

**OPENING STATEMENT**  
**AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY**  
December 9, 2015



**Chairman Richard Hanna (R-NY)**  
**Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce**  
**"Supporting Success: Empowering Small Business Advocates"**  
**Wednesday, December 9, 2015, 11:00 A.M.**

Good morning. The hearing will come to order.

It's been four years since this Subcommittee held a hearing on the role of small business advocates, although we've spent a lot of effort strengthening these offices. During those four years, we've worked with the Minority to create minimum requirements for each of the four small business advocates. We've added clarity and precision to the roles of the Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs) and the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBUs). We've worked to improve the data and systems upon which they rely, and to give them new tools to assist small businesses competing for prime contracts and subcontracts. However, there is still much work to be done.

Unfortunately, the regulations and standard operating procedures in place across the government haven't kept pace with the Small Business Act or with the reality of federal contracting. What does this mean? First, job descriptions for the Business Opportunity Specialists and Commercial Market Representatives are woefully out of date. Second, PCRs are regulatorily prohibited from looking at many consolidated contracts. Third, OSDBUs aren't able to catch agency personnel evading the Small Business Act. Fourth, small contractors are losing opportunities to compete. Finally, it means that we aren't explaining to new contractors that winning an award is only the first hurdle – next you have to comply with obscure, confusing compliance regulations.

Today, we're here to learn from small businesses and those that work with them how we can ensure that the small business advocates created by the Small Business Act can be more effective. I especially want to hear suggestions on what Congress can do to alleviate these burdens. I think it is appropriate that we periodically review the efficacy of these programs and make improvements so that the reality of the programs remains true to the spirit of the Act. I think we have an opportunity to work on these issues in a bipartisan manner.

As we've discussed numerous times this year, we know that we are losing small contractors, and it will be difficult if not impossible to replace these sectors of our technological and industrial base. Supporting the advocates who support small businesses is a crucial element of small business success.

I now yield to Ranking Member Velázquez for her opening remarks