



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## **Small Business Administration Brings Economic Growth Tour to Bend**

**BEND, Ore.** – The U.S. Small Business Administration was in Bend, Ore. today as part of its nationwide Economic Growth Tour. The event provided a forum for area small businesses, SBA's resource partners, community leaders, and elected officials to discuss the challenges and opportunities that small business faces in the region. There are more than 100,000 small businesses in Oregon, and small business makes up 97.6 percent of all Oregon businesses.

SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto began the visit to Bend with a tour of Discovery Corner, Inc., a child-care center and preschool. After receiving a tour from Discovery Corner's Susan Sano and founder Dana Heath, Barreto led a roundtable discussion with several local small business owners. Following the roundtable, Barreto spoke to more than 300 local small business leaders during a luncheon at the Riverhouse Resort.

"I'm so pleased to bring the SBA's Economic Growth Tour to Bend," Barreto said. "President Bush and I know that small business is leading the way in our growing economy, so I can't imagine a more important time for government to reach out to small business and ensure that we are helping where we can, and getting out of the way when we need to. That's why SBA came to Bend today – to listen to our customers, America's small business owner – and talk about how we can help them do what they do best: grow the economy and create jobs."

Today's events were part of SBA's nationwide "Economic Growth Tour: Listening to America's Job Creators." The tour, part of SBA's recognition of the agency's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, allows small business owners to meet with government officials and discuss the issues that are impacting their businesses today. As part of the tour, business owners across the country are being encouraged to send thoughts and comments to the SBA at [sbalistens@sba.gov](mailto:sbalistens@sba.gov).

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