

# MINORITY Enterprise DEVELOPMENT

## Push to eliminate Commerce Department Bill would eliminate Minority Business Development Administration

Congressional Republicans are renewing a push to dismantle the Commerce Department, saying the sprawling agency had become little more than a dumping ground for political appointees.

Conservatives, including House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich, unveiled legislation last week to eliminate some department programs, consolidate others and turn the patent office into a freestanding government corporation.

It was not the first time Repub-

licans set their sights on the mammoth department, home to everything from international trade programs to the weather service to the census.

Kasich said the stakes were higher this time around.

"We're beginning to see a fight for the soul of the Republican Party," he claimed, saying the longer his party remained in power in Congress the more special interests "try to co-opt us, make us part of the system."

"It's about the renewal of our fight to keep on course, to do the

things we've promised people," the Ohio Republican said.

more political cast this time around with Republicans invoking

fund-raising improprieties — to make their case that department was a haven for political hacks.

Department critics admit they face an uphill battle.

They do not have the support of key chairmen for their legislation, estimated to save \$2.5 billion over five years. The bill to demolish the department, sponsored in the Senate by Republican Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback, would eliminate Commerce's Minority Business Development Administration and Economic Development Administration.

It would end the Advanced Technology Program, which aids business research efforts. Republicans call the program a prime example of corporate welfare.

Federal trade functions, including the U.S. trade representative, would be consolidated within the U.S. Trade Administration.

The bill was unveiled as the House debated an annual spending measure to fund Commerce and other departments in fiscal 1998. The spending bill does not make major changes, instead increasing aid for many department functions.

*"We're beginning to see a fight for the soul of the Republican Party,"*

Republicans took control of the House and Senate in 1994. The rhetoric has taken on a

ing the name of John Huang — a former Commerce trade official embroiled in alleged Democratic

### Parade of achievements

Continued from Front

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The Small Business Administration recognized David Flint, President of In-Line Commercial Construction, Inc. Established in 1984, the company provides general contracting services specializing in tenant improvements and commercial remodeling.

The Minority Business Opportunity Committee of the Portland Federal Executive Board recognized Gil Cde Baca, President of R.C. Machine and Floyd Booker Sr., Courtesy Janitorial.

In addition to the seven businesses being recognized, the MED Week Committee honored Tri-Met Gen-

eral Manager, Tom Walsh, for Tri-Met's "diversity in contracting" accomplishments on the Westside Light Rail Project.

There are a total of 96 minority and women-owned firms on the project, most of which are Oregon based.

The MED Week Committee also recognizing The Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde Community of Oregon and Spirit Mountain Development and Gaming, Inc. for their economic contributions to State of Oregon. Kathryn Harrison is the Tribal Chairwoman for the Grande Ronde Tribe and Bruce Thomas is President of the Spirit Mountain Development and Gaming, Inc.



Kathryn Harrison (left), tribal chairwoman for the Grand Ronde Tribe in Oregon, and Therman Evans, M.D., was honored during a business awards luncheon in Portland Thursday during National Minority Enterprise Development Week. Harrison was presented a community development award during the event and Evans, the keynote speaker.

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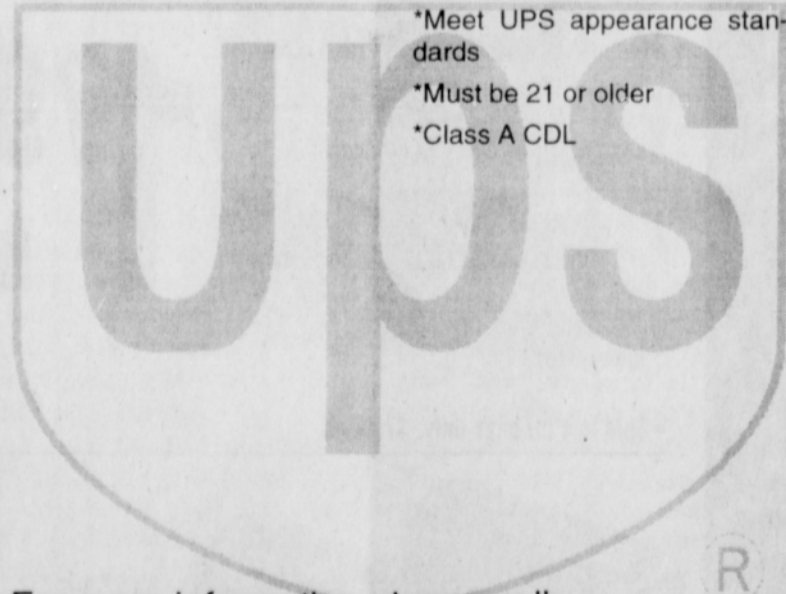
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