STATEMENT OF TERRIE S. ROUSE
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Regarding "Doing Business with the Government: The Record and Goals for Small, Minority, and Disadvantaged Businesses"

Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure U.S. House of Representatives

March 6, 2008

Thank you, Madam Chair, for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. I'd like to begin by thanking the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) and Congress for giving me the opportunity to be a part of history — opening the doors to the largest expansion of the Capitol that is devoted to the citizens of the United States. I believe that the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) is the symbolic door to Congress – a portal – that will become an inviting place to remind visitors of their roles as citizens. As an extension of the Capitol, it will provide a fitting welcome and introduction to the People's House so all may witness the workings of our legislative process. Our mission is to inform, involve, and inspire generations of Americans.

To provide the Subcommittee with a bit of background about myself: I am originally from Youngstown, Ohio. I received my Bachelor of Arts degree in Intercultural Studies from Trinity College, a Masters of Professional Studies from Cornell University, and a Master of Arts degree in African History from Columbia University. Over the years, I have been an educator, serving as an adjunct professor or instructor at a number of universities across the country.

I have also spent a number of years in the museum world, most recently as Executive Vice President and Director of Museums for Kansas City's (Missouri) Union Station, a 900,000-square-foot historic landmark. I have also provided consultant services to a number of cultural, non-profit organizations across the United States including a joint project between the City of Philadelphia, the National Park Service, and Independence National Historic Park (The President's House: Freedom

and Slavery in Making a New Nation), and worked with the City of Charleston on the development of the International African American Museum.

I have been serving as the AOC's Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services for the CVC for six months now, and one of my top priorities has been to hire a diverse and professional staff to help prepare the CVC to receive visitors. We are planning a job fair in April and are actively reaching out to a number of Congressional caucuses, including the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Native American Caucus, to help inform potential candidates of job opportunities with the CVC.

My goals for the CVC mirror those of the AOC, to aggressively work to hire personnel and award contracts to individuals and companies that reflect the diversity of our country. I believe such effort enhances our ability to serve Congress and all who visit our nation's Capitol.

For our procurements, the Capitol Visitor Center team follows the same statutes and policies as the AOC. Over the past several months, three contracts of note have been awarded to support the new Office of Visitor Services. The first one awarded last spring provides food service in the CVC restaurant; another was awarded last fall to a small business to develop the advanced reservation system, and a third was awarded to a woman-owned, small business for designing the CVC Web site.

As we move forward, we will be following the Small Business Program which Mr. Ayers discussed in his testimony. For example, we will soon be seeking small business suppliers for our gift shops to provide materials that are related to our mission. We agree that we have a vested interest in supporting small businesses because the use of small businesses helps facilitate competition and lower prices by providing additional sources for our requirements and improves our relationship with the local community.

Madam Chair, you have my commitment as CEO for Visitor Services for the CVC to working to ensure that we continue to do business with small, minority, and disadvantaged businesses.

Thank you.