



NEWS from
**U.S. Senator
Bob Dole**

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(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR NEDA

Senator Bob Dole today reaffirmed his support for the National Economic Development Association in a letter to the Secretary of Commerce, Juanita Kreps. The letter was in response to recent critical reports of the Office Minority Business Enterprise. Dole is concerned government officials may view those reports as an indirect criticism of NEDA. The letter emphasizes that NEDA was not studied for any of these reports.

A long-time supporter of NEDA, Dole has helped NEDA expand its operation in Kansas. Other Dole efforts to help minority businessmen include introduction of S. 927. That bill would reform and streamline OMBE without interfering with the role of groups such as NEDA.

The text of the letter to Secretary Kreps is printed below:

The Honorable Juanita Kreps
Secretary of Commerce
Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Kreps:

The General Accounting Office released a report on November 10, 1977 concerning the operation of the Office of Minority Business Enterprise. It has been brought to my attention that this report may be read to reflect unfavorably on certain organizations, including the National Economic Development Association, which were not the object of that study.

I want to take this opportunity to apprise you of the excellent work that has been done for OMBE by the National Economic Development Association. NEDA has performed admirably in its efforts to bring more Spanish-speaking people into the mainstream of the free enterprise system. My associations with NEDA both in Kansas and across the country have convinced me that this organization is well managed and totally dedicated to helping Hispanic Americans more fully develop their economic potential.

The Office of Minority Development Enterprise, like all government programs, could certainly be improved. For example, I have introduced a bill, S. 927, to reorganize OMBE to focus its energies more productively on the real problems encountered by minority businessmen. I am also aware that the Department of Commerce is independently considering possible changes in the structure of OMBE. While I want to encourage you to try to make improvements, I believe that the past success of groups such as NEDA must be given a great deal of consideration in any future planning.

One of the most frequent praises of OMBE has been its ability to adapt a program to the needs of a particular business and individual. The use of NEDA and other such groups has been a major reason that this personal involvement with minority businessmen has been available. The accumulated expertise of NEDA should not be forgotten in any reorganization of OMBE.

Thank you for your consideration. I would appreciate being informed of any actions that the Department of Commerce contemplates regarding a restructuring of federal minority business programs. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of a NEDA position paper for your review and comments.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bob Dole".

BOB DOLE
United States Senator