

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS  
AT THE OPENING OF THE SEATTLE LOCAL OUTREACH CENTER, AUGUST 3, 1978

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be home in Seattle today for an event that is vitally important for the minority business community, the Department of Transportation and for Seattle.

As a Congressman, when I co-authored the legislation that created the Minority Business Resource Center, I looked forward to the time when this would work. Today is one of those days.

I've stated that as Secretary of Transportation, I've been doomed to implement a great deal of legislation I wrote as a Congressman. This is one of the happy occasions however when something good has happened.

Minority firms have long been under-represented among the companies providing products and services to the railroads.

I believe that the Minority Business Resource Center goes a long way toward achieving equal business opportunity in this country.

The legislation that created the MBRC, the Rail Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976, is unprecedented in mandating the creation of a center specifically to aid minority firms in obtaining business with the nation's railroads.

The law goes into great detail about the services and types of projects the Center will undertake. The Local Outreach Centers are a small, but vital part of that much more extensive network. They are perhaps the most important part of the program.

As walk-in centers, they are ready to receive and serve the public. Having a person who is as knowledgeable as Willie Allen to direct such a program in Seattle will ensure that your center is a successful one. Willie has excellent connections with the minority business community in the state of Washington and day to day experience in how to reach such firms and begin getting them to work with the railroads.

The same 4-R Act that created the MBRC designated money to rehabilitate the nation's railroads. Approximately \$1.6 billion is being used for the Northeast Corridor Project.

I have established a goal of 15 percent minority participation for all railroads receiving assistance under the 4-R Act and on the Northeast Corridor Project.

We don't mean to stop there. It is the intent of the Carter Administration to direct business to minority firms until they are able to compete on their own. This assistance will be required until minority companies can obtain loans, prepare successful bid proposals and promote their own interests.

In his urban policy message to Congress, the President announced that the Federal government would triple its minority business awards by the end of fiscal year 1979.

On March 6th of this year I signed an order allowing set-asides for minority businessmen throughout the Department of Transportation.

Each administration will establish minority business goals. Set-asides is just one means of helping them achieve these goals.

It is my hope that one day all businesses will be able to compete equally for contracts from both government and industry.

Until that day, however, I am committed to the Minority Business Resource Center, as the means of creating equality of opportunity in transportation. I want to thank Jesse Hill, the Chairman of the Advisory Board and Gary Gayton, my Special Assistant, Ken Bolton, the Director of the Center, as well as many others for making this day possible. You have a center to be proud of. I know the staff is going to do a great job.

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