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U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce Releases Report; Women-Owned Small Businesses Suffer Largest Federal Contracting Opportunity Loss in History

FY2008 Contracting Misses Goal for Contracting with Women-Owned Small Businesses by Over Twelve Billion Dollars

WASHINGTON, August 24, 2009 -- After more than a decade of failure to meet federal contracting goals with women, and nearly nine years of delay in the implementation of the Women's Procurement Program, the recently released FY2008 federal spending report shows that women-owned small businesses suffered the greatest opportunity loss in history. FY2008 federal spending with women missed the paltry five percent goal for spending with women by **twenty-two percent** representing a **shortfall of over \$12 Billion** in just one year.

"Federal spending increased over \$300 Billion between 2001 and 2008, while the federal contracts secured by women-owned firms have seen shortfall after shortfall," said Margot Dorfman, CEO of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce. "And now, with the release of the FY 2008 data, we find that women-owned businesses lost over \$12 Billion of opportunity in FY2008 as the federal government failed to meet the remarkably low goal of five-percent for contracting with women-owned small businesses. For more than ten years, the federal government has failed to meet their own goal. And for more than nine years, the Small Business Administration has failed to implement the Women's Procurement Program which was established by Congress to assist federal agencies to overcome this tragic shortcoming," added Dorfman.

In 2004, the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce filed a claim against the Small Business Administration for failure to implement the Women's Procurement Program, and the court agreed. Reggie B. Walton (United States District Judge for the District of Columbia) further noted that the SBA "... had sabotaged, whether intentional or not, the implementation of a procurement program..." Since this finding, the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce fought back several attempts by the Bush Administration to enact spuriously formed rules for the implementation of the Women's Procurement Program that have been nothing more than subterfuge and delay tactics.

"With this most recent shortfall of over \$12 Billion dollars, it is time for the new leadership of the Small Business Administration to take quick action to implement the Women's Procurement Program and put an end to the disparities women-owned small businesses face in the federal contracting arena," concludes Dorfman. "It's time to put an end to this travesty."

The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce reports are available at <http://www.uswcc.org/reports> .

The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce(TM) is the leading advocate for women on economic and leadership issues. The USWCC creates opportunities and change for women by building a strong community voice, advocating for members, and providing programs and benefits to support the economic growth of women across America and around the globe. The USWCC is a not-for-profit 501(c)6 organization founded in 2001; its headquarters offices are located in Washington, D.C.

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U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce

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