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## State exceeds minority business expenditure goal

COLUMBUS – Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Director Matt Damschroder today announced the State of Ohio exceeded its minority business expenditure goal in fiscal year 2020. The State spent \$298.8 million with 314 businesses certified with Ohio's Minority Business Enterprise Program (MBE) last year, or 21.5 percent of \$1.39 billion in eligible expenditures.

"Ohio's minority and economically disadvantaged certification programs seek to widen access for businesses that have been historically underrepresented in the ranks of suppliers of the goods and services that keep State government operating," said Damschroder. "In exceeding expenditure goals, the State is not simply meeting a program requirement but promoting the growth and competitiveness of a small business community that reflects the diversity of our state."

The MBE program was established in 1980 and mandates that State agencies set aside 15 percent of annual purchases for goods and services from certified minority-owned businesses. The fiscal year 2020 numbers represent goods and services purchased from opportunities set aside for MBE-certified businesses, as well as instances where MBE-certified businesses won open-market contracts. Of the \$1.39 billion in eligible expenditures, 18.80 percent went to set-aside opportunities, and an additional 2.68 percent were selected through open-market contracts.

Damschroder also reported State agencies exceeded the five percent goal associated with the Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (EDGE) program, spending \$347.8 million, or 7.2 percent of eligible expenditures, with businesses certified through the program. EDGE assists socially and economically disadvantaged businesses in obtaining state government contracts to foster their development and increase the number of qualified competitors in the marketplace. The State conducted business with 378 EDGE-certified businesses last fiscal year.

Businesses wishing to become MBE or EDGE-certified can apply by contacting DAS' Equal Opportunity Division, which oversees several programs that help ensure equal opportunity access to and fair treatment in government contracting. Those include programs for minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged businesses. Visit the [Department of Administrative Services Equal Opportunity Division website](#) for additional information.

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*DAS is the hub of State government, working behind the scenes to deliver innovative services and solutions that support the operation of State agencies, boards, and commissions.*