



News Release

Rhode Island District Office

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SBA Pledges to Work with Rhode Island Officials to Help Small Businesses Comply with New Fire Code

Providence, RI – The District Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is pledging the full support of the Rhode Island District Office to assist the state’s small business community in complying with any new fire codes.

Rhode Island Governor Donald L. Carcieri directed the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation to “work with the Small Business Administration to develop a plan to help Rhode Island businesses meet the expenses of complying with the new fire code requirements.”

“I offer the full support of the local SBA staff and its resource partners to assist businesses in complying with any new standards,” said SBA District Director Mark S. Hayward. “I extend my thanks to Governor Carcieri for the confidence that he has in the Small Business Administration and I look forward to working with the Economic Development Corporation to serve the needs of the small business community,” Hayward added.

Hayward will meet with the SBA’s commercial lending partners on Wednesday, June 18th to discuss a strategy for assisting small businesses that might suffer economic hardship because of stricter fire code standards. Hayward met with the lenders shortly after the tragic West Warwick night club fire and the lenders showed a willingness to work with the SBA and the small business community to help them overcome the economic burdens they might suffer as a result of subsequent fire code revisions.

SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto declared Rhode Island a disaster area shortly after the fatal nightclub fire. The declaration enabled small businesses in the vicinity of the fire scene that suffered economic hardship as a result of the fire to obtain low-interest long-term financing. SBA staff members were also available to provide counseling and technical assistance to the affected businesses.