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February 8, 2012

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On January 13, 2012, in a White House speech before dozens of small business owners, you announced that you would elevate the Administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA) to Cabinet-level status. As you know, I first called on you to make the SBA Administrator a member of your Cabinet on December 8, 2008. I have long supported the elevation of this position, and I applaud you for giving small businesses a seat at the table as we work together to revitalize our economy.

Additionally, in response to a question asked in a January 30, 2012, interview presented by YouTube and Google+, regarding your Administration's proposed agency reorganization plan, you made the following statement, "I elevated the SBA Administrator to a Cabinet level position so that they are talking directly to me, there's nobody in between me and the SBA when they are advocating on behalf of small businesses... [after reorganization] I'll still have a SBA Administrator in my Cabinet who's advocating directly just for small businesses."

At the same time, other members of your administration have made conflicting statements regarding whether the Administrator of the SBA will remain in your Cabinet, given your recent proposal for an agency reorganization plan. For example, in a White House press briefing following your announced proposal for reorganization, also held on January 13th, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Deputy Director for Management, Jeff Zients stated, "the SBA would be represented in the new agency by the secretary of the agency that is focused on business competitiveness."

As Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I respectfully request clarification on whether the SBA Administrator will remain a Cabinet-level position – as cited in your January 30th interview – should your Administration's reorganization proposal move forward. The elevation of the SBA Administrator to Cabinet-level status was a tremendous win for small businesses and ensures their voice is heard loud and clear in your Administration's most crucial meetings regarding our nation's economy.

This is a critical time for our country's economic recovery, and we cannot allow further uncertainty for our nation's small businesses. I look forward to your response clarifying the status of this Cabinet-level position.

Sincerely,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
Ranking Member