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EXECUTIVE ORDER Small Business Assessment

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order requiring each executive department to submit a yearly small business assessment of the burdens imposed on and opportunities extended to small businesses by Colorado state government.

1. Background and Need.

Small businesses are the backbone of Colorado's economy. Companies employing fewer than 100 people comprise 98% of all Colorado businesses. Small businesses make important contributions to Colorado's economic vitality and sense of community. State government should encourage and foster entrepreneurship by recognizing and enhancing the positive aspects of the small business sector. Likewise, state government should avoid activities that hinder small business enterprises.

The activities of state governmental agencies have an effect on small business enterprises on a continual basis. In some cases the activities of state government adversely impact small businesses in unintentional ways. In other cases there may be unrealized potential to enhance small business participation in the opportunities provided through state government. Because no comprehensive assessment of these burdens and potential benefits is currently available, I am requesting that each executive department coordinate with the Office of Economic Development to conduct a calendar year assessment of small business activities affected by state government action.

2. Mission and Scope.

Each executive department of state government shall prepare a small business impact assessment in coordination with and following the guidelines established by the Office of Economic Development. The report shall contain the elements listed below to the extent applicable to each agency. If a particular element is not appropriate the department may issue a finding of no impact in its assessment.

Any finding of negative impact on the listed elements shall include department recommendations to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts through appropriate means including executive action or recommendations for legislation.

The executive director of each department or the director's designee shall have final editorial discretion over the contents and recommendations of the department's contribution to the assessment report. The first report shall be delivered to the Governor no later than December 31, 2000.

3. Elements of the Assessment.

A. Regulatory Relief

Each department shall identify burdens imposed on small businesses by existing or proposed regulations in the following areas:

1. Paperwork impacts on small businesses created by new or existing regulatory burdens;
2. Adverse economic impacts on small businesses created by new or existing regulatory burdens;
3. Non-economic impacts due to regulatory requirements which do not fall under paperwork or economic impacts;
4. Activities or policies of the department or its divisions that reduce or eliminate the impact of regulatory requirements on small businesses.

Each department shall also recommend appropriate means to increase the ready availability of proposed policies and proposed regulations including access via electronic media to enhance the opportunity for public review and comment before the policies or regulations are adopted by any agency of state government.

B. Small Business Outreach

Each department shall identify in its report any policies and programs that expand opportunities for small businesses to take part in the following:

1. Competition for state government contracting opportunities;
2. Participation in rulemaking proceedings by providing input on the potential impacts of a proposed regulation before its adoption by an agency of state government;
3. Enhanced opportunities to access capital for small business ventures;

4. Any other relevant outreach efforts related to enabling more participation by small businesses in state government activities and opportunities.

Each executive department may identify policies or programs the department needs but does not currently offer in order to improve its performance in the above listed outreach areas.

4. Duration.

This Executive Order shall expire on December 31, 2002 unless extended by executive order.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this 30th Day of March, 2000.

Bill Owens
Governor