



News Release

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Statement by SBA Administrator Steven C. Preston Following President Bush's Proclamation of National Veterans Awareness Week, November 5-11, 2006

WASHINGTON – Following President Bush's recent proclamation of November 5-11, 2006, as "National Veterans Awareness Week," Administrator Steven C. Preston of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), issued the following statement:

"More than 14 percent of businesses in America are owned by veterans, and SBA is proud that we guarantee more than \$1 billion annually in loans for veteran-owned businesses," said Administrator Preston. "As a measure of our gratitude for their service to our country we will also continue our efforts to make sure veteran entrepreneurs have greater access to federal contracting opportunities."

"Veteran-owned businesses make significant contributions to the economy and because of their unique technical and leadership skills acquired through military service, they can become successful entrepreneurs. As we commemorate Veteran's Day, the SBA, along with its own 771 employees who are veterans, salutes the nation's 25 million veterans, our veteran entrepreneurs, and all the active duty servicemen and servicewomen."

The SBA and its Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) provides comprehensive assistance, outreach and support to veterans. Each year the SBA assists more than 100,000 veterans, service-disabled veterans and Reserve Component members. Some key programs/services SBA provides include:

- Special support through 68 Veterans Business Development Officers (VBDO) nationwide who help veteran entrepreneurs access the full range of SBA programs and partners. For your nearest VBDO, visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/rep.html>.
- Funding for five Veterans Business Outreach Centers that provide outreach, training, counseling, mentoring and directed e-referrals to veterans owning or considering starting a small business. Visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/vbop.html>.
- Planning, e-counseling and lending assistance for self-employed Reserve and National Guard members facing activation or deployment. Visit: www.sba.gov/reservists.
- Federal goal setting and guidance for veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses seeking contracting opportunities in the federal marketplace.

For more information about the SBA's veterans programs, visit: <http://www.sba.gov/VETS/>.