



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

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July 19, 2010

ISSUE:

- [MWBE \(Division of Minority and Women Business Development\)](#)

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Governor David A. Paterson signed four ground-breaking bills into law, including legislation to establish a level playing field for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs) in New York State. Three of the bills were Governor's Program Bills.

"With these pieces of legislation, our State is building on its proud history of opening the door to success for any New Yorker who has the talent, drive and passion for their business to succeed," Governor Paterson said. "But there is still much work to be done to correct disparities in government contracting. By improving equity in the State procurement process and facilitating greater access for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises, we help businesses thrive, and we will help the State recover from recession."

Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson said: "These bills intend to bring our State procurement process into the 21st Century by removing barriers that have historically prevented women and persons of color from reaching full economic parity with respect to contracting opportunities in this State. By the year 2040 more than 50% of the population of New York State will be made up of what are termed 'diverse groups.' Large corporations have already sought to prepare for this eventuality by engaging in a process known as 'Supplier Diversity.' New York State has lagged behind even the private sector with respect to its contract expenditures for Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (MWBEs). This bill package, also known as the New York State Business Diversity Act ensures that the State's public controlled entities, public authorities and agencies have developed and codified a strategy aimed at the inclusion and meaningful participation of MWBEs across New York State. These bills go a long way to ensure that best-practices are institutionalized and that contracting opportunities are readily available for qualified MWBEs."

In June 2008, Governor Paterson issued Executive Order No. 10, which established the Task Force on Minority and Women Business Enterprises. As a result of the Executive Order and the work of the Task Force, MWBE participation quadrupled. The firms that are involved with investment banking and the issuance of debt went from 4.2 percent MWBE in 2007 to 23.9 percent now. Under Governor Paterson's leadership, minority and women firms have yielded an increase of \$162 million in revenue from 2007 year levels. With regard to transportation, thirteen percent of stimulus transportation projects have gone to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises – for a total of \$146 million dollars and an estimated 1,000 jobs created or saved.

The following MWBE bills were signed into law:

Governor's Program Bill No. 297 (S.8312/ A.11525): Raises the cap on discretionary purchases that a State agency can award to MWBEs or small businesses from \$100,000 to \$200,000, subject to the agency's internal controls, but not based on full-blown competitive procurement procedures.

Governor's Program Bill No. 298 (S.8313/ A.11526): Expands contracting practices of public authorities granting increased opportunities for MWBE participation. Additionally, requires that procurement guidelines for each State public authority include the designation of one or more staff to oversee the authority's MWBE program and requires that procurements be conducted

