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1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Women Construction Owners and Executives (WCOE)
3 is a national organization with a chapter in Illinois; and

4 WHEREAS, WCOE promotes opportunities and business for
5 women-owned firms in the construction industry; and

6 WHEREAS, WCOE monitors and provides input on legislation
7 affecting women construction owners and executives; and

8 WHEREAS, WCOE is celebrating its 25th anniversary on March
9 23, 2009 in Washington, D.C.; and

10 WHEREAS, WCOE has at the top of its national legislative
11 agenda improvements to the United States Department of
12 Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
13 program; and

14 WHEREAS, These changes will enable recipients of federal
15 stimulus moneys to be prepared with a strong pool of qualified
16 DBE firms to perform the work that is being funded; and

17 WHEREAS, The present DBE program imposes a \$750,000
18 personal net worth limitation on any qualifying owners seeking
19 DBE certification and this limit has never been increased; and

1 WHEREAS, The present DBE program in 49 C.F.R. § 26.65
2 imposes the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) size
3 standards on the gross revenues of any firm seeking DBE
4 certification, but also imposes an absolute limit, currently
5 \$20.1 million, even if the SBA standard is higher; and

6 WHEREAS, Bonding capacity and ability to secure lines of
7 credit are directly tied to both a DBE owner's personal net
8 worth as well as the DBE firm's gross revenues; and

9 WHEREAS, These artificially low limits on personal net
10 worth and gross revenues are particularly challenging for DBE
11 firms in Illinois due to a higher cost of living and higher
12 construction costs; and

13 WHEREAS, The City of Chicago and Cook County have
14 established personal net worth limitations of \$2 million for
15 their Minority and Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) programs;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, The current SBA gross revenue size standard for
18 construction firms is \$33.5 million; and

19 WHEREAS, Governmental agencies that provide DBE
20 construction opportunities must develop statistical and

1 anecdotal evidence to show the extent of discrimination against
2 women and minorities in the construction industry; and

3 WHEREAS, The DBE program presently provides no guidelines
4 for the methodology that should be used for these disparity
5 studies; and

6 WHEREAS, The Transportation Research Board of the National
7 Academy of Sciences is in the process of developing a model
8 disparity study methodology; and

9 WHEREAS, Such a model disparity study methodology would
10 greatly benefit the DBE program; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
13 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge President Obama, the Illinois
14 congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the United
15 States Department of Transportation to take immediate action to
16 increase the personal net worth limitation in the DBE program
17 to \$2 million; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That we urge President Obama, the Illinois
19 congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the United
20 States Department of Transportation to take immediate action to
21 remove the cap on DBE gross receipts to reflect the applicable

1 SBA size standards; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That we urge President Obama, the Illinois
3 congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the United
4 States Department of Transportation to take immediate action to
5 adopt the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy
6 of Sciences' model disparity study methodology; and be it
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 delivered to President Obama, the Illinois congressional
10 delegation, and the Secretary of the United States Department
11 of Transportation.