

Testimony

**Shelia C. Hill
President & CEO
Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council**

**ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives**

**Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and
Consumer Protection**

**“The Minority Business Development Agency:
Enhancing the Prospects for Success”**

Thursday
October 15, 2009
1:00 P.M.

2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2322

Washington, DC

Good afternoon. I would like to thank the Honorable Bobby L. Rush (D-IL), Chairman Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection and the distinguished committee members for giving me this opportunity to speak.

My name is Shelia Hill. I am the President and CEO of the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council (CMSDC) a 43 year old not-for-profit organization founded on the basic principle that all should have equal access to participate in the commerce of this country. I have been in this industry for more than 20 years; have been an entrepreneur, a fortune 500 corporate professional and now the leader of the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council.

The Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council is the founding council of the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC). NMSDC represents 37 affiliate councils, over 16,000 certified minority business and more than 3500 major buying organizations.

The mission of the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council is "To create an environment that maximizes business opportunities between buying organizations, certified MBEs and provide business

development services to foster the creation of mutually beneficial business relationships”.

CMSDC, has maintained a 40+ year relationship with the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), US Department of Commerce and has been the operator of the Chicago Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) for the last 6 years.

Our relationship with MBDA is unique and it is in conjunction with this relationship the minority business community has benefited and business opportunities have prospered. Through this relationship, the operation of the MBOC has created jobs, accessed contracts (public and private sector), increased financial transactions including, but not limited to mergers and acquisitions. In fact the MBOC has generated approximately 1 billion dollars in contracts and financial transaction over the past 3 years. The Chicago model is a good working model and one I hope will be replicated across the country.

Committee members, MBDA provides vital resources to the business community and although the name states minority, its policies and outreach far exceed the minority business community and for the record,

my experience validates that “public policy dictates private behavior and policy”! MBDA’s initiatives impact all Americans, not just minority Americans. MBDA is an American agency!

Parity for people of color in business does not exist, discrimination is still widespread. Access to contracts, financing and bonding which lead to growth, prosperity and employment continues to be limited. Minority businesses need access and business development.

At approximately 29 million dollars, the Minority Business Development is the smallest federally funded agency within the government; never-the-less, for the last 5 years the citizens of America have realized a minimum return of 54 times and a maximum return of 74 times.

As a business professional committed to the growth and development of minority businesses, the growth and development of this country, it is mission critical that MBDA, be better funded.

Had the MBDA budget remained flat over these past 40 years, even with inflation, the agency would be funded at 300 million dollars.

As operator of the Chicago MBOC, this would allow me to serve more MBEs. Larger, more successful MBEs would hire more employees, more employees would positively contribute to the economy, pay more taxes and build our country, our world!

MBDA the only Federal agency specifically devoted to the growth and development of minority businesses was created in 1969 by Executive Order. Statutory Authority must be granted to MBDA.

Transparency and accountability to ensure a level playing field is still needed, A perusal of FedBizOps will confirm that minority businesses are not widely being included in the Stimulus, TARP or ARRA. MBDA is critical to “Enhancing the Prospects for Success”!

Thank you.