



# NEWS RELEASE

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## *Public Forum Set for Small Business Owners in Hawaii to Comment on Federal Regulatory Enforcement*

**Honolulu, HI** – Small business owners, community leaders and representatives of trade associations concerned about excessive enforcement of federal rules can voice their complaints at a **U.S. Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Board Forum in Honolulu on Thursday, July 19, 2007, from 10:00 a.m. to noon.**

The forum will be held at the **1132 Bishop Street Building Conference Room** on the third floor of the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii located in downtown Honolulu. Participants may enter from either Union Mall or Fort Street Mall.

SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens, members of the SBA's Region IX Regulatory Fairness Board, and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance.

"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."

This forum offers small business owners a chance to express their concerns about federal compliance practices in Hawaii.

Comments and complaints presented during the forum will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the National Ombudsman's Annual Report to Congress, and with the leadership of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The National Ombudsman's authority to respond to comments on compliance issues is limited to federal regulatory enforcement matters and does not include concerns about obtaining federal contracts, regulations in general, or securing guaranteed loans.

The forum is open to the public. Those wishing to testify should contact Deputy District Director Karen Sakihama at (808) 541-2990, ext. 209, or by email at [karen.sakihama@sba.gov](mailto:karen.sakihama@sba.gov) before the forum. Should a small business owner or representative be unable to attend, written testimony may be sent in advance of the forum to be included in the public record.

Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For more information about the National Ombudsman and the Honolulu forum, please visit the web site [www.sba.gov/ombudsman](http://www.sba.gov/ombudsman).

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