



Updated NEWS RELEASE

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**National Small Business Ombudsman to Hear Concerns About
Federal Regulatory Enforcement**
New time – 10:00 am – Noon
August 20, 2007

Seattle WA, Monday, August 20, 2007 National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens will discuss concerns about unfair or excessive enforcement of federal regulations at a Regulatory Fairness Board Roundtable at the U.S. SBA Seattle District Office, 2401 4th Avenue, Suite 450, Downtown Seattle, from [10:00 am – noon](#).

This informal roundtable forum offers small business owners and representatives from business and trade associations a chance to discuss openly, without fear of retaliation, their concerns about federal compliance practices in Washington. “One of the leading concerns small business owners face is unfair enforcement of federal regulations. They also worry about telling their stories because they fear retaliation by federal agencies,” Owens said. “Small business owners want to play by the rules and comply with federal regulations. We want to encourage Federal regulators to provide effective compliance assistance, rather than go straight to the penalty stage. Regulatory enforcement should be effective, and not excessive.”

The National Ombudsman’s primary mission is to assist small business people when they experience excessive federal regulatory enforcement actions, such as repetitive audits or investigations, excessive fines, penalties, threats, retaliation or other unfair enforcement action by a federal agency. “Right now, important issues are before Congress that will directly impact businesses in the state of Washington. The Seattle RegFair Roundtable provides an opportunity for small business owners to voice their concerns to their Congressional spokesperson, Nick Owens,” said Dan Picora, Regional RegFair Board Member. “The National Ombudsman is a small business’ best friend and greatest ally.”

The Office of the National Ombudsman was created by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (SBREFA). The act established 10 Regulatory Fairness Boards and each board is comprised of five members who are small business owners or operators from the region who volunteer their time to help small businesses cope with regulatory problems. Information gathered from roundtables and hearings across the country will be shared with government officials in the National Ombudsman’s Annual report to Congress, and with high-level officials of federal regulatory agencies to ensure the fairness of enforcement actions.

The Washington roundtable is open to the public. However, those wishing to participate in the discussion should register online at www.seattlescore.org (under workshops). Contact Darlene Robbins, at 206-553-7317 or Darlene.robbins@sba.gov prior to the meeting if you have any questions.

Comments and concerns about federal agency enforcement actions can be addressed directly to the Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-REGFAIR. For more information on the national ombudsman and this roundtable, visit the National Ombudsman’s Web site at www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

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