

Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6515

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure of the Committee on Small Business

FROM: Committee Majority Staff

DATE: September 5, 2025

RE: Subcommittee Hearing Titled: “Leveling the Playing Field: Fostering Opportunities for Small Business Contractors”

On **Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 9:30 AM ET**, the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure of the Committee on Small Business (the Subcommittee) will hold a hearing titled **“Leveling the Playing Field: Fostering Opportunities for Small Business Contractors.”** The meeting will convene in room 2360 of the Rayburn House Office Building. The purpose of this hearing is to examine how plain language and streamlined procurement processes can reduce barriers small contractors face when competing for valuable government contracts.

I. Witnesses

- **Mr. Rao S. Anumolu**, President & CEO, ASR International Corp.
- **Mr. Michael Ramos**, President, Raymond Global
- **Ms. Sue Tellier**, President and Owner, JetCo Federal

II. Background

Over the last ten years, the number of small businesses participating in government contracting has consistently decreased.¹ In addition to the numerous challenges small businesses face in the private sector, small businesses face additional hurdles when competing for federal contracts. Confusing government contract writing, onerous regulatory compliance costs, and actions by federal agencies that limit competition all contribute to this unnecessarily complex environment for small businesses.

¹ Jory Heckman, *SBA Seeks to Grow Shrinking Pool of Small Businesses Getting Federal Contracts*, Fed. News Network (May 8, 2023).

Government contracts have long been criticized for their use of complex and technical language. This can be a significant barrier for small businesses seeking to participate in federal procurement. Unlike larger corporations that typically have dedicated legal and contracting teams, many small businesses lack the resources to hire lawyers or contracting specialists solely to interpret and comply with these complicated documents. This not only imposes a financial burden on small business owners but also diverts valuable time and energy away from core business operations.²

Fewer than three percent of federal government contract solicitations are written in plain English, making it difficult for businesses to accurately identify what work is being sought after by the government.³ This highlights the degree to which government solicitation language remains inaccessible, especially for small business owners who must navigate these documents to compete effectively. The complexity of government contracts creates an uneven playing field where larger, well-resourced firms hold a distinct advantage simply because they can afford the specialized expertise required to fulfill contract requirements.

In response to these challenges, there has been a growing movement to reform and simplify government contracting language. One proposed solution to the cumbersome language barriers is H.R. 787, the *Plain Language in Contracting Act*, introduced by Subcommittee Chairman Nick LaLota and passed in the House of Representatives on June 3, 2025.⁴ This legislation would enhance small businesses' ability to engage in government contracting opportunities. By making contracts easier to understand, small businesses can save on legal fees, reduce administrative delays, and focus more on delivering quality products and services. This approach benefits small firms and improves the efficiency and competitiveness of the government procurement process as a whole.⁵

III. Conclusion

By removing the challenges created by dense language, the government can unlock greater participation in government contracting for small businesses through legislation like H.R. 787. In addition to driving innovation, eliminating barriers for small businesses ensures that taxpayer dollars are used more effectively by widening the pool of capable contractors and fostering competitive pricing and quality. The push toward clear contracting language aligns with the principles of transparency, accountability, and economic growth that are central to modernizing the federal acquisition system.

² Press Release, Office of Representative Nick LaLota, Small Business Committee Advances LaLota's Bill to Streamline Federal Contracting (Mar. 18, 2025).

³ *Exploring SBA Programs: Reviewing the SBIC and SBIR Programs' Impact on Small Businesses: Hearing Before H. Comm. on Small Business Sub. Comm. on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access*, 118th Cong. 87 (Apr. 16, 2024) (statement of Amanda Bresler, Chief Strategy Officer, PW Communications, Inc.).

⁴ H.R. 787, 119th Cong. § 2 (as passed by House, June 3, 2025).

⁵ Press Release, Office of Representative Nick LaLota, Small Business Committee Advances LaLota's Bill to Streamline Federal Contracting (Mar. 18, 2025).