

# SBA

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specific contracts for SBA-certified economically and socially disadvantaged businesses.

Blacks, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans are presumed to be socially disadvantaged. But they, white women and disabled persons, who can qualify for the program, must demonstrate clear and convincing evidence of economic disadvantage, experts said.

In fiscal year 1994, 5,646 business participated in the program nationally and were awarded contracts worth about \$3.6 billion.

But critics do not question whether the program works. They question whether the program works fairly.

Their argument focuses on

the role of the SBA in obtaining contracts for the members of the set-aside program.

NBCC officials said the role of the agency should be that of a watchdog. The goal of the program should work with government purchasing agents to get them to hire a more balanced number of minorities.

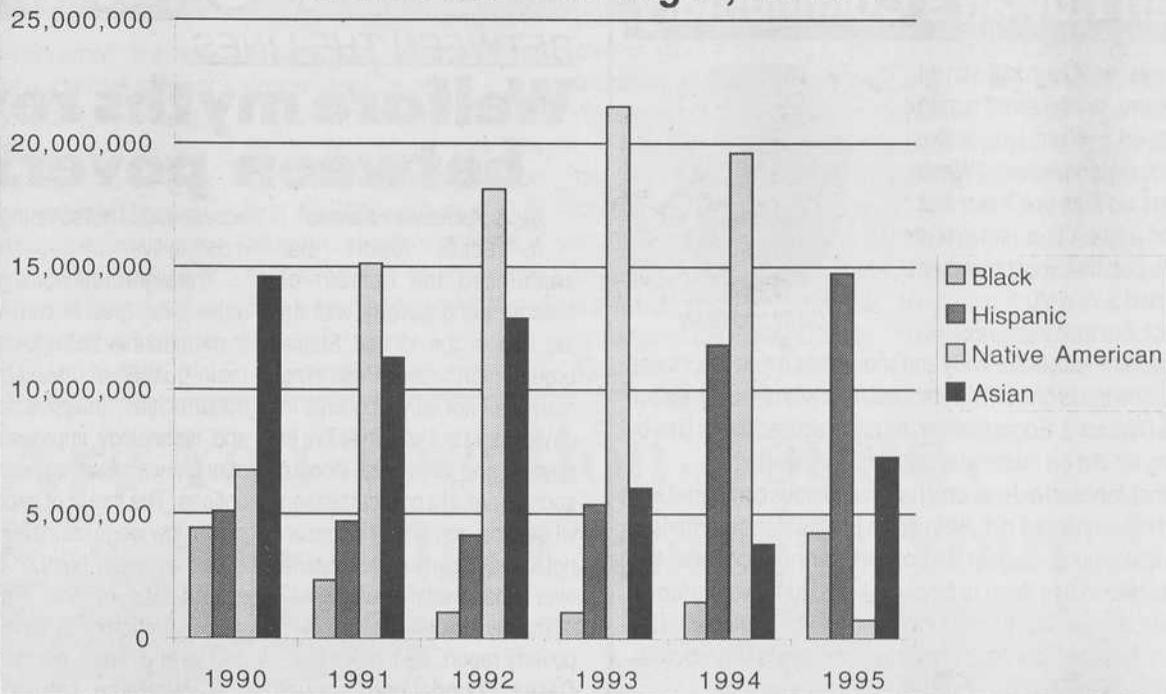
Instead, "they'll get one or two of the good old boys and give them all the business," Alford said. "It's totally out of wack with what they're supposed to be doing."

In Las Vegas, for example, there were never more than three listed Native American 8(a) participants during the last six years, but on average they have received 41.41 percent of the business, NBCC officials said.

The reason the situation has

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## SBA District Las Vegas, Nevada



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