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News Release

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State hosting Ohio Business Expo on Nov. 30

Columbus – A priority for the State of Ohio is to expand the access to state contracts for minority, women-owned and small businesses. Toward this end, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) is hosting the 2011 Ohio Business Expo on Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Rhodes Center at the Ohio Expo Center in Columbus.

This free expo will allow Ohio business owners to network with purchasing professionals from state agencies regarding upcoming contracting and procurement opportunities with the state.

"The Ohio Business Expo is an opportunity for Ohio businesses to increase meaningful access to state purchasing authorities, giving state agencies a wider pool of businesses to work with," DAS Director Robert Blair said. "The state has many procurement and contracting opportunities and is looking for efficient, stable businesses to provide-quality products and services to our state agencies."

The state spent more than \$240 million with certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (EDGE) firms during fiscal year 2011. The MBE program is the state's minority business set-aside program. EDGE is a business and economic development program for economically and socially disadvantaged businesses.

The goal for this year's expo is for businesses to become better acquainted with how the state's procurement systems operate, and how to make more effective use of the resources and tools being made available for this purpose. In addition, the expo's workshops will give attendees the opportunity to learn directly from state officials about their procurement opportunities as well as how to effectively market their business to them.

Expo admission is free. Parking is \$5.

Registration for the expo is preferred, but walk-ins are welcome. To register or learn more about the event or the state's MBE and EDGE programs, please visit the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' website at das.ohio.gov/eod or call 614.466.8380.

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