



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Senator James Sanders Jr. Says \$10 Billion Redevelopment at JFK Presents Tremendous Opportunities for MWBEs

JAMES SANDERS JR. July 19, 2018



The economy is racing back strong for many, but not for all, as minority and women-owned businesses may miss a windfall of opportunity if they're not in the know.

The Port Authority of New York/New Jersey which manages John F. Kennedy Airport held community outreach meetings in Far Rockaway and St. Albans, Tuesday and Wednesday to inform locals of the more than \$10 billion in redevelopment in the JFK Vision Plan.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has set the nation's highest goal for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises procurement at 30 percent. I have publicly vowed to help him reach that goal by connecting the State with businesses that can compete for contracts, but to make it happen, more MWBES need to be ready.

An MWBE is a business that has a specific ownership composition of minimally 51 percent. Many such firms operating in New York may not be looking at government as an opportunity for diversifying their revenue source, but the Kennedy investment presents a unique opportunity. Work will last more than 10 years, creating regional job growth and new business ventures that will benefit generations to come.

MWBE contract awards are on the rise, but more needs to be done and challenges remain.

The State initiative aims to promote equality of economic opportunities for MWBEs, minority group members and women, and to eliminate barriers to their participation in State contracting.

According to the Division of Minority and Women's Business Development Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2016-2017, statewide utilization of MWBE was 27.2 percent with MWBEs earning \$2.2 billion out of the \$8.1 billion. Construction accounting for 53 percent of jobs in the fiscal year, with 27 percent to service consultants, 15 percent to commodities and 5 percent to construction consultants.

Minorities are more than 50 percent of New York City's population, so the State can hit its 30 percent procurement goal if we can get more qualified. Queens is the sixth largest city in the nation and is considered the most ethnically diverse urban area in the entire world. We are a borough rich in talent, and part of my initiatives is to create capacity building among MWBEs to strengthen one another.

JFK is America's largest International gateway to the world, and it sits right in the middle of my District in Southeast Queens.

According to Port Authority stats, JFK Airport broke new records in 2017. It handled 59.3 million total passengers (+0.4 percent), representing 239,908 more passengers than in 2016. In addition, the airport served a record 32.4 million international passengers – up 643,847 passengers (+2 percent). All the growth was generated by the international sector, which grew 7.3 percent – the first annual growth in international cargo since 2014. Airport activity is expected to increase in the years ahead and that presents tremendous opportunity for future business.

In order to accommodate the dramatic expected growth in coming decades, and keep New York's economy moving forward, the vision plan addresses three key areas:

Transform JFK into a unified, interconnected airport

Improve road access to the airport

Expand rail mass transit to meet projected passenger growth

Across town, the \$8 billion rebuild of LaGuardia Airport is well underway and will bring even more opportunities with the Governor's recent announcement of a 30-minute ride from midtown Manhattan to LaGuardia by AirTrain. Construction on the rail project would be completed 2022.

I implore people to get ready for what is about to happen in Queens and not let opportunity pass them by. Businesses cannot put the onus on just government alone. Owners have to take responsibility to participate where government has made a way for them, and my job is to encourage them to get involved.

The effort to transform the airport for the 21st Century is just about underway. Now is the time to get ready because when the shovels hit the dirt at groundbreaking, it will be too late.

New York State Senator

James Sanders Jr.

10th Senatorial District

Senator James Sanders Jr. heads the Senate Task Force on Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE). The Task Force is charged with working to find innovative ways to better encourage and support MWBEs as a valuable part of growing the New York economy. In addition, Sanders is a member of New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's Advisory Council on MWBEs. The Advisory Council guides policymaking and strategy to aggressively assist the City in reaching its pledge to award more than \$16 billion dollars to MWBEs over a 10-year period. It was Sanders, who in his City Council tenure, set the stage as author of MWBE NYC Local Law 1 to help strengthen the MWBE program, and Local Law 129 that established participation goals for MWBEs to help increase the number of certified firms from 700 to over 3,500 program participants, and win over \$3 billion dollars in City contracts. Sanders also serves as the ranking Democrat for the Senate Committee on Banks.