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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Website: [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)  
Fax: (202) 482-5117

Contact: MBDA Public Affairs  
Phone: (202) 482-1375  
Email: [abetancourt@mbda.gov](mailto:abetancourt@mbda.gov)

## **MBDA Establishes Partnership with California High-Speed Rail Authority to Expand Participation by Minority-Owned Firms in the State's Largest Infrastructure Project**

*Agreement Increases Firms' Access to Certification and Contracting Opportunities*

**WASHINGTON (May 3, 2013)** — The U.S. Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) aimed at achieving greater participation by minority-owned companies in all phases of construction of the new high-speed train system construction, the state's largest infrastructure project.

The MOU, signed during today's launch of the MBDA Business Center in Fresno, will help ensure that minority-owned businesses get information, technical assistance and support related to this significant contracting opportunity. To ensure that firms participating in the construction of the high-speed train system reflect the diversity of California's business community, the Authority has set a minimum participation goal of 30% for certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Small Businesses (SBs), Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBES) in all phases of the rail system construction process. This requirement exceeds widespread existing minimum standards.

Some of the major provisions of the agreement include MBDA providing minority-owned firms with professional management and technical assistance through its network of MBDA Business Centers. MBDA will also provide MBEs with information regarding all certification processes. The Authority will help MBEs and SBs access high-speed rail contract procurement information so that they can better identify opportunities. Authority representatives will also attend outreach events in partnership with MBDA to present and distribute their business opportunity material.

"MBDA is very excited about this project and its potential for creating good jobs for American workers," said David A. Hinson, MBDA National Director. "High-speed rail means tens of thousands of new jobs, making it possible for Californians to support their families—and not just jobs to build the trains and the train line, but also jobs to operate and maintain it. And there's more—businesses along the route, like restaurants, retail and suppliers will experience a boost in consumer demand thereby employing hundreds more Americans."

The Authority is responsible for planning, designing, building and operating the first high-speed rail system in the nation. The California high-speed rail will connect the mega-regions of the state, contribute to economic development and a cleaner environment, create jobs and preserve agricultural and protected lands. By 2029, the system will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds of over 200 miles per hour.

The system will eventually extend to Sacramento and San Diego, totaling 800 miles with up to 24 stations. Additionally, the Authority is working with regional partners to implement a statewide rail modernization plan that will invest billions of dollars in local and regional rail lines to meet the state's 21st century transportation needs.

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***About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)***

MBDA, [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov), an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, helps create and maintain U.S. jobs by promoting the growth and global competitiveness of large, medium and small businesses owned and operated by members of the minority and Diaspora communities. Through a national network of more than 40 business centers and a wide range of domestic and international strategic partners, MBDA provides Agency clients with the technical assistance and access to capital, contract opportunities and new markets that they need to create new jobs.