



February 29, 2012

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
Ranking Member
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Snowe,

On behalf of the nearly one million women-owned businesses and the 60 business organizations that Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) represents, we are writing to express our support for the Fairness in Women-Owned Small Business Contracting Act of 2012.

According to the National Women's Business Council, 7.8 million women business owners have an economic impact of \$3 trillion annually and represent one of the fastest-growing segments of the economy. According to the latest Census, women-owned businesses are growing at a rate twice as fast as their counterparts. A sobering statistic, however, is that 84% of these businesses have no employees.

One of the opportunities for growth is contracting with the federal government. In March, 2011, SBA implemented the Women Owned Small Business Procurement Program, which WIPP believes is an important tool for the federal government to meet its 5% goal for contracting with women-owned businesses. Since the program has been launched, several barriers exist to making the program a success. First, dollar limits on the contract awards have prohibited contracting officers to make significant awards. Second, the inability to award sole source contracts to women-owned businesses through the program makes the process of awarding contracts burdensome. This legislation will rectify these barriers to a successful program by removing the dollar limits and allowing sole source contracts. It will put this program on a level playing field with other small business procurement programs.

WIPP is dedicated to the growth of women owned businesses and women entrepreneurs' participation in federal contracting and will work to see this legislation enacted.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kasoff, President and CEO
Women Impacting Public Policy