

Office of the Commissioner  
State of Louisiana  
Division of Administration

JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR



JAY DARDENNE  
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

August 6, 2020

Honorable Representative Gary Carter, Chairman  
House Subcommittee on the Economic  
Recovery of Minority, Female, and  
Veterans Owned Enterprises  
2401 Westbend Parkway Suite 3071  
New Orleans, LA 70114

Honorable Representative Carter:

The Division of Administration and its component agencies, including the Office of State Procurement, appreciate the opportunity to assist the work of the Subcommittee. Please accept this joint response.

The Division of Administration and Office of State Procurement (DOA-OSP) welcome robust participation and competition from all suppliers, including minority, female, and veteran-owned enterprises. We recognize the significance of the State's contractors being reflective of the diversity of the people of Louisiana, and we strive daily to ensure that all prospective suppliers have the opportunity to compete in a fair and open manner to meet the needs of state agencies and political subdivisions, and the populations they serve.

Although state agencies governed by the State Procurement Code (Title 39) are prohibited by state constitutional case law [Louisiana Supreme Court decision No. 95-CA-2105 to LA Associated General Contractors vs. State of Louisiana] from carrying out existing statutory preferences in R.S. 39:1951 *et seq.* for minority and women-owned businesses, DOA-OSP has taken several steps to improve access for small businesses of all types, which we believe advances inclusion of minority, female, and veteran-owned businesses, as well as organizations employing individuals with disabilities.

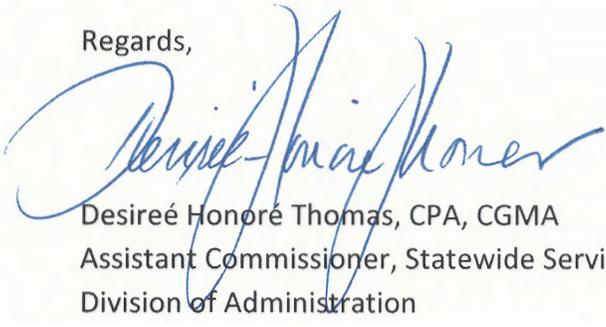
Examples of such efforts include, but are not limited to:

1. DOA-OSP has implemented Act 589 of 2016 in consultation with Rep. Gary Carter, to provide detailed biographical information about the ownership of state contractors, including the racial, ethnic, gender, veteran status, Louisiana residency, names, address, and other characteristics of ownership for each contract-holder.
2. DOA-OSP has voluntarily expanded the implementation of Act 589 reporting to include a quarterly report summarizing these same statistics across all contractors – a global view to complement the contract-specific view. This is known as the “Vendor Profile Data” report on the contracts portal of the Louisiana Checkbook.
3. DOA-OSP has voluntarily further expanded the implementation of Act 589 reporting to also include whether each contractor has identified itself as a certified disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE), including recognized certification subtypes.
4. The Office of State Procurement and Office of Technology Services are establishing a data linkage to automatically pull information from the Department of Transportation and Development’s DBE database into the State’s enterprise financial system (LaGov) so that all agencies can see at a glance whether a vendor is a registered DBE within LaGov.
5. DOA-OSP works extensively with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED) to implement the Hudson and Veterans Initiatives for Small Entrepreneurship. LED manages the enrollment and certification. DOA-OSP manages the procurement side and reporting, as the Commissioner of Administration sets annual growth goals for all agencies’ participation in the Hudson and Veterans Initiatives.
6. DOA-OSP has engaged frequently with groups such as the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus, LED’s Council for Economic Inclusion, the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, the Native American Business Network, and the State Use Council for the Purchase of Goods and Services Provided by Individuals with Disabilities, among others. DOA-OSP cannot recall a time when it has ever declined an invitation from a group to speak about best practices and opportunities to do business with the State.
7. DOA-OSP offers regularly scheduled and free-admission training classes for current and prospective suppliers about how to register as a vendor, how to access online resources, how to respond to a bid, how to respond to a request for proposals (RFP), and other topics. DOA-OSP is currently adapting its training offerings to web-based to continue this during the coronavirus pandemic.

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8. DOA-OSP has continued to use competitive purchasing methods such as publically-posted requests for quotations (RFQs) throughout the coronavirus pandemic as much as possible rather than exclusively relying on direct negotiations, so that as many suppliers as possible have an opportunity to participate.

Regards,



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Division of Administration



For: Paula Tregre, Director  
Office of State Procurement  
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