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To Whom It May Concern:

I have been made aware that the SBA is proposing to change the way SBDC's report client information, so that the SBA will have access to client email addresses, names and other information, in effect enabling SBA to circumvent current privacy provisions.

Knowing my identity and contact information would not be shared with other agencies was why I sought assistance from the Small Business Development Center.

As a small business owner, I do not have the staff or outside consultants to protect our identifiable information when seeking finance or discussing confidential matters with an advisor. I trust that the SBDC will not share this information, and I chose to work with the SBDC knowing they would protect my information and would not share it without my permission.

I do not mind sharing some information, such as the ability to understand how many businesses they assist or knowing how many employees work for these businesses, but I don't understand how having my name, contact information, or other proprietary information would be of use to the government. I wonder if this information would be sold for marketing or other purposes.

If this information would now be available beyond my advisor at the SBDC I would think twice about asking for assistance. Knowing how many small businesses are currently in need of advising this action seems contradictory with the intended goal.

I hope the SBA will reconsider making these privacy changes to protect small businesses, which are already struggling in these challenging times.

Best regards,

Karen Serke  
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