

MEDIA MENTION

John Prairie Discusses SBA's Plans to Expand Mentor-Protégé Program

Bloomberg BNA's Federal Contracts Report
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John Prairie a partner in Wiley Rein's Government Contracts Practice, was quoted by *Bloomberg BNA* in an October 30 *Federal Contracts Report* article discussing new contracting opportunities under the expanded mentor-protégé program the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) expects to have running within the year.

The new program offers a "big opportunity" for all small businesses, not just those eligible for contracting preferences under current set-aside programs, Mr. Prairie pointed out. Companies looking to take part in mentor-protégé arrangements should be prepared to apply to SBA district offices "right after they open the gate" to the new program, he said. The vetting process takes time, Mr. Prairie added, so companies that want to participate should start looking for mentors or protégés immediately.

The article notes that as government moves to widen the use of mentor-protégé programs, it also is increasing spending on set-aside awards. The ability to enter into a mentor-protégé joint venture arrangement and go after small business set-aside contracts is the program's "biggest carrot," Mr. Prairie said.

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