

News from

CONGRESSMAN MARK SCHAUER

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Administration Takes Action on Schauer 'Buy American' Demands

Letter to Vice President Biden brings changes to enforcement of the Recovery Act's Buy American provisions

WASHINGTON -- Today Congressman Mark Schauer (D-MI) released changes in the enforcement of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's Buy American provisions as detailed in a letter from Vice President Joe Biden. Schauer wrote to Biden on June 22 on behalf of Full Spectrum Solutions, a Jackson-based business that manufactures energy efficient lighting products and had lost contracts due to other companies violating these provisions. Biden's response described immediate steps that the Department of Energy (DOE) will take to make the process fairer for American businesses, based on solutions Schauer proposed.

"This is good news for businesses like Full Spectrum Solutions, American taxpayers, and American workers," said Schauer. "I am encouraged by the nearly point-by-point response I received from Vice President Biden and the Department of Energy on this issue, especially at a time when job creation is so critical. We need to make sure our taxpayer dollars are creating jobs for workers here at home, and these changes will help us hold bad actors accountable, level the playing field for American businesses and open doors for companies like Full Spectrum Solutions to create more jobs right here in Michigan."

The solutions that the Administration and the DOE are implementing reflect nearly all of the suggestions made by Schauer in his letter. The DOE has now sent additional guidance to all grantees regarding their responsibilities under the Buy American provisions of the Recovery Act. A new mechanism has been created to give businesses a fast, effective way to report violations, as well as a streamlined process for the DOE to investigate and respond to complaints. The DOE is also investigating the specific claims of fraudulent activity raised by Full Spectrum Solutions.

"This is exactly the kind of solution we were looking for when we approached Congressman Schauer with this problem, and thanks to his hard work, companies that play fair and comply with Buy American requirements will no longer lose contracts because of it," said Mike Nevins, President and CEO of Full Spectrum Solutions. "This will make a big difference for businesses like ours that want to make sure our products, and the products we purchase from other companies, are helping American workers instead of workers in China."

"This is a big step in the right direction, but we must remain vigilant about enforcing our Buy American laws," said Schauer. "We simply can't afford to waste our taxpayer dollars on products that create jobs for workers in China instead of here in America."

Copies of Schauer's letter to Biden, Biden's response, and the DOE's new Buy American Program Notice are included as attachments to this document. The new Buy American complaints "hotline" is available at <http://www.gc.energy.gov/> and http://www1.eere.energy.gov/recovery/buy_american_provision.html.

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