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Minority Business Development Agency Releases Report on Contracting Barriers Impacting Minority Firms

WASHINGTON (January 18, 2017) — The U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency today released a new report, *Contracting Barriers and Factors Affecting Minority Business Enterprises: A Review of Existing Disparity Studies*. The report, which spotlights disparities in state and local government contracting between minority-owned and nonminority-owned business enterprises, provides an in-depth review and analysis of disparity studies, summaries, and reports.

“Our goal in releasing this report is to advance the dialogue surrounding contracting disparities and use the findings as a catalyst for creating policy and innovative solutions. It’s critically important that MBEs, advocacy groups and policy makers have access to this information,” said MBDA National Deputy Director Albert K. Shen. “This report also underscores the power of data and the fact that we still have a lot of work to do to ensure MBEs have fair and equal access to contracting opportunities.”

Some of the key findings from the report prepared by Premier Quantitative Consulting Inc., revealed the following: contracting disparity remains wide-spread; MBEs typically obtain a lower number and dollar value of contracts in proportion to the number of available MBEs in a comparable market; and that industry groups most affected include construction, professional services, architecture, engineering services, and goods and supplies.

The report also dedicates a chapter to *Disparity Study Basics*, a guide for those embarking upon a disparity study. This should be helpful to state and local governments, since the Federal Government provides over \$536 billion, with disadvantaged business enterprise spending requirements, to states each year. Conducting a local study can determine if disparities exist and prompt states to take corrective action and eliminate the risk of losing federal dollars. The report can be viewed at

http://www.mbda.gov/sites/default/files/ContractingBarriers_AReviewofExistingDisparityStudies.pdf

National Deputy Director Shen will host a free webinar TODAY at 11 a.m. (ET), to discuss the final report and its overall findings. To register for the webinar visit www.mbda.gov. A copy of the webinar recording will also be available for download afterwards on the website.

About the Minority Business Development Agency

MBDA, www.mbda.gov, is the only Federal agency dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. minority-owned businesses. Our programs and services better equip minority-owned firms to create jobs, build scale and capacity, increase revenues and expand regionally, nationally and internationally. Services are provided through a network of MBDA Business Centers. After 47 years of service, MBDA continues to be a dedicated strategic partner to all U.S. minority-owned businesses, committed to providing programs and services that build size, scale and capacity through access to capital, contracts and markets. Follow us on Twitter [@usmbda](https://twitter.com/usmbda).

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