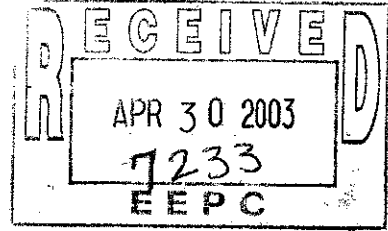




Ronnie Lowenstein  
DIRECTOR

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
INDEPENDENT BUDGET OFFICE  
110 WILLIAM STREET, 14th FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10038  
(212) 442-8615 Fax (212) 442-0350  
Email: ronniel@ibo.nyc.ny.us

April 29, 2003



Frank R. Nicolazzi  
Vice Chairman  
City of New York Equal Employment Practices Commission  
253 Broadway, Suite 301  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Mr. Nicolazzi:

Thank you for sending us the Preliminary Determination Pursuant to the Audit of the Independent Budget Office's (IBO) Equal Employment Opportunity Program from January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2002. I appreciate both the thorough work performed by the EEPC's professional staff and the opportunity to respond to the audit.

IBO is committed to our equal employment opportunity program, and we generally accept the findings and recommendations of the EEPC. We've begun taking steps to implement the recommendations, and in some cases have already completed implementation. Our responses to each of the recommended corrective actions are as follows:

***Plan Dissemination (Internal)***

1. IBO's EEO Policy has been transcribed into Braille.
2. The EEO Policy has also been posted on the agency bulletin board.

***EEO Training***

In sessions conducted by the New York City Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) on April 4 and 8, 2003, all IBO employees recently received EEO training, with the exception of three staff members currently on maternity leave and another on sick leave. (All but one of these absent employees has received EEO training at IBO on previous occasions.) All IBO supervisors also attended a supplemental training session, also conducted on April 8. In the future, new employees will be given EEO orientation by the EEO officers and General Counsel and all employees will be given the opportunity for formal EEO training conducted by CCHR or internally on an annual or biannual basis.

### ***EEO Officer Reporting Arrangement***

Meetings between the EEO Officers and the IBO Director will be formally documented in writing in the EEO file.

### ***Selection and Recruitment***

1. IBO's Chief of Staff will notify both EEO Officers about recruitment strategies being implemented. The EEO Officers will review the strategy to determine its effectiveness and make recommendations to the Chief of Staff and IBO Director about revising the strategy.
2. IBO will continue to seek out job fairs, Web sites, publications and organizations that are minority-oriented or where a substantial share of potential recruits is likely to be minority.
3. As recommended in the Preliminary Determination, IBO recently contacted the city agencies indicated for lists of women and minority professional associations. While the agencies stated that they do not maintain any lists of such associations, they did share experiences and strategies for minority recruitment. We will continue to seek out minority professional associations from which to recruit for future job openings.
4. IBO will participate in citywide job posting by circulating its openings to other agencies. A link from the city job openings section of the nyc.gov Web site to the "Job Opportunities" section of the IBO Web site has also been established.

*Note:* While accepting the recommendations in the "Selection and Recruitment" section of the Preliminary Determination, IBO respectfully disagrees with the conclusion that its "recruitment methods have produced minimal results." While it is true that IBO has not been as successful as we would have liked in hiring minorities, IBO did identify and extend offers to two minorities for senior-level positions—for Director of Communications and Senior Economist—and a third minority candidate withdrew before an offer was made, all during the audit period. Despite our best efforts to hire them, these candidates ultimately declined: two chose higher paying careers in the private sector and the other went to a private, non-profit research organization. Our recruitment efforts should also be judged on our efforts to identify and extend offers to minority candidates, rather than solely on how many of our offers are accepted.

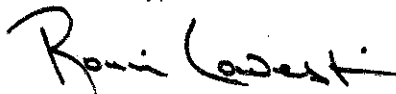
### ***Special Contingencies***

IBO agrees to increase the time spent by EEO Officers on EEO matters in general and, more specifically, increase their involvement in efforts to aggressively recruit and hire minority staff members. EEO efforts on the part of IBO's Chief of Staff and other senior staff members will also be increased. Minority recruitment and hiring is critically important for IBO, and we are committed to making those changes in the relationship between the EEO Officers and the senior staff that are necessary to improve EEO performance. The IBO Director will meet on a regular basis with EEO Officers and relevant senior staff to review progress toward EEO goals. The IBO Director will also meet with these staff members individually and as a group both as needed and at the conclusion of every specific recruitment effort for current and future vacancies.

In addition to increasing the time they spend on recruiting and hiring, IBO's EEO officers will be available to devote as much time as needed to fulfill their EEO responsibilities. For example, should other EEO matters arise, they would become the primary responsibility of one or both of IBO's EEO officers and would continue to consume as much of his and/or her time as needed to reach a successful conclusion. At this point, however, it is not apparent that having both EEO officers always devote 50 percent of their time to EEO activities will improve the agency's EEO performance in general or lead to a more racially diverse staff. Given that the IBO has only 27 full-time employees, setting a fixed percentage of time for EEO functions would not be an appropriate utilization of staff resources.

IBO will continue to seek opportunities to diversify its workforce and ensure that any current and future staff members, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, or physical challenge, will find the agency a welcoming and productive environment. We know that EEPC recognizes IBO's commitment to these goals, and we appreciate your recommendations, cooperation, and assistance in meeting those goals.

Sincerely,



Ronnie Lowenstein