



News Release

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Iowa Business Council Announces Initiatives to Improve Iowa's Economic Vitality

And observes its 25th Anniversary at the Annual Partnership Meeting

Des Moines, IOWA – (January 31, 2011). The Iowa Business Council (IBC) observed its 25th anniversary at its Annual Partnership Meeting held Monday evening, January 31, in Des Moines. The Council's 25-year history and vision for Iowa were highlighted at the meeting. A *Competitiveness Blueprint: Iowa 2025* report, commissioned by the Council, provides the basis for the Council's five "calls to action" issue areas to improve Iowa's economy. A competitiveness index was also introduced. In addition, the recipient of the Second Annual *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award* was announced and Governor Terry E. Branstad addressed attendees.

THE IOWA BUSINESS COUNCIL 25TH ANNIVERSARY

At the Annual Meeting, the Iowa Business Council Chair, Tom Aller, President of Interstate Power & Light, an Alliant Energy Company, introduced a video, *Celebrating 25 Years*, highlighting the contributions and accomplishments of the Council, where the organization has been, where it is today and where it may go in the future.

"Every year Council members look forward to this event, the Annual Partnership Meeting, because it provides an opportunity to focus on significant policy matters with leaders from business, education, state government and others. Iowa Business Council member companies and institutions have a vested interest and tremendous stake in the future of this state," Aller said. "Council members recognize that success occurs only when visions of the public and private sector align. Together we share a responsibility to discuss issues that are fundamental to fostering an attractive business climate and strong work ethic that sets Iowa apart."

In December of 1985, 15 CEOs gathered to develop a vision for economic growth in Iowa. The concept was to bring together business leaders of Iowa's large employers to identify issues, outline visions, and forge ideas – in a non-partisan manner – that engage public-/private-sector partnerships for economic growth. Today the IBC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, self-funded organization whose 24 members are the top executives of 20 of the largest businesses in the state, the three Regent university presidents, and Iowa's largest banking association.

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A COMPETITIVENESS BLUEPRINT: IOWA 2025 AND THE IOWA COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

The Iowa Business Council recently commissioned a report that assessed Iowa's historical, current, and future economic prosperity and growth. The report, *A Competitiveness Blueprint: Iowa 2025*, conducted this assessment through benchmarking, trends analysis, and fact-based scenario setting. The study was launched with three objectives:

- Revisit a 2001 IBC study entitled *A Case for Change*. The 2001 study examined the condition of Iowa's economy at that time and as a result, the Council called for broader, more diverse industry development if Iowa's economy was to grow at a pace with the rest of the country.
- Assess Iowa's current business environment.
- Identify factors to drive Iowa forward into the future.

The *Competitiveness Blueprint* also identified Iowa's current strengths and challenges and examined different aspects of Iowa's competitive posture. IBC utilized the report as the groundwork for their five specific "calls to action". These include:

- Economic Growth – Proactively address issues that promote a strong and vigorous business climate while developing a skilled and diverse workforce.
- Education – Encourage enthusiasm in STEM-oriented course-work, activities and related careers, support postsecondary education institutions, and increase the quality of the education received by Iowa children.
- Workforce – Attract, develop, and retain a world-class workforce through bold and aggressive initiatives that spurs broad-based business growth and incent workforce attraction.
- Health & Well-Being – Educate Iowans on health and wellness programs and encourage Iowans to become the healthiest people in the nation.
- Government Efficiency – Continue to support Continuous Process Improvement and LEAN efforts in government.

Along with the report, IBC is establishing a method of measurement to track progress. The *Iowa Competitiveness Index* is essentially a "report card" distinguishing positive or negative economic activity. The Council will regularly review relevant data and information to measure the vital trends of Iowa's business environment and, at the same time, identify areas that need attention. The first *Index* will be released in the spring of 2011 and updated annually. To view the *Competitiveness Blueprint* in its entirety, please visit the IBC Web site at www.iowabusinesscouncil.org.

IOWA PARTNERS IN EFFICIENCY AWARD

IBC announced the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics (UIHC) Organ Transplant Clinic as the second annual recipient of the *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award*. The UIHC Organ Transplant Clinic was recognized for reducing lead times by 82 percent, cutting work backlog by 88 percent, increasing the number of patient evaluations by 102 percent, and increasing the number of patients receiving kidney and liver transplants up to 57 percent. The UIHC Pharmacy Streamlined Prescription Processing Unit and the UIHC Women's Health Patient Flow Improvements Team were recognized as finalists for the award.

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The *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award* recognizes the employees or work units in any political subdivision of local, county, or state government who, through the use of Lean tools and techniques, significantly and measurably increase productivity and promote innovation that improves the delivery of public services to the benefit of the citizens of Iowa and the private sector.

ABOUT THE IOWA BUSINESS COUNCIL

The Iowa Business Council (IBC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, self-funded organization whose 24 members are the top executives of 20 of the largest businesses in the state, the three Regent university presidents, and Iowa's largest banking association. Founded in 1985, the Council's purpose is to focus the personal commitment of its members in active leadership roles on major initiatives that offer opportunity to enhance Iowa's economic vitality and improve the lives of Iowans. Council members identify economic issues, evaluate options, and assist in implementing solutions through collaborative public/private partnerships. **Collectively**, these companies and institutions employ nearly a quarter million Iowans and have committed billions of dollars in capital investment to the state. **On an annual basis**, several hundred million dollars in financial contributions and thousands of volunteer hours are directed to numerous charitable causes around Iowa. IBC members also lead in technology innovation with billions of dollars spent and grants procured for research and development. The Business Council focuses its efforts primarily in areas related to advanced technology, continuous process improvement, economic and workforce development, education excellence, health care and wellness, and operations continuity and security. Its representation reaches across the state – from borders north and south to rivers east and west. For more information, please visit the IBC Web site at www.iowabusinesscouncil.org.

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