

October 6, 2010

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are writing to urge you to support high-road contracting reforms to ensure that companies that do business with the federal government are responsible; comply with existing environmental, workplace and other laws; and provide decent jobs with safe and healthy working conditions.

Current regulations require that the federal government only do business with responsible businesses, but existing policies and procedures are woefully inadequate. The responsibility screening process has become a check-the-box exercise that allows egregious lawbreakers to continue receiving lucrative contracts and leases.

These shortcomings have resulted in the federal government awarding contracts and leases worth billions of dollars to companies with a long history of committing violations that have polluted the environment, caused workers to die, damaged the health of communities, and left taxpayers holding the bag. It is just common sense for the federal government to take such illegal behavior into account when awarding public dollars.

Strengthening responsibility review by providing to contracting officers thorough information and rigorous analysis by the relevant federal agencies will address the key failings of the current process. It will ensure that persistent violators of workplace, environmental, tax or other laws will not be awarded federal contracts. Such a review should also cover leases and permits issued by federal agencies.

Your action to further transform the way the federal government does business would have a direct and positive impact on our environment and the lives of America's working families, and provide much needed oversight and accountability for how the federal government uses taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

BlueGreen Alliance  
Center for American Progress Action Fund  
Earth Day Network  
Environment America  
Friends of the Earth  
Green For All  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Public Citizen  
Sierra Club