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Rep. Carl Gatto
Chairman, House Veterans Affairs Committee

Mr. Chairman,

Arctic Sky Excavating, LLC is in full support of HJR 16. It is critical that we secure oversight hearings in the State of Alaska as to why Public Law (P.L.) 106-50 “the Veterans Entrepreneurship Act”, passed in 1999 creating a 3% federal procurement goal for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOB), is not being fully implemented in Alaska.

My company is a SDVOB and we are in the Excavating business. The opportunities that we have been presented with have been one project with the USDA Forest Service, one with the Department of Veterans Affairs and one with the Corps of Engineers. That has been over a three year period. One Contracting Officer for the USDA Forest Service stated that she **will not** do set asides for SDVOB since she tried that when the program first came out and did not receive any responses to her solicitation. She has stated to me that she will only do set asides for Hub zone businesses. No opportunities have been available from the Army, Air Force or National Guard that I am aware of. The Corps of Engineers are trying to meet their goals. However, they have set aside one project for 2009 and that project was for 12 million dollars. All of the SDVOB businesses that I know of are in their infancy and cannot get bonding for a project of that magnitude. They then have to Joint Venture with larger companies in order to get the bonding required for a project of this size.

The law that Congress passed and the Executive orders from the President are not being enforced. This needs to be corrected.

Rep. Gatto, whatever you can do concerning these issues with regards to federal contracting for Alaska’s SDVOB community will be appreciated. I hope you will be able to urge other legislators to sign on to this resolution and press for immediate passage of HJR 16 before the end of this legislative session.

Sincerely,

Bernie Schuyler
President
Arctic Sky Excavating, LLC