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4 April 2011

Veronica Lara  
Director  
Department of Small Minority Business Resources  
City of Austin  
4201 Ed Bluestein Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78721

Re: Proposed Small Business Enterprise Program

Dear Veronica:

You asked for my thoughts on the proposed Small Business Enterprise Program. As you know, I have been urging the City of Austin for several years to implement additional race- and gender-neutral remedies to assist Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) and other small firms to perform as prime contractors on City projects. The proposed SBE Program is an important step in that direction. Given that the courts have prohibited the use of set-asides or quotas for M/WBEs, the SBE approach is one way to address the need to create capacity and support prime contracting in the disadvantaged and small business sectors of the Austin economy. While some details remain to be worked out, I am happy to support the overall approach and to work with the City to implement this initiative.

Very truly yours,

Cc: Sabine Romero, Esq., City of Austin  
Rosie Truelove, City of Austin  
Lino Mendiola, Esq., Andrews & Kurth