



NEWS RELEASE

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Hearing Set for Idaho Small Business Owners to Comment about Excessive Federal Regulatory Enforcement

Boise, Idaho – Idaho small business owners, community leaders and representatives of trade associations, who have experienced their share of excessive enforcement of federal rules and regulations, now have a forum where they can voice their concerns and complaints.

On Thursday, August 23, 2007, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the U.S. Small Business Administration is holding a **Regulatory Fairness Board Hearing** at the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce located at 250 South 5th, Boise, Idaho, Basement conference Center, where small business owners can testify about unfair or excessive federal regulations they have encountered with a federal regulatory agency.

SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens, members of the SBA's Region X Regulatory Fairness Board, and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance.

“One of the biggest concerns small business owners face is unfair enforcement of federal regulations. They also worry about telling their stories because they fear retaliation by federal agencies,” Owens said. “Small business owners want to play by the rules and comply with federal regulations. We want to assist them by encouraging federal regulators to provide effective compliance assistance, rather than go straight to the penalty stage.”

This forum offers small business owners, throughout Idaho, the opportunity to make their concerns about federal compliance practices known. Comments and complaints presented during the hearing will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the Ombudsman's annual report to Congress, and with managers of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The National Ombudsman's authority to respond to comments on compliance issues is limited to regulatory enforcement matters and does not include concerns about obtaining federal contracts, regulations in general, or securing guaranteed loans.

The hearing is open to the public. Those wishing to testify should contact Thomas Bergdoll of the SBA Boise District Office at (208) 334-9004, X-325 or by email at thomas.bergdoll@sba.gov before the hearing. Small business owners or representatives, who are unable to attend, may submit written testimony in advance of the hearing to be included in the public record.

Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For additional information about the National Ombudsman and this hearing, you may visit the National Ombudsman's Web site at www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

For more information on Surety Bond Guarantee Program, the HUBZone Program and other SBA programs, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA, or visit the SBA's extensive website at www.sba.gov.

The U.S. Small Business Administration, established in 1953, provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. With a portfolio of business loans, loan guarantees and disaster loans worth more than \$45 billion, the SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses. Last year, the SBA offered management and technical assistance to more than one million small business owners. The SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses. America's 24 million small businesses employ more than 50 percent of the private workforce, generate more than half of the nation's gross domestic product, and are the principal source of new jobs in the U.S. economy.

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