

My name is Joseph Forney, I am a Service Disabled Veteran Small Business owner (SDVOSB) from the state of California.

I would like to thank Congressman Simpson and the other members of this committee for holding this hearing today.

I would like to submit my written testimony for the record, and then share with the committee my experiences and concerns regarding the 3% procurement goal for participation by Service-Disabled Veteran-owned small-business concerns in Federal contracting and subcontracting.

Public Law 106-50, (The Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Act of 1999) was signed into law, 17 August 1999, by former President Clinton. The bill, H.R.1568, authored by Congressman Jim Talent had 57 co-sponsors and passed both bodies of Congress unanimously.

According to the Federal Procurement Data Center (FPDC), 29 out of 50 federal agencies reported spending “0” dollars with Service Disabled Veteran owned Small Businesses. Two of these agencies, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Department of Labor, are among the agencies specifically charged with fostering federal procurement opportunities for SDVOSBs per P.L. 106-50. In stark contrast to these Agencies’ failed programs for SDVOSBs, they exceeded procurement goals for other targeted groups.

Another agency that stands out, the Department of Defense, the agency responsible for the creation of Disabled Veterans, reported spending less than 2/10 of 1 percent since the law was passed. The other and perhaps the most egregious statistic is the fact that the Department of Veterans Affairs, the agency charged with the care and well-being of Veterans, reported spending less than 0.25 percent. One other notable Federal entity that reported “0” participation was the Office of the President.

The inability to meet these modest procurement goals clearly shows that this committee needs to take immediate and decisive action.

If the commander-in-chief (Office of the Presidency), Small Business (SBA), and the Department of Labor, after nearly four years report that

all of their efforts have resulted in “0” procurement dollars spent with Service Disabled Veterans, more enforceable legislation is warranted immediately.

Procedures are needed to insure that Veterans rehabilitation programs will be enforced. To illustrate this lack of inclusion by eligible Veterans, in 2002, Lockheed-Martin was awarded the contract to build the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, valued at \$285 Billion and not one dollar was designated for subcontracting with SDVOSBs.

Today, thousands of America’s finest men and women are massing on the Iraqi border for a potential armed conflict. Many more Americans in uniform are still patrolling areas across the world, bringing to justice those who have, and would, do great harm to all of America.

I respectfully request that this committee be the vehicle and catalyst for ensuring that the Federal Government realigns its priorities when seeking to render procurement and small business assistance to Veteran small business owners. It is time to correct this error. Mr. Chairman, I would like to again thank the committee for this opportunity to speak, and I stand ready for any questions that you and your colleagues may have for me.