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Small Business Advocate Encouraged by Governor's Action on Implementing NJSBDC Report Recommendations

Newark, NJ. Sept. 26, 2006 –NJSBDC leadership today welcomed the approval of an executive order aimed at getting State authorities to operate within the standard structure of practices and procedures used by State government executive departments in awarding contracts to vendors.

“We are very encouraged to see that in just one month since the release of our official advocacy report on behalf of small business owners statewide, the Governor has initiated an executive order to implement one of our report’s key procurement recommendations,” said NJSBDC state director Brenda Hopper. “It’s a fresh approach to enhancing the small business sector’s share of procurement contract opportunities and past disparities.”

NJSBDC’s report entitled *Strategic Blueprint for Small Business Growth* was sent to the Legislature, Governor and other economic development leaders in August. That report contained a recommendation corresponding to Executive Order No. 37 issued yesterday. The report recommended that: “State authorities and commissions should have public bids posted in the same manner as the 16 executive State Departments that post bids through the Treasury Department.” This change will make it easier for small businesses to know of potential procurement opportunities at these authorities for which they may want to compete in order to grow their business enterprises.

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NJSBDC PROCUREMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

“NJSBDC’s procurement services program helps small business owners maximize their potential, yet, small business owners are still receiving too small a percentage of contracting opportunities,” said NJSBDC associate state director Deborah Smarth. “We commend the Governor for quick action and we look forward to working with the Governor’s Office of Economic Growth and the full Legislature in implementing many other recommendations in our report including much needed statutory changes across a wide spectrum to remove barriers to small business growth.”

“Our report notes that in many instances State government is missing opportunities to encourage a greater level of set-asides for small business,” Hopper said. “The executive order issued on September 15 creating a minority and women business development council is a step in the right direction. By systematically enhancing procurement practices and procedures at the State level, small business owners will be the winners.”

NJSBDC’s report offers a series of recommendations in the procurement related area including:

- Standardizing the application process between State and local levels of government;
- Charging fair and consistent fees for certifications to do business with governmental entities;
- Requiring prime contractors to pay small business contractors promptly with harsher penalties for violation and requiring or strongly encouraging all State contractors to purchase products and services from small businesses in state.

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