

I-64 HAMPTON ROADS BRIDGE-TUNNEL EXPANSION

Governor Ralph S. Northam

Talking Points – Hampton Roads Builds Businesses DBE and SWaM Symposium.

Wednesday, October 27, 2021

- Thank you, Shannon.
- I am pleased to speak to Virginia's DBE and SWaM business owners again this year.
- I have some exciting updates to share today about how the Commonwealth of Virginia continues to provide equitable access to business opportunities.
- Before I get started, I would like to acknowledge the entire VDOT and HRCP teams, state and federal agencies, the Cities of Hampton and Norfolk, and our business partners for making the HRBT Expansion Project a reality.
- This project is already having a great economic impact in the Hampton Roads region.
- The HRBT Expansion Project will add approximately 28 thousand jobs while under construction.
- Along with more jobs, there will be hundreds of contract opportunities for DBE and SWaM businesses to work as subcontractors or suppliers.
- Under my Administration, CNBC named the Commonwealth of Virginia as the “Top State for Business.”
- We want to continue to be the top state for business, but it starts with making sure Virginia's DBEs and SWaMs have equitable access to opportunities within the Commonwealth and most certainly with Virginia's largest infrastructure project to date.



- In 2019, we issued Executive Order 35 directing executive branch agencies and institutions to allocate 42 percent of discretionary spending to certified small businesses.
- In 2020, my administration announced the Rebuild V-A Economic Recovery Fund for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. I am proud to report that as of October 1, over 35 hundred small businesses in Virginia have been awarded \$140 million in grant funding.
- This year, we continue to make strides for small businesses.
- Earlier this month I appointed Matthew James as the Director of the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity. This appointment is especially unique because Matthew James is a Hampton Roads native. I am sure he will take special interest in the DBE and SWaM participation on the HRBT Expansion Project.
- About a month ago, I announced the launch of the Start Small app. This app will connect its app users and state government agencies with nearby vendors.
- The app aims to makes Small, Women-Owned, and Minority-Owned businesses more accessible.
- I also want to encourage all of the DBE and SWaM business owners who are participating in today's event to register your firm with Virginia's online marketplace better knowns as eVA.
- eVA is one way DBE and SWaM business owners can find more business opportunities in the Commonwealth. The site offers outreach and events to help business owners.
- In fact, there are two events coming up on Wednesday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 9. We hope your schedule will allow you to participate.
- Please visit eVA's website at eVA.VIRGINIA.GOV for more information.

- The Commonwealth is committed to providing equitable opportunities to DBE and SWaM businesses.
- We need DBE and SWaM businesses to help deliver the HRBT Expansion project successfully.
- I am happy to have served the DBE and SWaM communities as your Governor.
- Thank you all, and much success on another great event.