



STATE OF OHIO

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OHIO INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION FINDS THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES' EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DIVISION IMPROPERLY RECERTIFIED BUSINESSES IN THE ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, GROWTH, AND EQUITY PROGRAM
Columbus, Ohio, February 12, 2019

The Ohio Inspector General issued a report of investigation today after investigating a complaint questioning the administration of the Economic Diversity, Growth, and Equity (EDGE) program by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (ODAS). Specifically, the complaint questioned how CTL Engineering, Inc. (CTL), an engineering firm whose "total local billings were \$14.5 million and company-wide was \$35.5 million in 2016," could qualify as a disadvantaged business and continue to be recertified into the EDGE program.

The State of Ohio developed the EDGE program to support the growth of economically and socially disadvantaged businesses to foster their development and increase the number of qualified competitors in the marketplace. In order for a business to be certified as EDGE, the business must comply with eligibility rules, including meeting net worth and size thresholds. When evaluating and approving CTL's multiple recertifications in the EDGE program, the investigation determined that ODAS did not comply with the Ohio Administrative Code when ODAS failed to consider whether CTL exceeded established thresholds. Additionally, the EDGE program's eligibility requirements stipulate that a business' participation in the program cannot exceed 10 years. The investigation discovered that ODAS had recertified hundreds of businesses who, including CTL, exceeded the EDGE program's 10-year eligibility restriction.

The report of investigation, containing 10 recommendations, will be provided to the Ohio Auditor of State's Office for review and consideration.

Ohio Inspector General Report of Investigation file number 2018-CA00016 is now available at:
<http://watchdog.ohio.gov/investigations/2019investigations.aspx>

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