



Lourdes Zapata
Chief Diversity Officer
Executive Office
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ms. Zapata:

My name is Darryl (Tony) Jackson, and I am President of Panther Graphics Inc. and a member of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council. Panther Graphics is located in Rochester, New York, is a New York State certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), and we are engaged in the commercial printing business, utilizing both digital and offset printing production methods.

I am writing today as President of Panther Graphics and a member of the Printing Industries Alliance Board of Directors. My comments focus on concerns regarding my business but are certainly applicable to the New York State MBE business community in general. I am very concerned about a matter currently under consideration by the New York State Procurement Council. The issue of concern is the Preferred Source application for "Mail Fulfillment Services" that has been submitted by the New York State Industries for the Disabled (NYSID).

As you know, minority-owned businesses already face significant challenges that most businesses do not. Among these are adequate access to capital, lack of professional development opportunities, and limited availability to the right kinds of mentors and advisers. When you add these obstacles to the general challenges impacting our industry, shrinking markets, competition from electronic media, an aging workforce, razor thin profit margins, it is easy to see why our industry has lost so much business and cut so many jobs in recent times. Since 2006, New York State has lost over 1,000 printing firms with a resulting loss of close to 40,000 jobs.

Despite these challenges, Panther Graphics, with the support of New York State and the City of Rochester, has invested over 2 million dollars in new equipment and created over 20 jobs in the past 2 years. This is a significant investment for any company, much less one the size of Panther Graphics. I believe that this significant investment is necessary for Panther Graphics to remain competitive and for us be able to maintain the jobs of our skilled workforce. We continue to be 100 percent committed to our community and to the industry of which we are a part. Most certainly, approval of the NYSID application will be very detrimental to the success of our investment, to the future of our company, and to others like us.

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The State of New York 2016 MWBE Disparity Study shows a statistically significant disparity in the utilization of MWBE business as prime contractors for state purchases of various commodities. Certainly, approval of the NYSID application being considered will increase this disparity. As such, I would ask that approval of NYSID application to become a Preferred Source for "Mail Fulfillment Services", which should be correctly titled "Digital Printing", be rejected by the Procurement Council. We know of the extreme importance that Governor Cuomo places on equal opportunity for all New Yorkers and as his Chief Diversity Officer, we are hopeful that you will be a forceful advocate in opposition to this application for Panther Graphics and the other MBE and WBE printing firms in our state.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daryll A. Jackson", written over a faint circular stamp.

Daryll A. Jackson

President

Panther Graphics Inc.

Cc

RoAnn Destito- Commissioner, NY SOGS

NYS Procurement Council members ✓

Kyle H Ishmael, Esq. Executive Director, Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus

Tim Freeman, President, Printing Industries Alliance