

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Rep. Sharice L. Davids**  
**Kansas Third District**

February 27, 2024

Mrs. Joan Mooney  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Management and Budget  
Department of Interior  
1100 Ohio Drive SW  
Washington D.C. 20242

Dear Deputy Assistant Secretary Mooney,

I am writing to urge the Department of Interior to prioritize set-asides for Indian Small Business Economic Enterprise (ISBEE) corporations for Indefinite-Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) vehicles to facilitate fair competition, increase collaboration through an understanding of unique cultural perspectives, and increase opportunities for Native American-owned corporations to expand into new industries, such as Information Technology (IT).

Native American-owned corporations have been crowded out of the contracting marketplace within the Department of Interior through the issuance of IDIQ contract vehicles. Through IDIQs, a given agency can issue a contracting vehicle for an undefined amount of a given product or service for an unspecified time. The scope of IDIQs is increasingly flexible, as contract officers are only required to provide information on:

- A minimum quantity and reasonable maximum quantity of the product or service;
- An estimated time period; and
- A statement of work.

As IDIQs provide broad flexibility to federal agencies with ever-evolving needs, they have become increasingly popular; between FY21 and FY22, federal spending on IDIQ vehicles increased from \$10.3 billion to \$13.5 billion, an increase of almost **24 percent**. Unfortunately, this growth has significantly constrained the ability of small businesses, particularly those that are Native American-owned, to compete for new opportunities. By the nature of how IDIQs are developed, the selected group of companies that are eligible to receive an award are limited to those that have been given permission to bid on task orders under the pre-approved price list. Under this system, some corporations are given broad latitude to collaborate directly with federal contracting officers to create a pricing structure that favors their services and capabilities, preventing businesses that lack this infrastructure from engaging in fair competition.

These IDIQ vehicles can also facilitate an environment where larger corporations with broad

capabilities are provided with early access to upcoming high-dollar task orders. As companies are pre-selected for IDIQ competition prior to all the task orders being issued, this enables agencies to intentionally avoid posting high-dollar opportunities until the contract pool has been sufficiently limited.

Within the Department of Interior, this issue is exacerbated by the lack of fair competition amongst Native American-owned ISBEE corporations within IDIQ vehicles issued by the following agencies:

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM);
- National Park Services (NPS);
- Bureau of Indian Education (BIE); and
- Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA).

Given that these agencies service Native American populations, the Department of Interior needs to ensure these communities are serviced by companies that understand the cultural nuances of tribal lands in a manner that can increase collaboration between both parties. Many ISBEE owners have lived on tribal lands themselves, thereby providing them with the insight to enable their employees to engage in a contracting opportunity without the need to abandon their familial responsibilities by leaving their communities.


Crucially, many of these IDIQ vehicles would allow ISBEE corporations to expand into new industries, such as IT Operations and technological modernization. Over the past several years, the number of ISBEE corporations regularly competing within this space has expanded dramatically to include over twenty businesses, compared to under four just a few years ago. Through the entrance of new stakeholders into the marketplace, the capabilities of ISBEE corporations within the IT sector have expanded to include:

- Digital transformation of administrative & operational processes
- Data analytics that incorporate data science/AI, aggregation, storage, and visualization
- Cybersecurity solutions for prevention, detection, & recovery
- Enterprise application and mobile platform development
- Cloud computing architectural design & implementation

To continue to facilitate this growth, which will subsequently provide new opportunities for Native American employees, the Department of Interior should ensure that these corporations are provided with access to high-skilled IDIQ contracting opportunities through the usage of ISBEE set-asides.

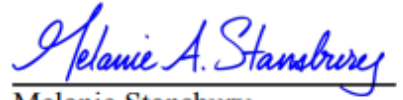
I ask that you give full and fair consideration to these concerns, and I thank you for your attention to this matter. I am happy to provide any additional information that may be requested.

Sincerely,



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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress  
Kansas Third District



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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



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Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



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Donald G. Davis  
Member of Congress