



Office of the Secretary  
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John Bel Edwards, Governor  
Shawn D. Wilson, Ph.D., Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Amanda Trapp, Legislative Analyst, House Appropriations Committee

**FROM:** Paula Merrick Roddy, DOTD Compliance Programs Director

**RE:** HSR 2 – Requested Information

**DATE:** August 6, 2020

The DOTD Compliance Programs Section is responsible for the administration of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Element (SBE) programs. The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development has at its disposal two consultant firms, SJB Group for Region A and Urban League of Louisiana for Region B, to provide comprehensive support services to certified disadvantaged business enterprises. Support services include full technical capabilities and financial condition assessments, business development and bidding assistance workshops, marketing and financial advisory assistance. The two regions are composed of the following DOTD districts, Region A: 03-Lafayette, 04-Bossier City/Shreveport, 05-Monroe, 07-Lake Charles, 08-Alexandria, and, 61-Baton Rouge; and Region B: 02-Bridge City/New Orleans, and 62-Hammond.

In anticipation of the requirements of HSR 2, the Compliance Programs DBE/SBE Section held a conference call with SJB Group and Urban League of Louisiana to identify critical areas related to economic recovery of affected minority, women- and veteran-owned companies. In addition, the group presented several recommendations for assistance. The notes of the conference call are as follows:

- A. Areas of concern for minority, women- and veteran-owned firms affected by COVID-19
  - Guidance needed for loan applications
  - Confusion on how to keep track of dollars received/spent
  - Constant date, requirement and procedure changes
  - Confusion on how to properly complete applications
  - 30-Day revision requirements are not clear
  - Confusion over allowable expenses, i.e., transportation vehicles, fuel; clarity needed on what is allowed/not allowed
  - Banks do not have proper protocols in place and the process is confusing
  - Fraud, scams, unethical lenders, etc.
- B. Groups affected by company name, type of industry, number of employees, specifics on how the company was affected, i.e., layoffs, loss of income, loss of clients, increase in business, i.e., capacity is unavailable to handle the influx of clients, lack of availability of staff, etc.
- C. Survey companies to ascertain if they have recovery plans, expect to change their business model, or have no recovery plans, etc.
- D. Suggestions to assist affected companies:



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- Provide resources or a comprehensive directory to include attorneys and accountants to assist with regulations, loans, paperwork, etc.
- Explore avenues of how government can increase business opportunities; creation of infrastructure projects; economic incentives for businesses to change their business model
- Develop ways to increase access to resources at all levels of government, local, state and federal
- MAJOR CONCERN - How do you increase the business of a business – what types of opportunities can be created to increase a business' productivity and income.

Should you require additional information or clarification, please contact me at 225-379-1382 or [paula.roddy@la.gov](mailto:paula.roddy@la.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to assist with this study request.