

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

109th Congress

Committee on Small Business

2361 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515-0515

February 17, 2005

Chairman Donald Manzullo
House Small Business Committee
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Manzullo:

We are writing regarding your decision to not hold a meeting to consider the Committee's Views and Estimates on the administration's FY 2006 budget submission. The decision to forgo this meeting effectively discharges the Committee of its jurisdictional responsibility to oversee the proposed funding for the Small Business Administration (SBA) and its programs. We should not be abdicating our Committee's responsibility in the budget process.

As an authorizing Committee, we are in the best position to critique the FY 2006 budget submission for the SBA. The Budget and Appropriations Committees use our Committee's Views and Estimates to determine spending priorities. As such, the meeting on the Committee's Views and Estimates is one of our most important responsibilities.

Such a meeting is not perfunctory and it would not overly burden Committee Members, nor should convenience be used as an excuse or rationale to not perform our duties. However, it is our hope that the Committee adheres to the fundamental principles of democracy, which call for an open and deliberative process, regardless of the circumstances. It is unprecedented in the Committee's modern history to not hold a meeting on the Committee's View and Estimates.

We ask that you reconsider your decision to discharge the Committee of its responsibilities. Given the significant effect the FY 2006 budget submission has on the SBA's ability to serve our nation's entrepreneurs, we believe it is our duty to meet in an open forum to discuss and debate the Committee's Views and Estimates on the administration's budget submission.

Sincerely,



Ed Cox

Ed Cox





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