THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

SEP 25 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Secretary
Solicitor
Inspector General
Assistant Secretaries
Bureau and Office Heads

From: Secretary Gale A. Norton

Subject: Support of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act Program and National JWOD Week

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and October 12 to 20 is National Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Week. Under the JWOD Program, government purchase card users and acquisition personnel buy supplies and services furnished by nonprofit agencies employing people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities.

The theme of National JWOD Week is "JWOD Works For America." Interior has played a leadership role to provide employment and training opportunities for people with severe disabilities through our support of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program. Under JWOD, supplies and services purchased by Interior and other Federal agencies currently generate jobs for nearly 40,000 Americans who are blind or who have other severe disabilities. I ask all Interior employees to help increase this number by identifying more contracting opportunities with the JWOD Program.

In his New Freedom Initiative for people with disabilities, President Bush cites the 70% unemployment rate that exists in this population. He pledges the Administration's commitment to increasing the ability of Americans with disabilities to integrate into the workforce. Your efforts to utilize JWOD and inform your colleagues about this program will help ensure that Interior meets the President's goal of fulfilling America's promise to Americans with disabilities.

Helen Keller said, "The world is moved not only by the mighty shoves of the heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."

Please learn more about the important role you can play in this program at www.jwod.gov and make a special effort to show your support during the celebration of National JWOD Week, October 12-20. Please contact the Department's JWOD Program Manager, Cindy Maltby, on 202-208-6352 or via email at Cynthia_Maltby@ios.doi.gov.