

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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December 19, 2012

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am writing in an effort to urge maximum practical utilization of local and small businesses in the construction of the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare Replacement Hospital project (Contract Number VA-101-09-RP-0123). As you know, Louisiana small businesses are essential to our local economy. To ensure that small businesses remain a strong source of job creation in the future we must do everything we can to propel them to overcome the devastation that they experienced due to Hurricane Katrina and, most recently, Hurricane Isaac.

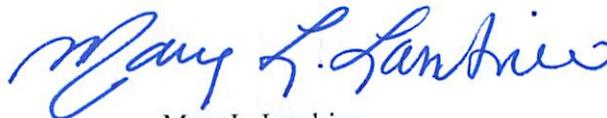
It is my understanding that there are two work packages remaining to be awarded in this project. Specifically, the Interior, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Site/Civil work package is expected to be awarded by March 2013. Awarding contracts such as these to local small business would mean hundreds of jobs for local union workers. As you know, small businesses bring innovative solutions to problems, are efficient and nimble, and they pay personal attention to each project. For these reasons, and more, small businesses are an asset and their participation in contracting opportunities should be a priority. Therefore, I strongly urge you to engage the prime contractor so as to ensure that local small businesses have fair access to compete for these contracts.

In closing, this matter is of the utmost importance to me and to the economic well-being of my constituents. I believe you will find their work product to be exemplary in every way, and I would appreciate every appropriate consideration be given to local small businesses, within the applicable guidelines. I ask for any information that you may now provide on this matter and look forward to hearing from you about the final decisions.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this serious matter and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator