



**U.S. Department of  
Transportation**

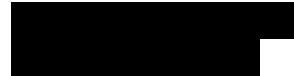
Office of the Secretary  
Of Transportation

Departmental Office of Civil Rights  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., W76-401  
Washington, DC 20590

February 25, 2021

Docket No. 21-0043

Bianca Gomez  
PR Solutions of New Orleans, LLC



Dear Ms. Gomez:

This is in response to your appeal of the October 27, 2020, denial the application for DBE certification of PR Solutions of New Orleans, LLC (PRS) by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD). DOTD denied the application on the bases of ownership and control.

DOTD stated that there was no documentation that you made a contribution of capital to support your ownership of PRS. With respect to control, DOTD pointed out that PRS shared facilities with a firm in a similar type of business, Southern Pro Solutions, Inc. (SPS). You had been employed by SPS until recently. The record includes a [REDACTED] check from SPS paid to PRS in 2017, the year in which PRS was created. DOTD concluded that the firm depended on SPS resources for essential support, which compromised PRS's viability as an independent concern.

Your appeal states that since receiving DOTD's denial letter, you have been working to correct the problems that led to the denial. You explained that SPS had originally loaned you start-up funds, but that you had now repaid the loan. In 2021, you leased your own office space.

In considering certification appeals, the Department makes its determination based on the circumstances of the firm as of the date of the decision being appealed. Based on the administrative record at the time of its decision, we conclude that DOTD had substantial evidence to find that you did not meet your burden of proof with respect to ownership and independence. We therefore affirm DOTD's decision.

It is commendable that you have taken steps toward clarifying the record concerning the initial financing of PRS and securing office space separate from that of SPS. These are matters that you can call to DOTD's attention if you choose to reapply after DOTD's waiting period expires.

This decision is administratively final and not subject to petitions for review.

Sincerely,

Samuel F. Brooks  
DBE Team Lead  
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Division

cc: Paula Merrick Roddy