## MBDA Emblem - FINAL

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### COMMERCE

### NEWS

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**U.S. Minority Business Development Agency Convenes First Ever Meeting of the Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 3, 2024) – On Friday, May 31, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) held the first-ever meeting of the Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council (MBEAC). The MBEAC held its inaugural meeting to provide an orientation for new committee members and an overview of future work products to fulfill the Council’s charter and statutory mandates. Among the various council members and attendees, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves spoke in recognition of the Council’s first engagement.

The MBDA Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council is a collection of public and private sector leaders appointed to guide the Agency in service of the country's minority business enterprises. The Council will advise the leadership of the Agency by:

* Serving as a source of information on developments in the areas of the economic and social life of the United States that affect socially or economically disadvantaged businesses; and
* Providing leadership with information regarding plans, programs, and activities in the public and private sectors related to socially or economically disadvantaged business concerns.

“MBE Advisory Council members were chosen because they each have success helping MBEs break through systemic barriers and access opportunities,” said **Acting Under Secretary Eric Morrissette**. “President Biden, leaders in Congress from both parties, and Secretary Raimondo are counting on MBDA to continue growing our impact in service of America's minority business enterprises. The establishment of the MBE Advisory Council is a critical step to accomplishing that mission.”

**Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council Members**

**Private Sector Members:**

* **Janice Bryant Howroyd**, CEO of ActOne Group
* **Ron Busby**, President and CEO of U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. ‘
* **Harry E. Johnson**, Sr., President and CEO of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation
* **Ying McGuire**, President and CEO of the National Minority Supplier Development Council
* **Frances Perez-Wilhite**, Program Manager of the North Carolina Military Business Center
* **Kip Ritchie**, CEO of the Potawatomi Business Development Corporation
* **Rosa Santana**, Founder and CEO of the Santana Group
* **David Steward**, Chairman and Founder of World-Wide Technology
* **Melanie Matter Welsh**, Executive Director of Alaska Unlimited

**The Council will also include representatives from the following Federal agencies:**

* **Carolyn Angus- Hornbuckle**, Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, U.S. Department of Labor
* **Elizabeth de Leon Bhargava**, Secretary for Administration, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Assistant
* **Mehul Parekh**, Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Government-wide Policy, U.S. General Services Administration
* **Michael S. Gibson**, Director for Division of Supervision and Regulation, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
* **Isabel Guzman**, Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration
* **Dr. William A. LaPlante**, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, U.S. Department of Defense
* **J. Nellie Liang**, Under Secretary, Domestic Finance, U.S. Department of the Treasury
* **Christopher Coes**, Acting, Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy in the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
* **Geraldine Richmond**, Under Secretary for Science and Innovation, U.S. Department of Energy
* **Malcom Shorter**, Assistant Secretary for Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Members of the Council serve a two-year term and may be reappointed. As stated in The Minority Business Development Act of 2021, this council will advise and assist MBDA in their mission to promote the growth of minority owned businesses.

**About the U.S. Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)**

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency is the only Federal agency dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. minority business enterprises (MBEs). For more than 50 years, MBDA’s programs and services have better equipped MBEs to create jobs, build scale and capacity, increase revenues, and expand regionally, nationally, and internationally.

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