

Who Does the "Rebuilding of America's Infrastructure" Include

WASHINGTON DC, WASHINGTON DC, USA, November 30, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "Rebuilding our infrastructure and communities" is an often-used phrase that is oversimplified. There will always be rebuilding of infrastructure and [minority](#) communities. The problem is we are seldom the owners, developers, contractor builders, or high-wage workers. We need to be partners in ownership, development, building, operators, and employers of the local community workforce in a process where public and private Fortune 500 companies continue to build successful, quality projects while allowing diversity to be an integral part of the planning and execution of that success.



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*Wendell Stemley, NAMC
President*

NAMC is concerned that we are losing a generation of minority youth because of neglect and indifference. We can no longer ignore the obvious: African-American males 18-35 have the highest unemployment rate in America. Other minority groups, women, veterans, and disabled veterans have also seen similar disparity. To that end, Minority Jobs Matter also.

The number of minorities and minority communities who are being left out of the rebuilding of America's infrastructure is daunting. For state agencies to award billions of dollars of

work annually and certain minority groups only receive less than one percent of those dollars is unacceptable. Ironically, these minority groups are not left out of paying the 18 cent per gallon federal sales tax to fund the U.S. Department of Transportation's highway program.

NAMC's efforts are timely, given passage of the recent Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in December 2015. The FAST Act authorizes the program at \$4.5 billion for fiscal years 2016 through 2020, including \$850 million for FY 2017 to be awarded by the [Secretary of Transportation](#). The grants, totaling nearly \$800 million, will be combined with other funding from federal, state, local, and private sources to support \$3.6 billion in infrastructure investment in 15 states and the District of Columbia. The legislation authorizes over \$300 billion in funding transportation projects over the next five years, which potentially presents opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms. The new legislation also addresses a long-standing issue in the DBE community by requiring the U.S. Department of Transportation to undertake measures to ensure prompt payment to DBEs. President Trump has stated that he plans to add a trillion dollars of public and private infrastructure spending to rebuilding America.

CALL TO ACTION

Citizens must be involved with local representatives, such as mayors and city council members, as

well as state and congressional representatives, to ensure that the needs of their communities are included in the appropriations to rebuild America's infrastructure. NAMC urges you to ask government representatives how rebuilding is going to work for and benefit small business, local communities, and mandatory participation requirements.

Please understand -- this is your money. Every time you go to the gas station, you help fund the transportation bill. We all pay the 18 cent federal gas tax, so all of us should have the right to equal services.

NAMC 2016 CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST - Washington, DC

The NAMC 2016 Congressional Breakfast was held on Capitol Hill on September 15, 2016 at the Rayburn House Office Building. Representatives who attended the breakfast and addressed NAMC's issues and concerns were Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA); who spoke about the need for small business banking reform; Rep. Hank C. Johnson, Jr. (D-GA), who addressed government contracting with respect to rebuilding the infrastructure; Rep. Dave Brat (R-VA), debt ceiling and its impact on small businesses; and Rick Allen (R-GA), a former construction company owner, who acknowledged the lack of loan options for small contractors in the industry. NAMC long-time supporters Congresswoman Alma Adams (D-NC) and Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA) also weighed in on the issue of minority contracting. Other congressional representatives also voiced their support for the DBE program.

On Friday, September 16, Wendell Stemley, NAMC President, was invited to host Breaking the Color Barrier in Military Contracting, a panel sponsored by Congressman Hank C. Johnson, Jr. at the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. The panel consisted of various government and industry representatives who assembled to provide an opportunity for minority- and women-owned small businesses to learn how to navigate the procurement process and market their businesses in the lucrative arena of defense contracts.

Small business participation options along with NAMC recommendations included better tracking of both prime and subcontractor flow down requirements for small businesses and minority participation. We also recommend that Federal agencies offer "FAST PAY" to small business contractors.

NAMC also suggested small businesses support Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez's call for stronger compliance and oversight of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Small Business program within federal contracting and Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici's bill, H.R. 3175, to increase the government-wide procurement goals for small disadvantaged businesses, women-owned businesses, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and HUBZONE (historically underutilized business zone) small businesses. Congressional support is needed for legislative bills.

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