Washington State Office of
MINORITY & WOMEN'S
Business Enterprises

Senate Business, Financial Services, Gaming and Trade Committee

November 30th, 2023

About OMWBE

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

Since 1983, the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) has helped businesses owned by minorities, women, and other underrepresented communities access contracting and procurement opportunities with state government.








Washington State Office of
MINORITY & WOMEN'S
Business Enterprises

Small Businesses are the backbone of our economy, employing about 50% of the Washington State workforce.

When small businesses thrive, everyone succeeds!

OMWBE Services

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

Certification

- Certify minority and women owned businesses.
- Maintain a directory so state agencies, primes, and educational institutions can find firms to work with.
- State: 2,850
- Federal: 1,708

Supplier Diversity

- Report the annual spend with certified firms. Posted on our website.
- Meet with 63 state agencies, 8 higher educational institutions, and 22 prime contractors on their inclusions plans and best practices.

Business Development

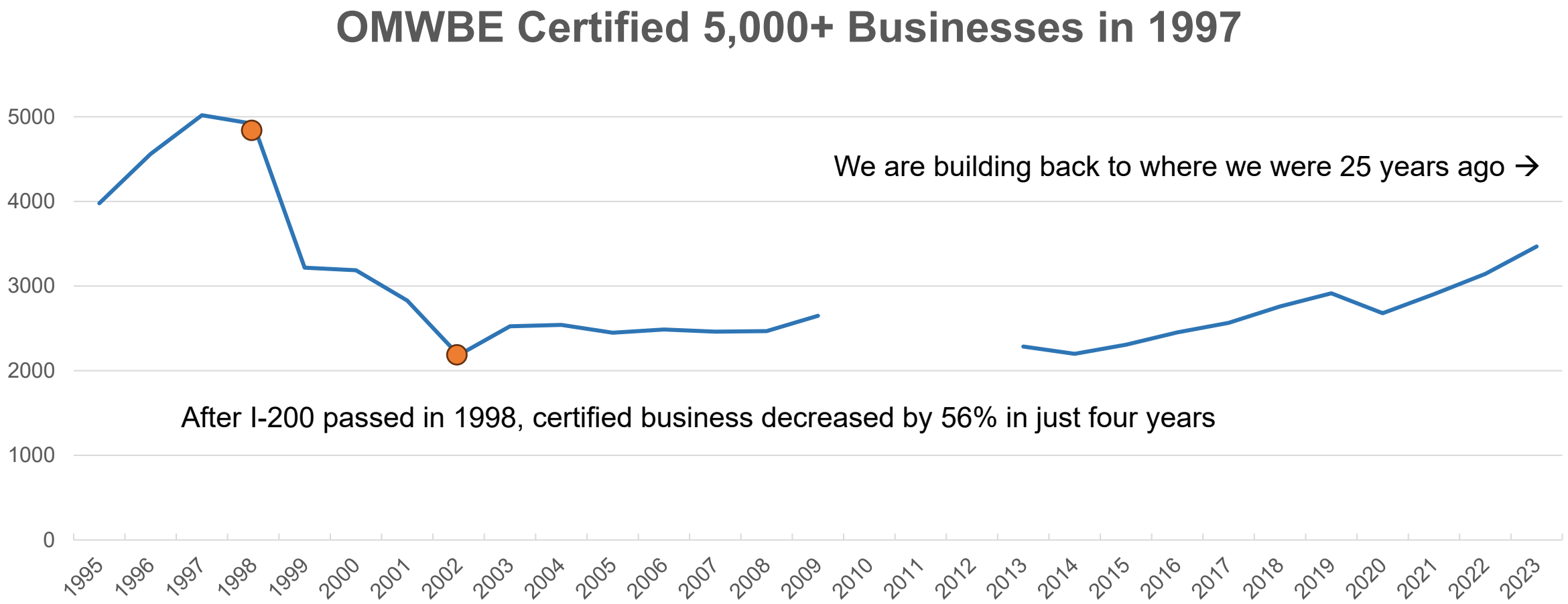
- Statewide outreach to raise awareness about certification.
- Expand presence in Central and Eastern WA
- Linked Deposit offers reduced interest rates on business loans by up to 2%.

Customer Relations

- Improves customer experience with OMWBE.
- Guarantees prompt response to all customer requests.
- Implements systems to reduce customer wait times, providing better service delivery.

History of OMWBE
Certified Businesses Growth

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises



Certification

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

OMWBE is the sole agency that certifies minority- and women-owned businesses to participate in public contracting and procurement.

- Enabled online applications in 2017
- 1,006 new applications and 2,759 renewals in 2023
- On track to eliminate the certification backlog for the first time in 40 years
- Businesses found their experiences with OMWBE to be:

  Excellent 28.52% | Very good 26.62% | Good 24.71% | Poor or Fair 6.84%

Certification fees are waived through June of 2024, relieving the cost burden to small business owners.

Business Development

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

Established in December 2022, the Business Development team conducts statewide outreach to raise awareness about certification.

- Participated in 70+ outreach events in 2023
- Increasing OMWBE presence in Central and Eastern Washington
- Creating on demand training for certified businesses
- Developing mentorship program with KPIs on contract dollars earned

Government contracts can help small businesses weather downturns in the economy, leading to greater financial security.

Customer Relations

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

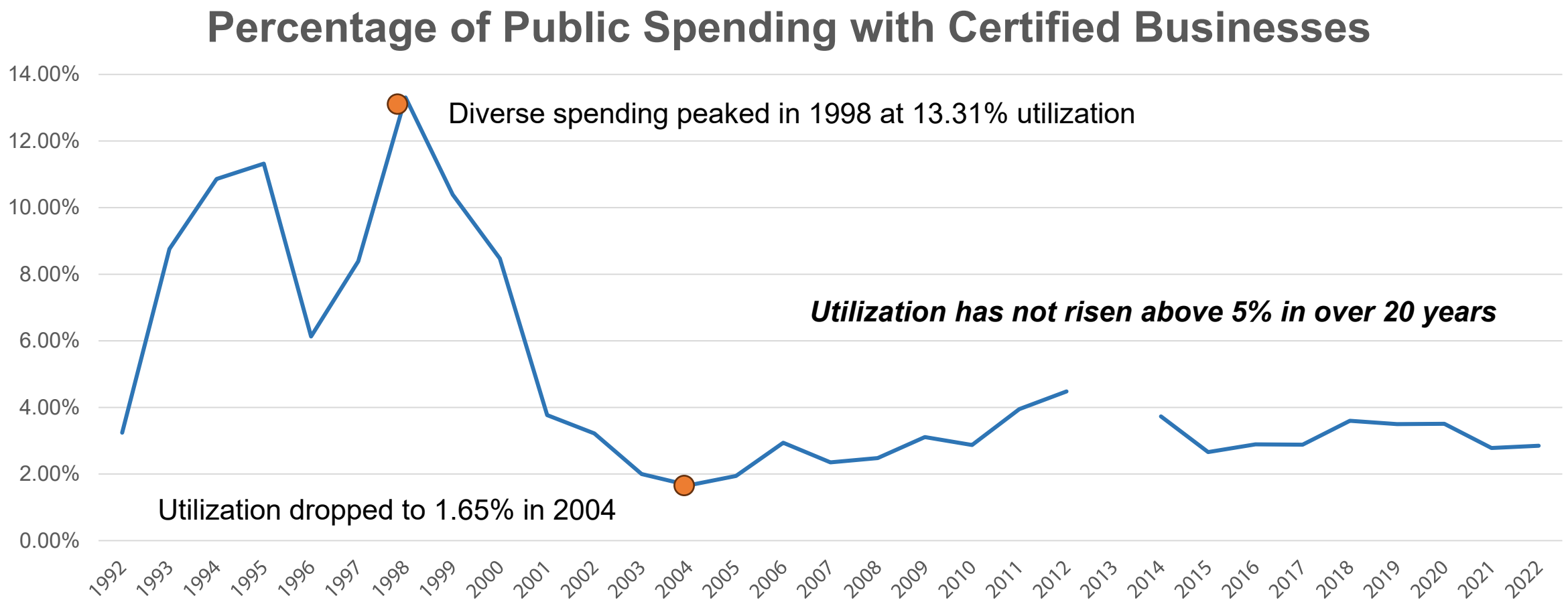
Established in September 2023, the Customer Relations team enhances OMWBE's brand through positive customer interactions.

- Triages customer support, allowing certification to focus on applications
- Improving our phone system and customer experience
- Implementing an electronic help desk to better assist customers
- Responds to 5,000+ customer inquiries each year

Customer inquiries have changed from majority complaints regarding timeliness to more questions about how to get certified.

30 Years of State Spending With Certified Businesses

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises



Supplier Diversity

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

OMWBE reports annual statewide spending with minority- and women-owned businesses and helps agencies improve their diverse spending.

- Works with agencies to leverage the Tools for Equity in Public Spending
- Collaborates with DES and Office of Equity to create a culture of inclusion
- Serves as a conduit between businesses and agencies to address difficulties
- In 2023, OMWBE set aspirational goals for agencies for the first time in over 25 years. If agencies attain their goals, statewide utilization will reach over 10%.

Success Story – Partnership with DOC led to one facility spending over 18% with certified businesses, surpassing DOC's aspirational goal of 5.33%.

OMWBE Future Plans

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

Investments in Data:

- Implementing Access Equity by June 2024
  - #1 recommendation of the 2019 Disparity Study
  - Connects spending data to our Directory of Certified Businesses
  - Agencies need support for continued use and expansion into payment tracking
  - Additional resources needed to sustain this enterprise system
- New Disparity Study
  - The last disparity study used contracting data from 2012-2016
  - Disparity studies become outdated after 5-7 years
  - New data will allow OMWBE to defend against legal challenges

Investments in Supplier Diversity:

- Enterprise-wide improvements come from individual agency support

Thank You!

Washington State Office of MINORITY & WOMEN'S Business Enterprises

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Visit omwbe.wa.gov to learn more.

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