

Women Business Owners Feel Pinch of Government Shutdown — WIPP Legislative Update



October 15, 2013

As the shutdown stretches into its third week, women business owners are anxious to see a resolution of the government shutdown and impending debt ceiling crisis. In two days, the U.S. government will be at risk of defaulting on its financial obligations, due to a failure to increase the debt ceiling. Meanwhile, Congress does not appear to have reached agreement on reopening the federal government.

Earlier today, WIPP member Lisa Firestone, President & CEO of Managed Care Advisors, spoke before Chair Mary L. Landrieu (D-LA) and the Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship specifically on how the government shutdown has directly harmed her business and many like hers. “We cannot overcome the obstacles of a government shutdown, eroded consumer confidence or any question of the full faith and confidence in the U.S. Government,” said Ms. Firestone, adding, “the result will be layoffs...and we shudder to think of the consequences of Congress failing to raise the debt ceiling.” In addition, WIPP member Sabrina Poole, President & CEO of Serdi LLC, testified that the consequences to her company are very serious. Chair Landrieu cited negative impacts affecting WIPP member Angela O’Byrne’s company, Perez, APC.

The latest proposals in the House and Senate both provide short term solutions: opening the government through Jan. 15, 2014 and increasing the debt limit through Feb. 7, 2014. At this writing, the House version includes additional policy changes:

- Bar the Treasury Department from using “extraordinary measures” in future debt ceiling breaches
- A two-year delay of medical device tax
- Eliminate federal healthcare subsidies for Members of Congress and Cabinet Members

Senate leadership is waiting on the outcome of a vote on the House bill that is expected tonight. Meanwhile, the Senate plan would still need to gain the support of the entire Senate as even one Senator could use procedural tactics to delay a vote until after the Oct. 17 debt ceiling deadline.

Earlier this week, WIPP sent out an action alert to members asking the Congress to resolve the issue as quickly as possible, and enact long-term fiscal certainty. To send a letter to your Members of Congress, please click [here](#).

WIPP Member Gloria Larkin Testifies on Needed Contracting Reforms

Despite the ongoing government shutdown, the Congress has continued to convene hearings on issues of concern to women-owned small businesses.

Last week, WIPP member Gloria Larkin, President of TargetGov, testified before the House Small Business Committee's Subcommittee on Contracting and the Workforce on how contract bundling and consolidation negatively affects small business contractors competing in the federal marketplace.

"We believe that contracts that can be serviced by small businesses should not be subject to any form of consolidation," said Ms. Larkin, leaving the Subcommittee with three recommendations: 1) improve the collection of statutorily required data from agencies to measure the impact of bundling and consolidation on small businesses; 2) complete the regulatory actions required in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2013 and the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010; and 3) increase outreach to small business vendors regarding the consolidation and bundling processes.

For more information on the House's hearing on small business contract bundling, please click [here](#).