

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECEMBER 12, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

December 11, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
THE SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

I want to stress that an important objective of my Administration will be assistance to disadvantaged minorities to further allow their participation in the economic benefits of the private enterprise system. Too little attention has been given to this objective in certain sectors of the Federal Government. I am, therefore, seeking improvements in the Government's minority business development program.

Although the Office of Minority Business Enterprise in the Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration have had primary responsibility for minority business programs, their success to date in these efforts has been due in large measure to the support of other Federal agencies. Your strong backing of this objective is essential to a meaningful Federal effort, and I ask that you undertake a reexamination of your agency's commitment to assisting the creation of successful minority businesses and of the effectiveness of your program. Please submit a report of your findings to me by January 31, 1975.

During this difficult economic period, many minority businesses are particularly vulnerable. They need every help the Government can reasonably provide. It is especially important, therefore, that your agency look for every appropriate opportunity for minority businesses to participate in Government programs as contractors, subcontractors, bankers, etc., and that management, technical and financial assistance be provided whenever feasible.

I am confident of your support of this important effort.

GERALD R. FORD

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