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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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June 28, 2011

The Honorable Karen G. Mills  
Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Administrator Mills:

I write to you today regarding the Administration's progress in implementing a key provision of the *Small Business Jobs Act of 2010* (P.L. 111-240), intended to help our nearly 28 million small businesses innovate, grow and create new jobs. Section 1203 of the legislation called on the Small Business Administration (SBA) to update and improve its export assistance programs by restructuring the Office of International Trade and specifically, to create an Associate Administrator for International Trade to coordinate the agency's export promotion activities. However, as we mark the nine month anniversary of the President signing this important legislation into law, it is my understanding that this position has yet to be permanently filled.

Although the Administration has taken steps to fulfill its statutory obligations by temporarily designating a current SBA employee as Acting Associate Administrator for International Trade, I am concerned that this position has yet to be filled with a permanent, full-time appointment. As you know, the intent of the *Small Business Jobs Act* was to provide the small business community with immediate relief through, among other initiatives, improved access to exporting and business development opportunities in foreign markets. Key to the success of these efforts is having strong leadership in charge of the Office of International Trade, ensuring that the many changes made by this law are being swiftly and properly implemented. Further, in light of the significant number of pending Administration initiatives aimed at increasing export opportunities for our small businesses—including the President's National Export Initiative and a potential reorganization of the federal agencies involved in the export promotion process—it is critical that the SBA has a strong and consistent voice promoting its ability to address the needs and interests of the small business community through each of these initiatives.

With these factors in mind, I urge you to fulfill the SBA's statutory obligation by moving swiftly to appoint a permanent, full time and qualified candidate to the position of Associate Administrator for International Trade. Additionally, I request that you provide the Committee, in writing, with any relevant information relating to the current status of this position, the process by which candidates have been or are being identified, and any reasons for the delayed implementation of this provision of the law.

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In closing, I would reiterate that the *Small Business Jobs Act* was crafted with the goal of providing the small business community—which has been adversely and disproportionately impacted by our nation’s recent economic difficulties—with immediate and much needed relief. Filling this vacant leadership position represents a critical step towards achieving that goal and will ultimately ensure proper implementation of the law. Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact John High from my staff at (202) 224-5175. Thank you for your prompt attention this matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu  
Chair