and drafting (CADD), reproduction, mileage, etc.
- 4. Direct labor base (used to allocate indirect costs)
- 5. Indirect costs (overhead)

P&R performed these reviews in accordance with professional standards including GAGAS, applicable CAS, and AASHTO Uniform Audit and Accounting Guide.

North Dakota, Department of Transportation, Audit Services Division, Agreed-Upon Procedures Reviews

P&R conducted agreed-upon procedures in accordance with the standards for attestation engagements contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

As described above, the DBE program has been instrumental for Prado & Renteria to demonstrate its capabilities and begin Prime vendor relationships with Transportation Industry Clients. In turn, those relationships have created an expansion of services which has provided greater capacity and expanded opportunities for new accountants to explore their careers in public accounting. Through these opportunities numerous people of color have begun their professional careers in public accounting, many of them moving on to serve other sectors including local government entities, nonprofit organizations and small businesses. P&R employees have moved on to fulfill roles as Finance Director for Cook County of Illinois, Budget Director for the City of Chicago, Comptroller for the University of Chicago Medical Center, Comptroller for the Chicago Park District, Comptroller for Brookfield Zoo, Comptroller for the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Regional Finance Director for the Archdiocese of Chicago, among many others.

Additionally, current and former employees serve or have served on numerous Appointed Boards and Nonprofit Organization Boards of Directors such as:

- The Illinois Board of Examiners
- The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations
- The Illinois CPA Society
- The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy
- The Resurrection Project

P&R team member's participation on these Boards has been instrumental in various ways:

- They have contributed their experiences and view points.
- They have been instrumental in implementing accountancy standards and policies which serves the Accounting Profession in the United States.
- They have become role models for other individuals from DBE communities to explore their own careers and opportunities.

We recognize the importance of the DBE program and other similar initiatives as they play a crucial role in empowering the next generation of entrepreneurs as they embark on their business journey. The absence of the DBE program would disrupt the trajectory of new enterprises. Consequently, these businesses would not be able to support and uplift their own communities, diminishing their economic and educational development. Disadvantaged communities would feel the impact most prominently.



PRC Engineering 1685 W. Uintah St., Suite 114 Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904 www.PRCeng.com 719-291-2744

For the past 11 years, our civil engineering consulting firm has been serving the urban core with thoughtful, reliable infrastructure solutions. We're a small but highly skilled team of 10 professionals who care deeply about the quality of our work and the communities we serve.

Our growth and sustainability have been made possible, in large part, through the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. As a certified DBE, we've had access to meaningful subcontracting opportunities that allowed us to build capacity, create jobs, and establish strong, ongoing partnerships in the public and private sectors.

The DBE program supports the subcontracting backbone of the construction industry. It brings smaller, qualified firms to the table—ensuring competition stays strong, innovation thrives, and taxpayer dollars go further. That's good policy, good business, and good stewardship.

This mission aligns directly with the goals of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)—landmark legislation aimed at rebuilding America's infrastructure with inclusivity, efficiency, and long-term economic impact. Under the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which oversees a significant portion of IIJA-related funding, the DBE program remains a vital tool to meet those goals by ensuring diverse firms like ours are part of the solution.

Nationwide, over 50,000 DBEs employ more than 500,000 people. The ripple effect is real—these businesses support families, stimulate local economies, and give back to the communities that support them. The program doesn't guarantee success; it ensures access. It's rooted in good faith efforts and fair competition—values we believe all Americans, regardless of political party, can support.

The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already impacted us. Uncertainty around the program has led to paused projects, hesitancy from prime contractors, and a noticeable slow-down in the kind of opportunities we've relied on to stay competitive and growing. Without the DBE program, our path forward becomes exponentially steeper.

As a Republican-owned DBE, we want to emphasize: this isn't about handouts. It's about fairness. We compete on merit, deliver excellent results, and hold ourselves to the highest standards. The DBE program simply ensures our work gets a chance to be seen. And in doing so, it upholds the very principles the IIJA was built upon—broad participation, smart investment, and resilient infrastructure for all.

The DBE program has strengthened our business, our families, and our community. Its loss would weaken more than just our bottom line—it would undercut the spirit of progress and opportunity that drives American infrastructure forward.

Precision Measurements Inc. is a Woman-Owned, Land Surveying Business, with over 70 employees, operating for over 30 years.

- The DBE program helps to educate us and gives us opportunities to work, as a subconsultant, on many large-scale projects that ordinarily only large businesses would be able to perform. This opportunity allows our staff to be trained and grow professionally with our company, or for another company, it adds value to the economy by strengthening the workforce.
- The DBE program supports the subcontracting arm of construction.
- It drives competition, resulting in lower taxpayer costs.
- There are over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing 500,000+ people.
- It is based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field. We have to perform in order to get work. We DON'T win contracts simply due to our DBE status. The DBE status helps to "open the door" but it is only our quality work that keeps the doors open and the lights on.
- The DBE Program fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses.
- PMI is owned and managed by Republican Leaders.

PUGET SOUND STEEL COMPANY 906 3RD AVENUE SOUTH KENT, WA 98032 253-854-3600

www.pugetsoundsteel.com

April 27, 2025

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure United States House of Representatives 2165 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to introduce myself and my company to you as you begin consideration on the reauthorization of our Nation's surface transportation programs. Puget Sound Steel Company is a reinforcing steel fabricator located in Kent, WA, and Spokane, WA and we have been in business since 1968. We currently employ 35 employees in manufacturing, estimating and detailing of reinforcing steel for concrete structures such as roads and bridges, airport runways, commercial high-rise buildings, wastewater infrastructure, docks, ferry terminals, and even fish ladders. As the longest standing independent fabricator in the Pacific Northwest, we take great pride in maintaining our small business model, especially when our competitors are mostly Fortune 500 big businesses.

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) has allowed us, a small business, to compete and succeed, as the low bidder, on many, many projects in our marketplace. We have successfully completed work with WSDOT, Sound Transit, and even the Great Wheel on Seattle's waterfront. Without this program, I believe we would never have had the opportunity to even compete for this work – the DBE program is an economic engine that levels the playing field against a marketplace that would have a few prime contractors self-performing everything in a given market – competition would be driven away, and costs would inevitably rise for the tax paying public.

Puget Sound Steel currently has a backlog of 20,000 tons, half of which is in the public sector programs you are reauthorizing. Should this program be abolished, it would have an enormously negative impact to the company and its employees. Please believe me when I say we can compete, we just need to have the opportunity to do so. The DBE program allows us that opportunity.

I appreciate the consideration this committee has given me to tell my story, and I remain available to answer questions, provide additional information, or meet with any of you should you think that helpful in your deliberations. Our website is www.pugetsoundsteel.com and I can be reached at the phone number and email address below. Thank you again for the kind consideration of my letter.

Very truly yours,

httspeckersless

Constance Macolino, President

cmacolino@pugetsoundsteel.com

610-636-6173

Joann-my business has dropped to zero. I am a supplier of reinforced steel. My manufacturer does not even send me quotes anymore! Contracts jobs have been dropped by about 85%. Manufacturers are understanding the impact to their customers and stopping lines of credit and expecting payment earlier than prior years. They are mitigating their potential losses...which in turns makes it difficult to pay them until Prime has paid us. There is the inventory and equipment issue. I have inventory in my yard that no one is buying. Equipment that is not moving that still needs insured and maintained. Overhead...that doesnt change. Insurance has to be paid, taxes paid, light bills etc... To sustain, you need to have subcontracts coming in on a monthly bases...because of the injunction that is no longer happening. There is great harm being done to my company. There needs to be a legal stay be put in place against this injunction.

__

Pamela Sterrett-Albertson DBE/WBE/DOBE Queen Bee Construction, Inc 8585 Hickory Hill Trail Mooresville Indiana 765-913-9012

Questivity's Story for DBE Program Reauthorization

Questivity is a full-service IT reseller and solutions provider, proudly operating for over **25 years** with a highly dedicated team of approximately **15 employees**. Our business is headquartered in an **urban location** in **California**, serving a broad range of industries, including public sector, education, and commercial enterprises nationwide.

The **loss of the DBE program** would have a devastating impact on our business. As a small, minority-owned company, the DBE designation has allowed us to compete in environments where larger corporations often dominate. Without the DBE program, our ability to participate meaningfully in competitive bids — especially public sector contracts — would be significantly reduced, threatening revenue streams that are crucial for our survival and growth.

The **Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction** has already created uncertainty for us. We have experienced delays in contract awards and project opportunities where DBE participation goals were temporarily suspended or questioned. This has directly impacted our pipeline of opportunities, forcing us to divert resources to reassess bid strategies and resulting in missed chances for growth.

The **DBE Program** has been a lifeline for Questivity, allowing us to build a sustainable business that supports not just our employees, but also their families and our local community. It has empowered us to invest back into our community by creating jobs, offering mentorship opportunities to minority youth interested in technology careers, and donating to local causes supporting education and workforce development.

Key Points:

- The **DBE program supports subcontracting** opportunities within critical sectors like Information and technology, offering small businesses a seat at the table for major projects.
- By **fostering competition**, the program ensures that government-funded projects are completed at a **lower cost to taxpayers** while still supporting small businesses.
- With over **50,000 DBEs employing 500,000+ people nationwide**, this program plays an essential role in the U.S. economy.
- The DBE program is rooted in **good faith efforts**, ensuring **fair competition** and **leveling the playing field** for historically disadvantaged groups.
- **Economic development** and **entrepreneurship** among minority-owned businesses are critical outcomes of the DBE program. The success of companies like Questivity highlights the broader benefits to local and national economies.

The reauthorization and continued support of the DBE program are vital not only for Questivity's future but for sustaining a vibrant, competitive economy that values diversity, innovation, and opportunity for all.

We respectfully urge lawmakers to recognize the tremendous value the DBE program brings — not only to individual businesses but to families, communities, and the nation as a whole.

Runnin' Freight LLC Letter

Contact Name: Darrell Smithers

Organization Name: Runnin' Freight LLC DBE/MLBE

Location: 1955 76th St SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Email: dsmithers374@gmail.com

Phone Number: (616) 477-3859

Statement

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my deep support for the continued reauthorization and expansion of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. As a small business owner who has dedicated an immense amount of time, money, and effort into building a viable and sustainable business, I can personally attest to the life-changing impact this program has had—not just on my journey, but on countless others who come from historically marginalized communities.

For many minority-owned businesses, the DBE program is more than just a certification—it is a bridge to opportunity. It opens doors that have long been closed due to systemic barriers and a lack of access to the networks and capital that more established businesses take for granted. Without the DBE program, contracts with state and city agencies—contracts that can mean the difference between survival and success—would remain out of reach for many of us.

I invested my life savings, took out loans, and poured my heart into purchasing the truck and equipment necessary to compete in this field. I studied, applied, waited, and finally qualified for the DBE program—a milestone that marked the beginning of realizing a lifelong dream. The opportunity to work alongside prime contractors, to network within a space that was once impenetrable, and to be considered for projects that would have previously been inaccessible, has given me and my family a sense of dignity, pride, and economic hope.

The DBE program is not about special treatment; it is about fair access and creating a level playing field. Minority businesses have the talent, dedication, and drive—it is the opportunity we so often lack. The DBE program is that opportunity.

To discontinue or defund this program would be to deny the very communities that need these chances the most. It would reverse progress, shrink equity, and reinforce barriers that generations have worked tirelessly to break.

I urge you with all sincerity to reauthorize and continue to strengthen the DBE program. Its impact cannot be measured merely in contracts won, but in the livelihoods changed, the communities uplifted, and the American dream made possible for all—regardless of background.

With gratitude and hope,

Darrell Smithers Owner/ Runnin Freight LLC DBE/MLBE



SALAZAR & ASSOCIATES, INC.

2226 Morris Avenue Union, New Jersey 07083 Phone: 908-206-1275 Fax: 908-206-1584 Email: mail@salazar-associates.com

We are in the construction industry, commercial government projects. We are located in an Urban location. Losing the DBE program would affect a great number of opportunities we have to bid in government projects that could require DBE participation. Because of the DBE program we were able to start working in government projects, which have become the main work we do. We have utilized our government work to train many trade workers, who have gone on to become successful in their trades.



Sandy's Dump Truck Service, Llc.

210 C Street Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 skb12612024@gmail.com (573) 275-4715

04-28-25

My name is Sandra Blackwell and I am the sole owner of Sandy's Dump Truck Services, Llc. a one truck company in rural southeast Missouri, specifically the Cape Girardeau area. I started my company in 2012 and I am the only employee. I find the jobs, drive and do the maintenance on the truck. It is my understanding that I am the only woman owned dump truck company in my area. So needless to say, it's a challenge getting the jobs over guys with multiple trucks. I have gotten jobs through the DBE program that I am confident I would not have otherwise gotten if the program was not available. I count on the availability of jobs this program offers in order to make an adequate income. The income this program provides is imperative now more than ever before due to the state wide (if not national) commercial insurance increases. My premium went up an ADDITIONAL \$4,000.00 with no tickets or accidents, bare minimum coverage for \$776 monthly. So I would be greatly affected to lose the part of my income the DBE program provides.

Thank you,

Sandra Blackwell

1401 E. 79th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60619

Office (773) 221-7221 Fax (773) 221-7272

April 30, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Shawn Brown Enterprises Inc. (SBE) is an Environmental Construction, Consulting and Demolition company based in Chicago, Illinois.

We perform services including asbestos and lead-based paint abatement, mold remediation, interior demolition and environmental consulting. SBE was founded in 1999 and is contracted across the City of Chicago and the Chicagoland area.

Our dedication to achieving client goals while performing quality work, always with health and safety at the top of our priority list, has positioned SBE as an industry leader.

As a subcontractor in the construction industry, the elimination of the DBE program would have a profound negative impact on our business. We rely on the DBE program to ensure the playing field is equitable as we position ourselves for bid opportunities and support our day-to-day operations. The DBE status ALONE has helped grow our business the past 25 years.

We hope that our letter and the voices of fellow DBEs will display the benefits of the program and the importance of reauthorization in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill.

Respectfully,

Shawn Brown Owner Shawn Brown Enterprises, Inc.



Slusser's Green Thumb, Inc. Seeding-Sodding Erosion Control Landscaping

125 Montgomery Street Post Office Box 33 Logansport, Indiana 46947-0033

> Phone (574) 722-3102 Fax (574) 722-2993 Toll-Free (800) 762-7442 www.slussers.com

April 18, 2025

I bought Slusser's Green Thumb, Inc. in January 2020. Our estimates we were bidding at that time were so low to get work & to keep our employees working only. We could not improve our property or equipment unless it was to keep equipment working. We focused on work for our employees as priority.

We are a commercial landscape, erosion control business with 40-50 employees. We are located in Logansport, Indiana, however, we travel 2/3 of Indiana for work. We received our Disadvantaged Business Enterprise status in March of 2021 (women owned) & our work has increased & we are able to increase our prices. We now have better equipment, more employees, higher salaries, donations to our community & property improvements to include energy-saving methods the past couple years.

The Mid-America vs. USDOT case has caused the DBE goal on our state work we bid to be removed - Contractor's not needing our services. I run my business in a conservative manner - keeping hours & expenses as low as possible hoping we do not go back to our 2020 non-profit days.

Thank you for realizing how valuable of a program the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise is in our work place. We have experience before my DBE & after my DBE and the constraints that come from without my DBE.

Sincerely,

Slusser's Green Thumb, Inc.

arclife A Slusser

Carolyn S. Slusser

President

CSS

Dear Members of the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,

My name is Hugo Spadafora, and I am the owner of Spadafora Engineering, a small business based in Houston, Texas. We have been providing Routine Bridge Inspections for the Texas Department of Transportation since 2010. Currently, our team consists of three employees, and we are planning to hire two more in the near future to support our continued growth.

Our ability to sustain and expand our business is directly tied to the support provided through the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. The opportunities made available through DBE participation have been instrumental in helping us build a stable company, maintain a decent standard of living for my family, and contribute to the local economy by creating jobs.

Losing access to the DBE program would significantly reduce the amount of work we are able to secure. Without it, we would likely not be able to move forward with our planned hires—and in the longer term, I fear we might not be able to keep the company open. Simply put, the DBE program has made it possible for me to pursue my dream of business ownership and to give back to my community.

As a Republican, I value personal responsibility, entrepreneurship, and limited government—but I also recognize the importance of smart, targeted programs like the DBE that level the playing field and support small businesses in accessing opportunities they would otherwise be excluded from.

I urge you to continue supporting the DBE program and to recognize its vital role in the sustainability and success of small businesses like mine across Texas and the country.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hugo Spadafora, P.E. President Spadafora Engineering

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act | FTA

Spann & Associates, LLC is a civil engineering firm headquartered in Germantown, Wisconsin, an urban community located northwest of Milwaukee. We are a Certified DBE firm in our home State of Wisconsin, and approved as a DBE, licensed and authorized to provide Professional Civil Engineering services in the States of Indiana, Texas and Virginia. We have been providing design and field services to both the public and private sector since 2006. Our areas of expertise include transportation engineering, traffic engineering, structural design, civil engineering, site development, and construction engineering.

We have the technical resources and management capabilities to deliver projects in a costeffective and timely manner. We practice a comprehensive management approach, and our team has a proven track record of transforming challenges into solutions.

We have 15 employees, that include 4 Licensed Professional Engineers, 8 engineers in training and 3 technicians. We are an ethnic majority minority company consisting of African American male and female, African, Mexican, Indian (from India) and Peru, along with white male and female staff. We have also sponsored 4 engineers to become US citizens, including a DACA immigrant.

The DBE program has given us the opportunity to be a subconsultant on numerous Mega Projects in Wisconsin for freeway mainline reconstruction, freeway interchanges and state and local highways through southeast Wisconsin. We have worked as a subconsultant on design and construction engineering projects to the south from the Wisconsin/Illinois State Lines to the north up to Green Bay, Wisconsin, and to the west to Madison, Wisconsin. Recently, we have expanded to Northern Indiana. These opportunities were (1) because we have qualified staff and (2) because we are DBE.

As a result of these opportunities, we have developed relationships and partnerships with large national and international firms, including HNTB, Jacobs, WSP, Michael Baker International, EXP, AECOM, and several regional and local engineering firms. Our experience on these large projects has also helped to build our capability and reputation as a quality firm. This has helped us to win projects as the Prime Consultant on federally

funded projects and to have support when needed by the larger firms being subconsultant to us.

Losing the DBE program would make it very difficult for our small firm to compete for projects that would support our 15-person staff. The large mega-projects offer the opportunity to have backlog to enable us to grow by hiring more staff and then we can also pursue new projects for those staff that allow us to add other in-house capabilities in the areas of structural design, stormwater management, site development and planning. Participating under the DBE program has helped us recruit and retain staff by offering opportunities that are challenging in developing their skills, gaining valuable experience. Our 4 senior engineers have been with the company for 15-17 years because of the experience they gain on great projects. This is coupled with the company's ability to offer competitive compensation and benefits to compete with larger firms that would otherwise be more attractive to them.

We are impacted by the Mid-America vs. USDOT lawsuit as a DBE certified company that is authorized to provide services in Indiana. Our firm was interested in pursuing an opportunity to be on the Design-Build Project of the Ohio River Crossing (ORX) that has an DBE goal. I did attend the DBE outreach event in Evansville, Indiana in August 2023. We are a professional services firm, so being awarded work on the project would not be in competition with the plaintiffs' scope of work; however, we made the business decision to hold on pursuing an opportunity to be part of the project until a decision is handed down by the court on the injunction.

The DBE program has been an important way for small businesses to start and grow. Our firm and many others have the goal to use the program for its intended purpose: to grow our firm to be able to graduate from the DBE program to successfully compete with larger firms and do our part to offer meaningful solutions for today's infrastructure challenges.

House Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC

Subject: Urgent Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

Dear Members of the Subcommittee,

I am writing to strongly encourage the reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program within the upcoming 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill. As a DBE business owner, representing SSC Partners LLC, a veteran- and women-owned enterprise, I can attest to the critical importance of this program for businesses like ours across the country.

SSC Partners LLC is an operational process improvement consulting firm operating in King County, Washington since 2023. The DBE program has directly facilitated fair competition, enabling our business to participate meaningfully in opportunities that otherwise might be inaccessible.

The potential loss or weakening of the DBE Program would severely restrict our ability to compete in markets traditionally dominated by larger, non-disadvantaged companies. Moreover, the uncertainty created by the Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already negatively impacted our strategic planning and growth prospects, emphasizing the urgency of securing stable reauthorization.

This program promotes equitable competition, drives down taxpayer costs, and fosters economic growth, benefiting communities nationwide. With over 50,000 DBEs employing more than half a million Americans, the impact and necessity of the DBE program are undeniable.

I respectfully urge your support for the reauthorization of this crucial initiative. Continued support for the DBE Program is an investment in economic fairness, small business development, and community prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration and dedication to equitable business practices and opportunities for disadvantaged businesses across America.

Respectfully,

Molly Schlobohm

Molly Schlobohm

Managing Partner SSC Partners LLC

We are a small business founded in 2005 located in Baltimore City.

We have been certified by the state of Maryland since 2005 and Baltimore City since 2012.

Being a DBE has allowed us to participate in public RFPs and have secure clients we wouldn't have without being a DBE.

Additionally, a lot of our clients are also DBEs and if they lose that benefit and become less competitive and secure less business, we will not be getting that work so losing the DB program will have a profound, far-reaching and multifaceted impact on our company.

Finally:

The DBE program supports the subcontracting arm of construction.

It drives competition, resulting in lower taxpayer costs.

There are over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing 500,000+ people.

It is based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field.

The DBE Program fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses.



Sutra Research's DBE Story

2025.04.18

Sutra Research is a woman-owned and operated transportation technology and management research and consulting firm, that owes the foundations of our success to certification and participation in the USDOT DBE program. Through this program we have been able to bring our thought leadership, vision, and actionable solutions to transportation projects nationwide - we make things happen to solve real world problems. We successfully assist local, regional, state and federal agencies in planning for and applying technology solutions to transportation, border crossing, and regional mobility projects – to make operations more efficient, safer, and more secure. We also assist in researching and aligning policies and regulations to ensure that the technology solutions are effective. As part of this process, we engage stakeholder agencies, private sector organizations and communities to make sure that these solutions are realistic and that they meet the actual needs of the users. Our offices are based in a rural community, although we support projects in urban and rural locations.

The DBE program has carved out a very small percentage of many federally funded contracts and given us an opportunity to show what we can do and the value we bring to our project teams with many large corporate prime contractors. And word of mouth has spread our excellent professional reputation. This has opened innumerable doors for us and helped us continue to employ talented people and even provide guidance and support for other DBE firms. This success and our continuing work has allowed us to feed our families, create stability, provide economic benefits to our community, and grow our business. We have continued to improve our services and continually raise our own bar to achieve higher levels of excellence to remain competitive. The DBE program helps drive this competition. We love to outshine our competition and provide the best possible solutions in service of our own and other taxpayer's dollars.

The DBE program has leveled the playing field in a way that would not have been possible otherwise. As a woman owned business serving the transportation industry, we really needed the opportunity provided by the DBE program to show we could complete effectively in a male dominated segment of industry. People tend to hire and subcontract to those that are "like them". The DBE program has encouraged folks in this industry to take a chance on small firms led by capable professionals that are from different background or are a different gender. Every one of my primes said that this has paid off for them - and the fact we have been subcontracted repeatedly by the same firms and frequently requested by the public agencies we serve is proof. This, in turn, has elevated our professional reputation and brought us new business. This was all made possible by the door that was opened for us by the USDOT DBE program. Please help preserve this program and give other women and minority groups the opportunity to experience the American dream as we have. Give DBEs the opportunity to give back.

The U.S. DOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program must be reauthorized in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill. This Bill supports businesses which have been systematically excluded from government funded projects for generations. Most projects have a small DBE participation requirement, thus has a minimal impact on any project budget. However, the impact is strongly felt by qualified businesses who have been ignored due to their ethnic makeup.

I am a sole proprietor civil engineer specializing in infrastructure projects. Presently, I work in a rural area. I have been the chief engineer of a mid-size firm and have been in the industry for 30 years. DBE projects are regularly reviewed by my office an offer meaningful source of income.

Sincerely,

Bucky Sparkle, PE, Owner The Zengineer Northampton, Massachusetts

Proposal for the Reauthorization of the Disadvantaged Business

Enterprise (DBE) Program

Submitted by: TK Supplies LLC

Owner: Terea Walker-Mahaney, CEO

Business Address: 616 Roberts St, Boonville, MO 65233

DBE Certification #: 20969 **Number of Employees:** 2

Introduction

TK Supplies LLC is a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE), located in the rural community of Boonville, Missouri. As a supplier of bridge and highway construction materials, we proudly serve public and private infrastructure projects throughout the state. Since our inception, the DBE program has played a critical role in our development, growth, and ability to contribute to the economy, our family, and our local community.

Impact of Losing the DBE Program

The discontinuation or weakening of the DBE program would have a devastating effect on TK Supplies LLC. As a small business in a rural area with only two employees, the DBE certification opens doors that would otherwise remain closed. Without it, we would lose our ability to fairly compete against larger, more established firms that already dominate procurement networks. This program provides visibility, credibility, and access that are essential for survival in the competitive construction supply sector. Its removal would result in lost contracts, reduced revenue, and fewer economic opportunities in underserved communities like ours.

The Effects of Mid-America Milling vs. USDOT

The current uncertainty surrounding the *Mid-America Milling vs. USDOT* ruling has already caused hesitation among prime contractors to engage DBE firms for fear of compliance issues. For TK Supplies, this has led to delayed bid opportunities, reduced outreach, and confusion in partnerships. It is imperative that the DBE program not only be reauthorized but reaffirmed with clarity to protect small firms from being sidelined due to legal ambiguity.

Benefits Realized Through DBE Certification

Since becoming certified in 2023, TK Supplies has gained the opportunity to bid on government-funded projects, many of which would have been inaccessible without the DBE designation. The program has helped us secure supply contracts with state agencies and large contractors while building a reputation for reliability and competitive pricing.

These business opportunities have directly improved the quality of life for my family, creating financial stability and allowing us to reinvest in education, transportation, and homeownership. Indirectly, our presence and engagement bring jobs, resources, and visibility to the Boonville community. We've been able to mentor other aspiring entrepreneurs and participate in programs that strengthen rural economic ecosystems.

DBE Program as a Catalyst for Economic Growth and Fair Competition

The DBE program supports the critical subcontracting arm of the construction industry by giving small businesses like ours the chance to play a meaningful role in large-scale infrastructure development. It fosters a more competitive and inclusive market, ensuring tax-funded projects reflect America's diversity.

By leveling the playing field, it encourages innovation, efficiency, and cost savings. Primes that partners with DBE firms gain fresh perspectives, flexible sourcing options, and compliance advantages. The program creates a pipeline of resilient small businesses that drive long-term economic development, especially in marginalized rural and urban areas.

Conclusion

TK Supplies LLC stands as a living example of how the DBE program uplifts not just businesses, but entire communities. We strongly urge reauthorization and reinforcement of the DBE program to preserve fairness, promote inclusive growth, and ensure that businesses like ours continue to build Missouri's infrastructure while building a legacy for our families.

Sincerely,

Terea Walker-Mahaney

CEO, TK Supplies LLC Phone: (573) 356-7646

Email: teresa@tksuppliesllc.com

I run a right-of-way consulting company specializing in relocation assistance. We have 14 employees and have been in operation for 5 years, working in both urban and rural locations. Losing the DBE program would severely impact our business because our prime contractors are currently required to meet DBE goals, which benefits us as subcontractors by providing work opportunities.

We are already facing economic challenges due to prime contractors not paying on time. Without the requirement to meet DBE goals, our business would be crippled as there would be no incentive for prime contractors to use our services. Most DBEs in our field are smaller, family-owned businesses. The impact extends beyond the business owner to their families, affecting generational wealth.

The DBE program has been instrumental in our growth, allowing us to secure several contracts due to prime contractors needing to meet their DBE goals. Additionally, the program fosters economic development for disadvantaged small businesses like ours, driving competition and resulting in lower taxpayer costs. There are over 50,000 DBEs in the U.S. employing 500,000+ people, showcasing the program's broad impact. It's based on good faith efforts and leveling the playing field, which is crucial for fair competition.



299 VIOLA WAY, STE 100 | WASHOE VALLEY | NEVADA | 89704

April 18, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: The Urgent Need to Reauthorize the DBE Program in the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program is facing a critical threat, and the consequences for small, minority-, and woman-owned businesses across the country are both immediate and significant. The recent injunction in the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council v. U.S. Department of Transportation has already begun to disrupt project timelines, delay contract awards, and cast uncertainty over a program that has long served as a lifeline for firms like ours.

This is not just a matter of policy—it is a matter of survival for thousands of businesses that depend on the DBE Program for access to fair and competitive opportunities. The program must be reauthorized as part of the 2026 Transportation and Infrastructure Bill. We urge lawmakers to listen to the voices of the DBE community and understand what is at stake.

Tungsten Engineering Contractors was founded in 2018 to meet a growing need for excavation services in Nevada. Since then, we have grown into a full-service heavy civil construction company specializing in mass grading, excavation, underground utilities, and structural concrete and paving. We currently employ 21 people and perform work in both urban and rural communities, with a focus on public infrastructure and commercial development.

The DBE Program has been essential to our growth. It has allowed us to:

- Compete for federally funded contracts;
- Build key relationships with prime contractors;
- Invest in necessary equipment and skilled labor;
- Create local jobs and contribute to community economic development.

The recent injunction has already begun to impact our operations. We are seeing delays in contract awards and uncertainty from prime contractors regarding DBE engagement. Without clarity or continuity in the program, small businesses like ours are left unable to make critical decisions related to hiring, equipment investment, and long-term planning. This uncertainty threatens not only our business but also the stability of our workforce and the communities we serve.

The DBE Program supports over 50,000 businesses and more than 500,000 jobs across the United States. It levels the playing field in an industry traditionally dominated by large firms. It fosters competition, reduces taxpayer costs, and ensures that federal infrastructure investment is inclusive and equitable. The program is based on good faith efforts—it is not about preference, but about access.

This is not a partisan issue. Business owners from all backgrounds and political affiliations recognize the value and necessity of the DBE Program. Its removal or weakening would be devastating to the progress we have made in creating a more inclusive and competitive construction industry.

We urge Congress to reauthorize and protect the DBE Program in the 2026 legislation. The future of small, disadvantaged businesses—and the people and communities they support—depends on it.

Sincerely,

Heather Hellickson

Heather Hellicknow

I am the President and primary owner of Upstate Steel, Inc. Upstate Steel was started by my parents and I grew up working at the company. I have worked at the company for decades. The company now has about 40 employees I first took an ownership stake in Upstate Steel in 2012 and have been the majority owner since 2021. I now own 60% of the company shares. Upstate Steel sells and distributes steel. We fabricate different types of metal for roads and bridges, really fabricating metal for any type of structural application. We've even competed for and won work on the Buffalo Bills Stadium. Because we are a woman-owned small business, and meet the economic requirements of the program, Upstate Steel is eligible to be certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. We are DBE certified in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Massachusetts. We will sell anywhere in the country, but most of our business is in New York, although we have done business in other states, including New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Washington. The DBE has been a critical part in the success of Upstate Steel. Without the program we would lose millions in revenue. The program allows a small business that employs a local workforce to compete with large out of state and even foreign fabricators for our tax dollars. This program helps keep tax dollars local by employing local workforce.

I am a member of Women First. Women First was responsible for women's inclusion in the DBE program - being a part of the organization is the responsible thing for me to do as a womenowned business. I joined in 2018. I met a member of Women First and after 15 minutes of talking to her, my overwhelming feeling was "where have you been all my life?" I had to navigate being a woman-owned business all alone, but since joining Women First, I feel like I have a network, support, camaraderie, and people who I can relate to. I had never been part of a group of actual legitimate women business owners in construction prior to joining Women First. I feel fortunate to be a part of it – by advocating for this program, these women supported me before they even knew me. And now that they know me, they continue to support me every day. It's extremely empowering. It's so important not to feel like I'm on an island.

Discrimination I have faced

- 1. Discrimination, including sexism, is a regular occurrence in the steel industry. I grew up in the steel business. It has been a "boys club" my whole life. Even though I know the industry like the back of my hand, I cannot be part of the "club."
- 2. Sexism is accepted in the industry—it is commonly known and widely accepted. As a woman owner, I often face the impossible choice between accepting the sexism and harassment to maintain business relationships and standing up for myself but having my business suffer as a result. I have spent decades navigating that landscape. This is a regular part of working in the industry, so it is impossible to share all of my experiences.
- 3. For example, when I was 23, I was at a trade show with my boss, who was a manager at Upstate Steel. At that time, I was an employee, and my parents still owned the company. My boss was married with a family, and I trusted him. One night, he offered to walk me back to my room after we were out with customers for dinner. Instead of leaving me at

- the door, he forced his way into my room. He then proceeded to push me down on the bed and tried to make something happen. I was able to force him to get off of me. I could tell that he knew he crossed the line. I did not feel like I could say something because technically "nothing happened." Except it did. I was scared and unsure of myself. I had to drive back to Buffalo with him the next morning, and he never apologized or spoke about what he had done. Many years later, I told my parents what had happened. My mom cried, but my father's response was "there are two sides to every story."
- 4. Beginning in 2012, my dad began to give my brother and me equal shares of the company. At the same time, we were still salaried. I found out that I was being paid only half of what my brother was paid, even though I ran the majority of the business, and the success or failure of the business would impact my assets. I confronted my parents and my brother and demanded to be paid equally. They told me that they could not afford to pay me as much, and that my brother needed the additional money because he had a family. I gave them a week to figure out whether they wanted to value us equally or whether I should leave the company and start my own business. They eventually gave me a raise, but I suffered in other ways. Being forced to stand up for myself destroyed my relationship with my family. This is just another example of how ingrained discrimination against women is in the construction industry; it even happens in your own family's construction business.
- 5. Once I began taking on a larger role in the business, some of my steel distributors began to treat me, and the company, differently. These were people I knew for years, but once I had power, they suddenly treated me differently. The owner of one of the largest steel distributors in the country emailed me that his company never had a problem working with Upstate Steel until I took over. We got on a call to discuss our longstanding business relationship, but I couldn't even get a word in because he just berated me, demanding that I "just admit" that I was difficult; to "just say the words" and "he wouldn't tell anyone" if I did. His comments were so derogatory that I struggled to keep my composure. Afterwards, I did not buy steel from that supplier for years because the way I was treated was unacceptable. This was a difficult business decision because, as such a large distributor, that supplier was able to offer the most competitive prices.
- 6. A key way to build relationships in the industry is through networking at business dinners or trade shows. As a woman, it's very difficult, and even dangerous, to take advantage of these opportunities. Many of the men do business at bars and restaurants over drinks. But that's also when it is most likely that I will face unwanted sexual advances. And if any of the men cross the line, I cannot stand up for myself because I cannot afford to lose these business relationships. We are a small fish in a big pond, and doing so could really hurt us. So, for the most part, I don't go to dinners or drinks.
- 7. The few times I do go to dinner or drinks, I make it a point to never go alone. If I am going to be in that environment, I need to have a wingman. I always bring my CFO or

- another male co-worker. I do not have the same opportunity to build one-on-one relationships with other owners, suppliers, or customers as men do in this industry.
- 8. Every time I am at a trade show, some guy insists on walking me back to my room. If I refuse the walk, I lose business. But if I accept the walk, I am also putting myself in a position I do not want to be in.
- 9. Even as the owner of a well-respected and successful company, I am regularly harassed or facing unwanted sexual advances. For example, one of my mill suppliers openly flirted with me in front of my CFO during a business dinner just two months ago. He kept asking me to get a drink. Even though I declined, he was so insistent that my male coworkers commented that he "couldn't have been more obvious." I could not be too direct because I did not want to lose the business.
- 10. I have another customer who insists on grabbing my hand and pulling me towards him for a kiss every time he sees me. I don't know any male customers in this industry who would grab the hand of another male supplier as a greeting.
- 11. These same attitudes persist on the supplier side. The owner of one steel plate supplier I use is always bcc'd on his team's emails with me. Whenever I complete a purchase order, he responds with a kissy face emoji. Sadly, even though I bought over \$2 million of steel plate from the company, he does not think of me as a business owner he only thinks of me sexually.
- 12. Another plate supplier texts me "you looked hot today" whenever he comes into town. I can't stick up for myself or flatly reject the unwanted advances without harming the business relationship. I want to tell him that it's inappropriate and insulting to talk to a customer that way, but I cannot afford to risk burning a bridge I need them as a supplier.
- 13. Even after working so hard to build my name and reputation in this business for decades, people still doubt that a woman can do the job. I face doubt every day and often enough it hurts my business.
- 14. In my experience, some men think they can more easily cheat women in business and, honestly, sometimes they do. I worked incredibly hard to come up with a great innovation for a project involving an extension of the Green Line (the train) in Boston, MA. The specs called for something called a deflection test. I had never heard of such a test and so I researched and called everyone I could think of. I even called one of the project leads for the prime, who helpfully responded "I don't know, Blondie, but you gotta figure it out." In the end, I *did* figure it out and submitted it with my bid. The company only gave me a small part of the work, about a quarter of what I had bid, though I was still glad to get the business. Later I found out that they had taken my idea about how to do the deflection test and gave it to the guy who won the larger part of the contract. It's infuriating.
- 15. The doubt and discrimination does not only come from private companies it comes from the government directly too. For example, in February 2022, the New York State

ESD denied me of my women-owned business designation. They claimed, without ever checking, that the plant manager and estimators were doing my job. There was this underlying assumption that a woman could not truly run the business. I immediately questioned the decision and told the truth: that I am the majority owner, know everything about the business, and run the daily operations. It took me 2 years to fight to get it back. When I tried to go through the WBE appeal process itself, I made no progress. I only eventually got my certification back when I went to the news media. Losing my certification for those 2 years cost Upstate Steel more than \$3 million per year in contracts.

The brutal truth is that I love selling steel. I enjoy going to trade shows. No one can speak better about my business than I can. But because I'm a woman, I have to balance my privacy and comfort against advancing my business. But if you are not willing or have the confidence to go toe to toe with men in the industry, you're going to get run over. There's this underlying presumption in the construction industry that a woman can't run her own company. I've battled to get to where I am and I'm proud of that. I was never "supposed to" run a steel fabrication business. I have grown up being treated like this and now I have general distrust and expectation that this is how guys are in the industry. But for any young woman to have to deal with this is just sad. And unacceptable. Every little girl should have the exact same opportunities as a boy in this field. As a kid, I was not given books about construction and steel mills – I was given a book about how to be a mommy. I was given a doll, not a dump truck. I had to find that on my own. I tell people all the time that if your son and your daughter walk into a bank, your daughter isn't getting a construction loan, but your son is. That's just wrong. If women are going to continue to be devalued based on their gender, how are young women ever going to be able to ask for a raise or a promotion or better yet start their own business? The DBE program helps balance this unfair playing field.

I know that speaking up about my experiences may impact my business. But just like no one can speak better about my business than I can, no one can speak better about the discrimination I have faced than me.

We are a boutique training and consulting firm that helps businesses (including manufacturing, services and governmental agencies) become more efficient. We operate out of our Columbia, SC, currently have 3 employees and use additional consultants as business dictates.

The DBE program has been instrumental in helping me set up my business, network with potential clients, and grow my customer base. The DBE program has provided me and my staff with opportunities to improve the operation of my business helping improve our profits and ensure the future of our business.

The Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction has already begun to impact my business pipeline. As a lifelong Republican, I urge you to continue this worthwhile program. Investing in the small businesses run by women and minorities will yield results for the entire economy both now and in the future. Competition that comes from a level playing field fosters economic development and lowers costs to taxpayers. There are over 50,000 DBEs in the US employing over 500,000 people.

The following will provide some key insight into how the value of the DBE program has contributed to our success.

• Type of business, # of employees, how long you've been operating.

Wats international Inc is a distributor of Office supplies/ Furniture, Janitorial Supplies and Industrial Supplies. We currently employ 8 employees and 2 independent contractors. The company was established on April 16, 1980.

• Urban, rural, or other location.

The Business is located in Dutchess County at 200 Manchester Road in the Town of Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

• How would losing the DBE program affect your business?

The DBE program provides the fundamental foundation for us to exist as a business. The Business Plan developed in the DBE program provided the necessary developmental, managerial and marketing skills for our day to day operation with a nine year projection. The program provided large corporations contract opportunities to ensure a revenue stream. The 8(a) program offer us significances value in doing business with federal agencies. As a company, We have generated revenue for the federal, states and local government and our employees have contributed their share of taxes. During the COVID pandemic, Wats international was designated as an essential business, allowing us to remain open and operational for emergencies support for federal, state, local needs for PPE items. We have injected a substantial amount of revenue into the local economy. As corporate citizen, we support our local police, fire, EMS, and community organizations. As you can see, The DBE program is a critical part of our operation and losing this program would have catastrophic results.

• How has the Mid-America vs. USDOT injunction already impacted you?

During the last 6 months we have not received any DBE opportunity.

• How has the DBE Program benefited you, your family, and your community?

The DBE program provided me with the necessary skills to owned and operate a successful business for 44 years. Paid for the kids education. Develop generational wealth. And, develop the structure for second generation ownership.

Jim L. Watts President & CEO Wats International, Inc. Tel: 845-473-2106

Cell: 914-474-0116 Fax: 845-473-2153

jim.watts@watsinternational.com





July 2025

United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

I am Joann Payne, President of the Women First National Legislative Committee (Women First). Since 1987, Women First has represented women-owned small businesses in the highway, transit, and airport construction sectors—businesses that are critical to local job creation, economic growth, and community resilience.

These businesses operate in one of the most competitive and historically exclusionary industries in the country. The **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program** is one of the only federal tools designed to help remedy ongoing discrimination in this space. It provides women-owned small businesses with fair access to federal contracts and the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the transportation infrastructure projects funded by your constituents' tax dollars.

Far more than a policy, the DBE program is a proven, good-faith partnership among federal and state governments, contractors, and independent local businesses. It helps ensure that qualified DBEs—many of which are the largest employers in their communities—can compete on a level playing field. These businesses not only deliver high-quality work, they reinvest in their neighborhoods, create good-paying jobs, and strengthen regional economies across the country.

Yet today, this vital program is under threat. Without Congressional action, thousands of small businesses could lose access to critical contracts, triggering layoffs, wage reductions, or even closures—particularly in rural and underserved areas where DBEs are economic lifelines.

Women First was founded to defend the inclusion of women-owned businesses in the DBE program. We know firsthand how many communities depend on these companies and how devastating it would be to dismantle the framework that enables them to compete.

That's why we urge you to support the **reauthorization of the DBE Program**. This is not just about preserving a successful policy—it's about protecting American small businesses, promoting fair competition, and ensuring that the benefits of infrastructure investment reach every corner of the country.

On behalf of the more than **50,000 DBE-certified businesses** and **500,000 workers** whose livelihoods depend on this program, we ask you to reaffirm Congress's longstanding, bipartisan commitment to fairness, opportunity, and local economic strength.

Sincerely,
Joann Payne
President
Women First National Legislative Committee
703-973-6150

Women First National Legislative Committee Joann Payne, President

House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

April 30, 2025

I am Joann Payne, president of the Women First National Legislative Committee (Women First). Women First is a nonpartisan organization advocating for Women-owned small businesses that are certified in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)Program. I have been advocating for women DBEs since 1985.

The primary mission of Women First is to protect the DBE program and DBE status for thousands of woman-owned small businesses across our country. The Reauthorization of the DBE program is a literal lifeline to the continued success of certified women small businesses. Over and over again, I have heard woman say that without this program, they would never get a chance and their businesses would fail.

The DBE Program has been negatively impacted by a lawsuit (Mid-America Milling Company/ Bagshaw Trucking) against it and the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) in twenty-five states. The impact of the lawsuit to date has resulted in "0" goals on many contracts in Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and 21 other states if the plaintiffs want to bid in those states. In the states listed above, many DBE companies have not received any contracts and have been struggling to meet their commitments since the judge's decision in September. Apply the Mid-America/Bagshaw impact with "0" goals on contracts for all fifty states, and you will have an example of what will happen if the DBE program is not reauthorized.

Can you imagine the impact on the U.S. economy if 50,000 small businesses, with over 500,000 employees, many of them located in rural America, went out of business right around the same time in the same industry, and the financial loss for bank loans, bonding companies, and insurance companies?

The DBE Program is not a DEI Program. It is an economic development program based on good faith efforts from all participants. Those participants include the federal and state governments, the DBEs, and the general contractors.

Women and minorities are at a disadvantage not just because they face some type of discrimination every day, but because, as small businesses in the Highway,

Transit, and Airport construction industries funded by American taxpayers, they can't compete against the general contractors or the large non-DBE specialty subcontractors. For 40 years, our federal government carved out opportunities for small businesses to compete in industries that have excluded them. Without the DBE program, they will be excluding them again.

The DBE program is the very best small business program afforded to small businesses by our government.

If the DBE program is not reauthorized, other state and local economic development programs at the local and state levels may also be eliminated. The domino effect will be an economic failure for small businesses, state and local governments, and the nation's economy.

I present to you women DBE's voices to describe why the DBE program should be reauthorized:

"My business has dropped to zero. I am a supplier of reinforced steel. My manufacturer does not even send me quotes anymore! Contracts jobs have been dropped by about 85%. Manufacturers are understanding the impact to their customers and stopping lines of credit and expecting payment earlier than prior years. They are mitigating their potential losses...which in turns makes it difficult to pay them until Prime has paid us. There is the inventory and equipment issue. I have inventory in my yard that no one is buying. Equipment that is not moving that still needs insured and maintained. Overhead...that doesn't change. Insurance has to be paid, taxes paid, light bills etc... To sustain, you need to have subcontracts coming in on a monthly basis...because of the injunction that is no longer happening. There is great harm being done to my company. There needs to be a legal stay be put in place against this injunction."

Pamela Sterrett-Albertson DBE/WBE/DOBE Queen Bee Construction, Inc 8585 Hickory Hill Trail Mooresville Indiana

"First, becoming a certified DBE member played an important role for Genesis Consulting Group as a business and signaling that we were a bona-fide, reputable and highly qualified advisory and management consulting firm. In 2003, we were very appreciative to have individuals such as Wanda Perkins with Columbus Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) to assist Genesis in understanding benefits and opportunities afforded as a member of the DBE program.

Secondly, being a DBE member afforded Genesis the ability to educate our clients.

Secondly, being a DBE member afforded Genesis the ability to educate our clients and prospective clients on the value and insights that a DBE member could offer

and bring to the table. Branding our communications, marketing collateral and our website as a DBE certified company, coupled with demonstrating expertise and most importantly delivering on our client's expectations has allowed us to retain clients.

Lastly, suspending or eliminating the DBE certification and initiative would prevent otherwise qualified and reputable companies from participating in and providing the talent required to meet our workforce demands. Our clients view Genesis as a qualified business partner first and foremost and not a disadvantaged business."

KT

Kathryn Tarantino Genesis Consulting Group, dbe

"I am writing to you on behalf of the hundreds of certified DBE owners to urge your immediate action in response to the recent injunction placed on the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. As a certified DBE, concerned citizen, and advocate for equality in business opportunities, I implore you to take the necessary steps to ensure that this vital program is reinstated without delay.

The DBE program plays a crucial role in providing opportunities for small women and minority-owned businesses to compete fairly in the marketplace. By fostering diversity and inclusivity in government contracting, the program helps level the playing field and promotes economic growth in underserved communities.

The injunction on the DBE program is not only a setback for these businesses but also a blow to the principles of fairness and equality that we hold dear. It is imperative that we take a stand against this injustice and work towards reinstating the program to its full capacity.

I urge you to use your influence and authority to address this issue promptly and effectively. Our community depends on leaders like you to uphold the values of fairness and equality and to protect programs that promote economic opportunity for all."

Raeceeda Ellison President and Owner (412) 636-6184 Axios Industrial Painting LLC Tarpon Springs, Florida 727-946-6709 "My company does industrial painting on large structures such as Water towers, (elevated and ground), Over passes-bridges,

Communication towers, etc. We employ a minimum of 6 people for a project. We have been in business for one year and our business could potentially take us anywhere in the US.

The DBE program has allowed me to compete with large companies. Our business is based on bidding, period. There is not a perk to

landing a job, you still have to come in lower than others. So, it is not "just giving an unqualified person the job". That's absurd. I am just

as qualified, but I cannot compete financially with the big companies.

For example. The equipment I need to perform the blasting and painting on these structures costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. One

blast/recycle unit could be \$500,000 or more. Obviously, that is a far reach for me and I must rent this equipment at \$20,000-\$50,000 a

month for a job, where others own it. Now I've just added up to \$50k to my bid and will unlikely get this job or any for that matter.

Being a DBE helps in ways such as; even if I don't get the job as a primary contractor, the primary contractor may have to retain a DBE for

X amount of the work as a subcontractor. I'll then get the opportunity to work because I AM QUALIFIED. Completely different than

hiring someone incompetent because of a quota.

In the construction industry, it allows a more level playing field for us that do not have deep pockets and could never compete at pricing a job against a large construction company.

I have already seen a huge reduction in DBE offerings on the DOT websites and have not worked in months. I am not sure how long I can continue. I simply cannot compete.

DBE's employ people also and that should not go unnoticed. Small business is what drives our country.

My political views are quite conservative and a staunch supporter of the Republican party. I actually agree with removing the DEI component if it is not based on merit. The reality for us is, qualified individuals cannot compete as their small business is not financially able. This is where DBEs are an absolute necessity for some of us to survive. I work hard at my business, 12-16 hours a day. I want to succeed, but my competition will squash me without a DBE opportunity. Again, this doesn't give me a job, I still must be qualified and

come in with a price that is lowest, but it does allow the opportunity to bid against others with similar restraints. This program should be

expanded not taken away. I will be a very unhappy person with my elected politicians if they cannot grasp the importance of this. I am expecting a 100% common sense approach and this needs to be discussed with urgency. I would be more than happy to have a conversation with whomever would like to discuss this." Respectfully, Anna Samarkos

Thank you, Joann Payne President Women First joannpayne@payneshea.com

Hey! My story below:

We are a DBE / WBE out of Chicago and Denver. I've been in the construction space for almost 16 years and started my company years ago when I recognized the need to support federal projects to have more efficient reporting, documents, technical writing, construction management plans, and more. We are also a creative marketing firm focused on the AEC / infrastructure industry and help energy, transportation, and construction companies market projects. We also support community communication plans so locals know what is going on with a construction site – something that keeps people safe and informed to prevent any frustrations with unknowns.

The WBE work has been HUGE for my company – not just the work itself, but the connections. In a male dominated field, the WBE program gets me in the door and allows me to build trust with a network of people I wouldn't normally be friends with or have work experience with. My biggest mentors and supporters are men who own firms without this designation. It builds authentic relationships in a diverse community. It would be devastating to take it away and lose the fantastic mix of genders, races, and connections.

PLEASE let me know what I can do to further tell this story! I would be heartbroken to lose the opportunities we're given thanks to this certification.

Alyce Anderson (she/her) CEO / Founder

www.wonderstruct.co alyce@wonderstruct.co 312.581.8202