

(October 20, 2005) Congressman Lipinski Pushes for More Government Contracts for Small Businesses

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WASHINGTON, DC - Small businesses are not getting their fair share in the federal marketplace, according to an analysis released today at a press conference by Democrats on the House Small Business Committee. The sixth annual Scorecard Report, which measures 22 federal agencies on their ability to meet small business contracting goals, found that while the federal marketplace grew by 3 percent to nearly \$295 billion, contracts to small businesses declined by 31 percent.

Fifteen of the 22 federal agencies received poor marks for small business contracting goals. In all, small businesses missed out on contracts worth \$1.6 billion in FY 2004.

"With the overall size of the federal marketplace expanding, we should be seeing opportunities opening up for our nation's small businesses," said Congressman Dan Lipinski, Ranking Member of the Workforce, Empowerment, and Government Programs Subcommittee of the Small Business Committee.

Many of the worst performing agencies are heavily involved in the post-Katrina rebuilding efforts in the Gulf Coast region, and small business owners have expressed their frustrations with the way federal rebuilding contracts are being awarded. Business owners from the Gulf Coast region spoke of the multiple databases they were told to register in, the timely registration process, and the fact that they had not heard a word back from any of the large contractors or agencies nearly two months later, while large out of state contractors were getting the work.

"It is going to take a lot of time and a lot of work to rebuild the infrastructure and the communities in the Gulf region, and it just makes sense that qualified and capable small businesses should be given the job to do," said Congressman Lipinski. "In the Gulf region and nationwide, small businesses are an integral and crucial part of local economies and communities. They should not be overlooked."