

Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Introduces 13 Pieces of MWBE Legislation

Albany – New York State **Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte (D-NY)** has introduced a bundle of legislation that will greatly enhance economic opportunities for Minority and Women Owned Enterprises (MWBEs) and subcontractors throughout the State.

As the Assembly and the Senate take on issues relating to MWBEs, the fight at its core is to continue to break down barriers. The first piece of legislation introduced this year by **Assemblymember Bichotte** was A8700, which opened up more discussion on these issues. She also re-introduced A8044A, which was passed a few weeks ago.

Assemblymember Bichotte has traveled throughout the State and attended many community events, including sessions from the 2016 NYS Disparity Study, and has had an opportunity to hear from a wide range of stakeholders. The legislation she has introduced is informed by the many MWBEs she has had an opportunity to come in contact with, and it is because of that this legislation has the potential to transform how MWBEs and subcontractors conduct business in New York State.

The legislation falls mainly into five categories:

- 1) increased opportunities for MWBEs by attaching MWBE participation goals such as those entities receiving real estate tax exemptions, and for sole source contracting,
- 2) increased resources to expand the pool of certified MWBEs such as appropriations for outreach, and a feasibility study on capacity building and mentorship programs,
- 3) increased transparency and accountability such as the public sharing of data on MWBEs, companies who have received state contracts, and companies who have received waivers in regard to compliance with MWBE participation,
- 4) the way in which prime contractors and subcontractors will be paid and reported on in regard to MWBE contractual relationships, which are primarily MWBEs, and
- 5) the lifting of barriers such as the \$3.5 million cap on net worth, which limits the capacity and growth of MWBEs.

The 13 pieces of legislation are as follows:

A8700 - The purpose of this bill is to help widen opportunities for Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises throughout the State of New York by attaching a MWBE participation goal to any grant received by a locality or municipality, as well as those entities that conduct business with said localities and municipalities.

A9074A - The purpose of this bill is to require a minority and women-owned business enterprise participation goal requirement in order to receive exemption of new multiple dwellings from local taxation, such as 421-a.

A9122 - The purpose of this bill is to study what state agencies and industries would benefit most from having a capacity-building/mentorship program, and the duration and cost of such a program.

A9700 - The purpose of this bill is to amend the sole source procurement process so that it will include the solicitation of MWBEs.

A9707 - The purpose of this bill is to help enable under-represented MWBEs to be exposed to government contracting opportunities and resources.

A9708 - The purpose of this bill is to allow the public to see which contracts have received waivers in relation to compliance with MWBE participation.

A9710 - The purpose of this bill is to require contractors to report their contractual relationship throughout the life of the project with MWBEs.

A9733 - The purpose of this bill is for the Division of Minority and Women's Business Development to issue an annual report which will summarize the different information required for their development including breakdowns by race, gender, contract type, value of contract, and number of contractors, both prime and subcontractors.

A9740 - The purpose of this bill is to help stream line the payment process for both prime contractors and sub-contractors.

A9771 - The purpose of this bill is to publish and announce agencies that have entered into a contract with the State.

A9772 - The purpose of this bill is to require that real estate developers that are able to claim certain tax credits, abatements, and exemptions to attach a MWBE goal to their project.

A9774 - The purpose of this bill is to eliminate the requirements that MWBE owners have a personal net worth of less than \$3,500,000 in order to obtain certification as a qualifying MWBE.

A9775 - This purpose of this bill is to require the NYS Comptroller to report on Minority and Women-Owned Business development and contract spending.

"At a time where the wage gap and income equality are at an all time high, my legislation aims to further enhance the opportunities to incorporate MWBE goals, and create economic development opportunities for MWBEs and the local workforce throughout the state," said **Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte, Chair of the Subcommittee on the Oversight of Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)**. "If passed, this legislation will have a multiplier affect on many local economies."