

ADVOCACY 101 FOR MBEs: HOW TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Minority business enterprises (MBEs) face increasing challenges, from efforts to roll back supplier programs to policy shifts threatening contracting opportunities. Expanding the pool of suppliers has driven **cost savings, innovation, and revenue growth**, but some lawmakers and corporate leaders are retreating from these commitments under political and legal pressure.

Your business success — and the economic impact MBEs generate — depends on fair access to contracts, capital, and market opportunities. Elected officials must hear about protecting and expanding these programs directly from MBE owners. **This guide provides a simple framework for engaging effectively.**

How to Reach Out to Your Members of Congress

1. Identify Your Representatives

Find your U.S. senators and representative at www.congress.gov/members.

2. Choose Your Communication Method

- **Phone Call** (Most Direct) or leave a voicemail if nobody answers (they record and log all messages) – Call the D.C. or local office
- **Email or Online Form** – Submit comments via their official website
- **Old school - Send a handwritten or typed letter**
- **In-Person Meeting** – Request a meeting in D.C. or the district office and if possible offer to hold a roundtable with other MBEs
- **Social Media** – Engage publicly (i.e., Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Tiktok, FB)
- **Subscribe-** Sign up for newsletters and news alerts for your elected officials

3. Use the “Story of Me, Story of Us, Story of Now” Framework

Step 1: Story of Me (Why This Matters to You as an MBE Owner)

- Start with your personal experience as an MBE owner
- Explain how policies and programs have impacted your business, such as supplier procurement, access to federal contracts, and inclusive procurement
- Example:
“I started my business to provide high-quality services and create jobs in my community. Supplier inclusion programs helped us grow, allowing us to expand from three employees to 30. But now, these programs are under attack, putting businesses like mine at risk.”

Step 2: Story of Us (Why This Matters to MBEs & the Economy)






- Highlight how policy changes affect **thousands of MBEs** and the broader economy
- Use data:
 - **MBEs contribute \$1.4 trillion to the U.S. economy annually**
 - **Diverse suppliers drive 8.5% in annual cost savings for corporations**
 - **Companies with strong supplier inclusion programs see a 133% higher ROI on procurement**

- Example:
“Across industries, MBEs fuel job creation, economic growth, and innovation. Yet, supplier inclusion programs are being weakened, making it harder for businesses like mine to compete. Rolling back these programs doesn’t just hurt MBEs — it weakens our entire economy.”

Step 3: Story of Now (Why Congress Must Act Now)

- Make a direct ask: **“We need you to stand up for a local small business [specific action].”**
- Be clear and specific:
 - **Defend federal contracting goals for MBEs**
 - **Oppose legislative efforts that dismantle inclusive procurement policies**
 - **Ensure equitable access to capital and federal funding for MBEs**
 - **Encourage private sectors to provide equitable access to opportunities for MBEs**
- Example:
“I urge you to support MBEs in your district publicly. We need action now to prevent setbacks that could cost businesses and jobs in our communities.”

Key Advocacy Tips for MBEs

-  **Be concise** – Keep calls/emails under two minutes
-  **Be specific** – Clearly state your request
-  **Follow up** – Build relationships over time
-  **Engage other MBEs** – Encourage fellow business owners to reach out
-  **Leverage media** – Share testimonials, write op-eds, and use social media

Your voice matters. Advocacy today ensures policies that support MBEs for the future.