

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 15

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding Government procurement access for women-owned businesses.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 6, 1999

Mrs. KELLY (for herself, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding Government procurement access for women-owned businesses.

Whereas women-owned businesses are a powerful force in the economy;

Whereas between 1987 and 1996—

(1) the number of women-owned businesses increased by 78 percent, almost twice the rate of increase of all firms in the United States;

(2) the number of women-owned businesses increased in every State;

(3) total sales by women-owned businesses increased by 236 percent;

(4) employment provided by women-owned businesses increased by 183 percent; and

(5) the rates of growth for women-owned businesses for the fastest growing industries were as follows:

(A) 171 percent in construction;

(B) 157 percent in wholesale trade;

(C) 140 percent in transportation and communications;

(D) 130 percent in agriculture; and

(E) 112 percent in manufacturing;

Whereas approximately 8,000,000 women-owned businesses provide jobs for 15,500,000 people and generate almost \$1,400,000,000,000 in sales;

Whereas women-owned businesses experience limited access to the Federal Government procurement market;

Whereas the Federal Government is America's largest purchaser of goods and services, spending more than \$225,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas the majority of Federal Government purchases are for items that cost \$5,000 or less;

Whereas Congress set a 5-percent procurement goal for women-owned businesses in the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994; and

Whereas the rate of procurement for women-owned businesses is 1.8 percent: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that all Federal agencies would benefit from
3 reviewing the following recommendations for the purpose
4 of improving equitable access for women-owned businesses
5 to the Federal procurement market:

6 (1) Agencies should offer and make readily
7 available to women-owned businesses information re-
8 garding access to contracting practices and opportu-
9 nities.

10 (2) Agencies should identify women-owned busi-
11 ness advocates within their respective agency to
12 guarantee that women-owned businesses are ade-
13 quately represented in competitive bid solicitations.

14 (3) Agencies should review the various women-
15 owned business certifications that currently exist in
16 an attempt to develop a common certification stand-
17 ard.

18 (4) Agencies should, if possible, announce elec-
19 tronically any available procurement opportunities.

20 (5) Agencies should consider internal mentor
21 programs as a means of teaching new business con-
22 tracting practices.

23 (6) Agencies should consider adopting a “Rule
24 of One” approach for women-owned businesses

1 whereby at least one women-owned business is solie-
2 ited on all competitive acquisitions.

3 (7) Agencies should explore alternative ways to
4 allow women-owned businesses to compete, including
5 the concepts of teaming and partnering.

○