

Kathleen Hartnett White, *Chairman*  
Larry R. Soward, *Commissioner*  
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## TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

*Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution*

January 22, 2007

The Honorable Joe Barton  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2109 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Barton:

As Chairman of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Texas' comprehensive environmental regulatory agency, I am pleased to support the National Compliance Advisory Panel's initiative to promote multi-media environmental small business assistance. I encourage federal legislation authorizing the Small Business Environmental Assistance programs to assist small businesses not only with compliance with air quality requirements, but also with their water and waste management regulatory needs. Further, I strongly encourage the reallocation of federal funding to ensure adequate monies are available to support comprehensive state small business assistance programs.

In Texas, we have achieved considerable success with a multi-media and adequately funded program. In 2003, the Texas Legislature passed legislation expanding the statutory authority of our small business assistance program. While the State of Texas has been providing compliance assistance on air regulations since 1992, upon implementation of the multi-media program, we have learned that businesses have as many questions about compliance with water and waste rules. Providing assistance in air, water, and waste at once allows the small business program to most efficiently meet small business needs.

Here are some examples of the success the TCEQ's Small Business and Environmental Assistance program has had since becoming authorized to provide comprehensive compliance assistance.

- The creation of a Compliance Commitment program, which provides on-site technical assistance to help small businesses comply with regulations.
- The creation of an EnviroMentor program, which uses the professional services of attorneys and consultants on a volunteer basis to provide free environmental compliance assistance to small businesses.
- The deployment of 25 TCEQ small business technical staff in our 16 field offices across the state to provide direct, one-on-one assistance to small businesses.

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By utilizing these strong and successful programs, we are providing more comprehensive and more efficient services to small businesses.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact Matthew R. Baker, P.E., Texas Small Business Ombudsman, at 512-239-1091, if you would like more details on the TCEQ's Small Business and Environmental Assistance program. You are also welcome to contact me directly at 512-239-5510.

Sincerely,

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*Kathleen H. White*

Kathleen Hartnett White, Chairman  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality