



NEWS RELEASE

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SBA National Ombudsman Provides Access to Small Business Regulatory Compliance Information

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Small Business Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Management of Budget, has developed a comprehensive list of federal regulatory compliance assistance resources and a point of contact in each federal agency for helping small businesses comply with the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act.

“The SBA, with the assistance of the OMB, is breaking down more barriers to small business productivity,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. “This is an example of the federal government listening to the concerns of small business owners and finding ways to meet President Bush’s mandate to reduce the federal regulatory burden – what he calls the strangulation of regulation,” he said.

“The latest OMB estimates are that it takes businesses and citizens approximately 8.2 billion hours and \$320 billion annually to collect and submit data to the federal government. This takes resources away from starting and expanding small businesses, from creating new products and services, and from hiring new employees,” Barreto said.

The Paperwork Reduction Act required the SBA National Ombudsman and OMB to identify and list resources. This information is on the ombudsman’s Web site at <http://www.sba.gov/ombudsman/compliance/complianceassist.html> and on OMB’s Web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/062703_compliance_assistance.pdf.

“I’m pleased that our office can provide this service to the nation’s small businesses,” said SBA National Ombudsman Michael Barrera. “More and more we are finding federal regulatory agencies switching from a ‘gotcha’ attitude to a ‘let-me-help-you’ point of view. This is not only good government, it is good business.”

Barrera’s national ombudsman’s office provides a sounding board for small businesses experiencing excessive or unfair regulatory enforcement. These concerns can be sent directly to Barrera’s office or presented at one of numerous hearings he holds throughout the country each year. For more information about the office, how to file a complaint, and where hearings have been held or are scheduled, go to www.sba.gov/ombudsman, or call 1-888-REG-FAIR.

In addition to providing compliance assistance information, the Act required OMB to publish the final report of the Small Business Paperwork Relief Task Force on ways to reduce the paperwork burden. The report can be found at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/sbpr2003.pdf.

*For more information about SBA’s programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640 or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at www.sba.gov. The SBA, in co-sponsorship with Staples, has introduced an online newsletter **SBA Solutions**. For a free subscription, go to <http://web.sba.gov/list> and select New **SBA Solutions Newsletter**.*

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