

DEEP's conclusion is that this study had some, but limited, usefulness to improving the SBEA participation among LI/LE small businesses.

The main concern about this study is the research design of the interview process; the study limits interview participants to organizations that support LI/LE businesses, but does not interview the businesses themselves. One learns "second hand" information as reported by business organizations that represent LI/LE businesses. The study would have been improved if it had also interviewed a sample of LI/LE businesses.

The conclusions of Phase I of the study are not very enlightening and could have been surmised without undertaking the survey: Spanish is the most frequent primary language spoken by LE businesses; LI/LE business owners would potentially be interested in the SBEA Program, but faced the following barriers: Language/cultural barriers, Cost, Lack of trust, and Lack of knowledge about the program.

Phase II conclusions provided little insightful information.

LI/LE small businesses are typically retail businesses, restaurants, food stores, construction/contractor businesses, and small manufacturing.

The findings that (a) "average number of employees is 10 or fewer" and (b) "a quarter or fewer of low-income small business proprietors own their business locations" are somewhat imprecise; typically an interval estimate is reported.

The "quantitative" finding that twenty-one of the organizations interviewed work with limited English small business owners is of limited value. We don't know the size of the organization, or the number of LI/LE businesses they work with. Other similar "quantitative" findings were reported.

The main value of the study is that it assessed the degree of interest and willingness to facilitate SBEA participation by organizations that are affiliated with LI/LE small businesses. In doing so, it probably strengthened the connections between LI/LE affiliated organizations and the SBEA program.

DEEP questions why the Office of Energy Efficient Businesses was not included in the list of business groups that were interviewed. (Report, p. 9)

A question for the PAs: how useful do you find this information and operationally, how does it help to improve outreach of the SBEA program with regard to LI/LE businesses?