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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

TELEPHONE: (202) 224-5175 FAX: (202) 224-5619

DONALD R. CRAVINS, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL  
WALLACE K. HSUEH, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

October 15, 2009

The Honorable Karen G. Mills  
Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Administrator Mills,

On February 14, 2008, President George W. Bush signed the *Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act* (P.L. 110-186) into law. That legislation included a critical provision I authored to establish an Interagency Task Force to assist veterans in realizing their entrepreneurial goals. Yet regrettably, 20 months later, this Task Force has not been established. I know you share my commitment to the success of veteran entrepreneurs and it is my hope that, as the Task Force's chairperson, you will expeditiously form this vital tool.

According to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report issued exactly one year ago today, Small Business Administration (SBA) officials were cited as noting that "...the delay in forming the interagency task force was caused by the need to seek legal clarification from SBA's General Counsel regarding the appointment of senior-level representatives to the task force and the appointment of four nonfederal members." It is unacceptable that after 20 months the SBA has yet to resolve any legal questions and move forward on implementation. In fact, just last week, the SBA released a report confirming that the increase in call-ups of military reservists during recent years has resulted in negative effects on the revenues of small firms employing these servicemembers, demonstrating the timeliness of such a task force.

I have sent letters to you and the previous Administration urging the SBA to implement this provision in a timely manner, and I am perplexed that this Task Force remains unformed. At a time when servicemembers are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan in large numbers – and President Obama has set a goal of August 31, 2010, for the combat mission in Iraq to end – we owe it to these brave men and women to assist them in their efforts to seamlessly reintegrate into the civilian workforce. This Task Force will allow Federal agencies and veterans service organizations to work together towards improving capital access, ensuring the achievement of crucial Federal contracting and subcontracting goals, and making general improvements related to supporting veterans business development.

The needless delay in implementing this critical tool has been a disservice to our nation's veterans and their employers. Every day without this Task Force is a day our nation's government is not living up to its promise to our brave patriots. I look forward to working with you to ensure that the Task Force is formed as soon as possible. Thank you for all that you continue to do on behalf of America's small businesses.

Sincerely,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE  
United States Senator