

Washington, DC -- U.S Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) voted yesterday to improve the Small Business Administration's (SBA) federal contracting programs and open up new opportunities for small businesses, help veteran small business owners and end wasteful fraud in contracting initiatives.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and I am committed to making sure we do everything we can at the national level to provide local businesses with the resources they need to succeed," **said Arcuri**. "By improving the Small Business Administration's programs, we can bring more assistance back to local communities where small businesses are based and help our economy grow. Local small businesses are loyal partners in our communities and I will do all I can in Congress to support them."

America's 26 million small businesses represent more than 99.7 percent of all employers and create up to 80 percent of new jobs nationwide.

The Small Business Contracting Program Improvements Act (H.R. 3867) would expand opportunities for veteran-owned small businesses to compete for federal contracts - placing veteran small business owners at the top of the list for receiving federal contracts and eliminating the barriers that veterans face in receiving non-competitive contracts. Service-disabled veteran-owned businesses currently receive less than 1 percent of federal contracts.

"It is especially important to help veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan realize their dreams of owning a business," **said Arcuri**. "This bill would provide veterans with the necessary tools to tap into federal contracts and become successful entrepreneurs."

H.R. 3867 would also strengthen the HUBZone program which promotes business in historically underutilized urban and rural areas with lower-than-average incomes. It specifies that only local companies can get HUBZone construction contracts.

To combat fraud and taxpayer waste, H.R. 3867 includes safeguards and business integrity standards to ensure criminals are not misusing taxpayer dollars.

The bill also sets out requirements for the SBA to implement the Women's Procurement Program and expand opportunities for minority-owned small businesses.

H.R. 3867 is a bipartisan bill supported by the National Federation of Independent Business, the Associated General Contractors of America, as well as veterans groups including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and AMVETS.

Earlier this year, Arcuri voted today for the Small Business Fairness in Contracting Act (H.R. 1873) to increase opportunities for small businesses to compete for federal government contracts. He also voted from the Small Business Administration Entrepreneurial Development Programs Act of 2007 (H.R. 2359) to ensure regulations are up-to-date with the current business climate

Since taking office in January, the House of Representatives has passed, with Arcuri's strong support, numerous pro-small business measures including \$4.84 billion in tax relief for small business owners, and the Small Business Lending Improvements Act, which provides small businesses with tools to encourage entrepreneurial innovation.

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