



# News from the Ohio Turnpike

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Ohio Turnpike Announces New Minority Business Program

BEREA, Ohio (March 31, 2014) - The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission adopted a resolution last week, which commits the Turnpike to achieving a goal of 15% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) participation in contracts for goods and services, as well as accomplishing the objectives set forth in Governor Kasich's Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (EDGE) Program for construction services.

"The Commission has always been concerned with reaching out to all potential vendors, regardless of race or gender; a charge led by Commission Member George Dixon," stated Ohio Turnpike Executive Director Rick Hodges. "With the adoption of this resolution, we are formalizing our pledge to Governor Kasich's promise of full access to government contracts for minority and female owned businesses. We will achieve these goals by every means permitted by law."

Tommie Jo Marsilio, the Turnpike's Director of Contracts, informed the Commission that she has already begun working on a three-phased process to reach the goals established by the resolution. Marsilio, a former Portage County Commissioner, was hired by the Turnpike in January and will serve as the Commission's point person on minority business programs. She reported at the March 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting that her department has launched an intensive outreach program and has already begun forming partnerships with numerous organizations with a shared focus on MBE's. Additionally, the Ohio Turnpike has joined the Northern Ohio Department of Transportation Diversity Advisory Team (NODOT). NODOT is a working group made up of state transportation officials, MBE organizations, prime construction contractors and minority contractors with a common goal of removing hurdles for disadvantaged businesses.

Marsilio announced plans to host an MBE open house event in May to make the Turnpike's engineering staff available to meet with minority engineering and construction contractors.

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