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**Congress of the United States**  
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**CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE, OF TEXAS**

**RULES COMMITTEE**

**H.R.1734" THE CIVILIAN PROPERTY REALIGNMENT ACT"**



**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2012**

**AMENDMENT**

**TALKING POINTS**

Mr. Chairman, I would like to offer an amendment to H.R. 1734, the “Civilian Property Realignment Act.” This bill would establish the Civilian Property Realignment Commission (CPRC) to better manage federal buildings and facilities. In addition to giving the commission broad new authorities to consolidate, dispose of, or sell some government properties, the bill would require the commission to sell over the next year at least five civilian facilities that have a combined estimated fair market value of at least \$500 million.

- My amendment is a Sense of Congress that acknowledges the challenges faced by small, minority, and women-owned when attempting to participate in the government contracting process. I believe the Commission should take steps to provide assistance to small, women, and minority owned businesses seeking to be awarded contracts related to the sale or redevelopment of federal property.

- In addition, it is important to get a diverse representation of small, minority, and women-owned business. To ensure that a broad swath of the small business community is reached it is imperative that they are aware of the existence of contracts and that the process is clear. My amendment simply expresses that the Commission or other appropriate federal agency should conduct a public information campaign to advise small, minority, women-owned businesses of the available contracts.
- Further, I believe there should be accountability as to which firms are receiving these lucrative contracts which is why the Commission should report to Congress and the President every 6 months. This report should include the amount of contracts awarded to business firms, which will include small, minority, and women-owned businesses, as well as, subcontracts awarded to small, minority, and women-owned business.

- Few would argue with the premise that small business is the backbone of our economy and the heart beat of our nation. The small business owner reflects a valued principle in our nation's heritage. The belief that an individual or a group of individuals can come together to build a business from the ground up then employ their neighbors. It is the humble beginnings of most major businesses. It is the local grocery store to the Mom & Pop shop. In government contracting it is important to ensure that everyone has equal access to this valued American principle... a fair chance to have an equal opportunity to maintain a business. Whether large or small.
- We must remember the importance of small businesses. 99 percent of all independent companies and businesses in the United States are considered small businesses.

- They are the engine of our economy, creating two-thirds of the new jobs over the last 15 years. Enabling small businesses to gain access to these contracts would result in job growth.
- Small businesses have always been a source of dynamism for the American economy. In 2009, there were 27.5 million businesses in the United States. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) these small enterprises account for 52 percent of all U.S. workers.
  - Some 19.6 million Americans work for companies employing fewer than 20 workers, 18.4 million work for firms employing between 20 and 99 workers, and 14.6 million work for firms with 100 to 499 workers. By contrast, 47.7 million Americans work for firms with 500 or more employees.

- Again my amendment is intended to address the obstacles faced by small, minority, and women-owned businesses if a Commission is established. Support my amendment, support small business.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.