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Website: www.mbda.gov
Fax: (202) 219-8809

Contact: MBDA Public Affairs
Phone: (202) 482-6272
Email: public_affairs@mbda.gov

U.S. Commerce Department Announces Four Openings on New National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprises

Council to support the continued growth of the minority business community

WASHINGTON (March 1, 2011) - The U.S. Commerce Department today announced the opening of the application process to fill four vacancies on the newly established National Advisory Council for Minority Business Enterprises. The Advisory Council, led by the department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), is the first council focused on promoting the minority business community since the early 1970s.

The National Advisory Council will hold its inaugural meeting to discuss administrative procedures, future work products and provide an orientation for new committee members on March 11 in Washington, D.C. Additional meetings will be held over the next year, including one to be held during the National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference scheduled for September.

The new Council will provide advice and recommendations to U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and the administration on a broad range of policy issues affecting the minority business community as part of the Obama Administration's focus on job creation and U.S. economic growth. Recent Census data show that the number of minority-owned firms is growing at a significant rate, yet there is still a gap in revenue between minority-owned and non-minority-owned firms. Disparities in access to capital have also been recently documented in a report commissioned by MBDA.

The Advisory Council will help to identify new and innovative ways the public and private sector can help spur growth among the nation's 5.8 million minority-owned firms.

Current appointees to the Advisory Council represent a broad range of industries – including technology, energy, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, construction and consulting – and vary from small businesses to multinational corporations.

Complete nomination packages for the four open Council membership positions must be received by the Department of Commerce on or before March 30, 2011.

For more information about the National Advisory Council or to complete a nomination form online, visit <http://www.mbda.gov/nacmbenominations> or the Federal Register at <http://federalregister.gov/a/2011-4066>.

About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

MBDA, www.mbda.gov, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, promotes the growth and global competitiveness of the minority business community, making them better equipped to create jobs, impact local economies and compete successfully in domestic and global marketplaces. With a nationwide network of more than 45 business centers and strategic partners, MBDA assists minority entrepreneurs and business owners with consulting services, contract and financing opportunities, bonding and certification services, building business-to-business alliances and executive training.

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