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***MEDIA ADVISORY***

**Latest PPP Funds Likely to Shortchange Minority-Owned Businesses;  
Business and Community Leaders Send Letter to Congress  
Advocating for Change**

**WHAT:** The COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage minority-owned businesses. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) has offered only modest relief to this community through two rounds of funding. **The clock is ticking and too many minority-owned businesses are at risk of being left out of this crucial opportunity.**

Political leaders have offered proposals to increase access to relief funding for minority-owned businesses through Minority Depository Institutions and Community Development Financial Institutions. **Although well intentioned, these plans do not go far enough in ensuring that funding is distributed based on fundamental principles of fairness, equity and inclusion.**

Unless these funding flaws are widely understood and remedied, minority-owned businesses will continue to be left behind when a third round of PPP relief is deliberated, deepening wealth inequality and devastating a critical segment of our nation's economy. **Approximately 8 million minority-owned firms add \$1.4 trillion to the American economy with 909,000 of those businesses employing 7.2 million people (US Department of Commerce).**

A coalition of business and community leaders has written to all members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation urgently requesting changes to the next round of PPP to provide greater access to needed capital and a dedicated funding source for minority-owned businesses.

Solutions include:

- Allocating a significant portion of these monies to fund only applications from minority-owned businesses, specifically in the form of grants, not loans.
- Setting aside funds for CDFIs and minority financial institutions *to build their capacity to process the influx of funding applications* and expand their reach into underserved communities.
- Enhancing investment in robust technical assistance to these business owners.
- Requiring lenders to collect and report data on demographic information of PPP recipients.

**WHO:** Four highly respected business and community leaders who authored the recent *Boston Globe* op-ed, "[Minority-owned businesses are being left behind — again](#)," can discuss the challenges and solutions that address opportunities in federal aid measures for small businesses of color:

- **Betty Francisco**, Co-founder, [Amplify Latinx](#), a non-partisan collaborative movement whose mission is to build Latinx economic and political power by significantly increasing Latinx civic engagement and representation in leadership positions across sectors.
- **Steve Grossman**, former Massachusetts Treasurer; CEO, national nonprofit [Initiative for a Competitive Inner City](#), which drives inclusive economic prosperity in under-resourced communities through innovative research and programs to create jobs, income and wealth for local residents.
- **Segun Idowu**, executive director, [Black Economic Council of Massachusetts](#), which works to advance the economic well-being of Black businesses, organizations that serve the Black community and Black residents of Massachusetts
- **Bob Rivers**, chair and CEO, [Eastern Bank](#), which is headquartered in Boston and has over \$11 billion in assets and more than 110 locations serving communities in eastern Massachusetts, southern and coastal New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

**Media Contact:**

Eric Donovan  
The Castle Group  
Office: 617-337-9522  
Cell: 508-446-5308  
Email: [edonovan@thecastlegrp.com](mailto:edonovan@thecastlegrp.com)