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NATIONAL WOMEN'S
BUSINESS COUNCIL



ADVISORS TO THE PRESIDENT,
CONGRESS AND THE SBA

February 1, 2008

The Honorable Steven Preston
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 Third Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Administrator Preston:

The mission of the National Women's Business Council, as specified in our authorizing legislation, is to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, the Congress, and the U. S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners and leaders of women's business organizations.

The National Women's Business Council has reviewed the proposed rule 13CFR Parts 121,125,127 and 134 regarding women-owned small business federal contract assistance procedures. While the members of the Council have many differing views on these procedures, we do agree that increased support to women seeking federal contracts is critical to the overall growth of women-owned businesses.

The Council would respectfully recommend that this proposed rule be discarded. We suggest that a blue-ribbon panel of stakeholders- key participants in the women's entrepreneurial community- be convened to draft an alternative rule. The challenge to this high-level panel would be to draft a rule within a specified time period of six months. During the six month review process, comments and data would be collected and assimilated to form a rule which effectively addresses the interests of all concerned.

In the meantime, the Council continues to support federal procurement opportunities for women-owned businesses by administering the website, www.womenbiz.gov; featuring procurement as a policy topic in the town hall meetings and completing studies of federal contracting with women-owned businesses. We will continue to support women's contracting opportunities in the federal government by designating a percentage of our budget to be used to further that goal.

On behalf of the National Women's Business Council, thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Tami Longaberger
Chair, National Women's Business Council
Chair of the Board/CEO, The Longaberger Company

Susan Au Allen
US Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce

Sandy Bartow
Jacksonville Women's Business Center

Ann Blackburn
Women Impacting Public Policy

Rebecca Boenigk
Neutral Posture, Inc.

Kathy Eshelman
Women Presidents' Organization

Rebecca Herwick
Global Products, Inc.

Beverly Inman-Ebel
National Association of Women Business Owners

Carole Jean Jordan
Jordan Sprinkler Systems

Barbara Kasoff
GrassRoots Impact, Inc.

Cecilia McCloy
Integrated Science Solutions, Inc.

Leslie Saunders
Women's Business Enterprise National Council