

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

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July 7, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you know, military veterans who choose to become entrepreneurs play a critical role in our nation's economy. Their training and leadership skills provide a natural foundation to establish and grow businesses, which in turn create employment opportunities for returning veterans and American workers. That is why we must ensure that the federal government makes veterans small business development a priority. To that end, I urge you to direct federal agencies to engage with the work of the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development (IATF), which is tasked with developing veteran small business ownership in the United States.

Congress authorized the creation of the IATF to facilitate the further development and growth of veteran-owned small businesses. Led by the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the task force combines the efforts of the Departments of Labor, Defense, Treasury, and Veterans Affairs, with the General Services Administration, the Office of Management and Budget and veterans service organizations, creating a truly coordinated and comprehensive approach to veteran-owned small business development. Ensuring coordination among these diverse and dedicated organizations will not only improve outcomes for veterans and their families, but it will also provide better value for the taxpayer.

Unfortunately, however, many federal agency members have failed to meet their statutory requirement to engage with the IATF. I encourage you to direct federal agencies to rededicate their efforts to meet the mission of the IATF and ensure that the federal government is making veterans small business ownership a priority. I also request that federal agencies send confirmation of their intent to participate in future task force reports and meetings to both the Small Business Administration and this committee at their earliest convenience.

Thank you for your continued service on behalf of our nation and its veterans.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Maria Contreras-Sweet, Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration
The Honorable Robert A. McDonald, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
The Honorable Ashton Carter, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense
The Honorable Thomas Perez, Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor
The Honorable Jacob Lew, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Treasury
The Honorable Dan Tangherlini, Acting Administrator, U.S. General Services Administration
The Honorable Shaun Donovan, Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office
of the President