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Minority Business Development Agency and Department of Defense Announce Memorandum of Understanding to Bolster Minority Business Enterprise Participation in Defense Sector

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 19, 2024) — Today, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment met to commemorate the signing of their joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, with the aim of ensuring minority business enterprises (MBE) have an equitable opportunity to participate in the defense sector.

The MOU will leverage MBDA and the DoD’s collective insight, networks, and programs to strengthen resources for MBEs seeking to enter the defense industry supply chain and related high-growth industries. This partnership will also aim to utilize data-driven initiatives and capacity building to improve the participation of MBEs in the defense sector.

“A close working relationship between MBDA and the DoD will both benefit minority business enterprises seeking to enter or expand in the defense industry and strengthen U.S. national security,” **said Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development Eric Morrissette**. “By diversifying our defense sector with minority business enterprises, we are tapping into the full potential of American innovation, further enhancing U.S. competitiveness and helping us to stay ahead on the global stage.”

This MOU signing is among many others aiming to expand overall MBE access to contracts, and participation with various new industries and federal agencies. Working with the DoD and its Office of Small Business Programs provides a route to provide MBEs better awareness of defense contract opportunities and the industry as a whole.

“This MOU represents a significant step in expanding access to defense contracts for minority business enterprises, ensuring that our supply chain is diverse, resilient, and capable of

addressing the demands of our national defense,” said Dr. William A. LaPlante, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. “By working with MBDA, we can tap into a broader talent base of underrepresented businesses that bring unique perspectives and solutions which ultimately contributes to a more robust and innovative industrial base.”

For more information on initiatives and other efforts being led by the Minority Business Development Agency, please visit www.mbda.gov.

About the 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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