

**LINCOLN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
CONSENT AGENDA  
June 11, 2009**

**PUBLIC POLICY**

**June 2009 PUBLIC POLICY FORUMS & MEETINGS**

- Wed. 6/3, 8:00 – 9:00 am      Chamber Coffee
- Th. 6/4, 8:00 – 9:30 am      Public Policy Steering Committee meets to discuss and provide guidance on local, state, and federal policy issues.
- Tues. 6/9, 7:00 – 9:30 am      Business Executive Roundtable meets to discuss common issues faced by business owners and develop/share best practices approaches to solving them.
- Wed. 6/17, 8:00 – 9:00 am      Transportation & Public Works Forum  
Topic: Development Services Center presentation from Fred Hoke, City of Lincoln and Dave Johnson, Co-Chair of the Mayor’s DSC Advisory Committee.  
*Sponsored by: The Schemmer Associates*
- Wed. 6/24, 8:00 – 9:00 am      Public Policy Forum  
Topic: Sen. Chris Langemeier, Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, will be our featured speaker on policy issues surrounding the development of wind energy and other related policy issues.  
Sponsored by: Grubb & Ellis Pacific Realty
- Th. 6/25, 8:00 – 9:30 am      Public Policy Steering Committee meets to discuss and provide guidance on local, state, and federal policy issues.

**LOCAL ISSUES:**

**SAR Funds** – Lincoln Chamber staff member Kyle Fischer testified before the City Council regarding Councilman Ken Svoboda’s proposal to transfer \$8 million from the SAR fund to a newly created “Roads to Jobs” Fund. The Chamber’s Public Policy Steering Committee recommended Chamber staff try and bridge the gap between what Councilman Svoboda was proposing and the direction Mayor Chris Beutler intended to proceed. Mayor Beutler had stated that he would veto such a resolution due to the uncertainties in the upcoming budget. The Mayor’s office responded that they may be amicable to some changes and avoid a veto if the issue was placed on pending. In response, the Chamber asked the council to delay... we were successful in achieving the delay. Wendy and Bruce have since once again met with the Mayor to reiterate the Chamber’s position and desire to protect the SAR money for productive expenditures in long-term infrastructure related projects that serve our community’s economic development goals.

**Transportation & Public Works Forum** – Linda Beacham with Schemmer led a round-table discussion regarding solutions to Lincoln’s road funding gap. Attendance was very good and the responses from the audience led to some spirited discussion. The consensus from the input of Chamber members present was that a small group should be formed to isolate and identify some specific recommendations and those

recommendations could be presented at a later forum for discussion before possibly become recommendations to the Chamber's Board of Directors at a later date.

**Lincoln Public Schools Budget** – The 2009-2010 budget for Lincoln Public Schools was introduced during their June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Nick Cusick, Bruce Bohrer, and Kyle Fischer attended the meeting, with Nick and Bruce presenting the Chamber's testimony of support for the board's initial budget proposal that lowers the LPS general fund levy by 1 cent and also support for having the board and administration continue to search for efficiencies to see if the levy could be lowered another  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cent to close to the 1.03 (general fund levy) position. Chamber board member and LPS Superintendent Dr. Susan Gourley and Mark Shepard, Associate Superintendent for Business Affairs for LPS, presented budget information to the Chamber during the June 11<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. The Chamber continues to discuss potential ideas for meeting the goals of quality schools and seeking more spending efficiencies given the current economic conditions. The LPS board is scheduled to vote on the final budget on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**City of Lincoln Budget** – Mayor Chris Beutler will release his recommended budget sometime during the first week in July. The council will look at it, make any changes they feel are necessary, and hold a public hearing on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Right now there are no indications as to how the mayor or council will solve the budgetary shortfall. There is the possibility again this year of a levy increase. There also is a possibility the \$8 million Special Assessment Funds will be raided for ongoing general operations of the city. Chamber staff is actively analyzing the issue.

## **STATE ISSUES:**

### **Governor Signs Key Economic Development Legislation into Law –**

*LB 555 is Critical Building Block for Innovation Campus*

As The University of Nebraska takes its first steps in developing a new Innovation Campus, it will do so with a new economic tool.

The Legislature recently passed an update to the Nebraska Advantage R&D Tax Credit and Governor Dave Heineman signed the bill into law. LB 555 allows private businesses to earn a 7% refundable tax credit for research and development projects done in conjunction with universities and colleges. While other states are simply trying to stem their negative cash flows, Nebraska has sent a clear message of our commitment to the future.

Estimates calculate an increase in private sector R&D investment in the state of \$10.3 million. The four year estimated fiscal impact is \$3.1 million, which would prompt businesses to invest no less than \$43 million in new R&D into Nebraska's economy. In addition, employment created and associated with research and development investments are generally higher paying positions that attract and retain a skilled and educated workforce.

Congratulations to the Legislature and Governor Heineman for taking this affirmative step to position Nebraska to take advantage of the growth which will occur once the economy begins to rebound from the current recession. Many deserve credit for their tireless work, particularly Steve Frayser of the University Technology Park, Sen. Tom White of Omaha, Sen. Heath Mello for his priority designation, and Sen. Danielle Nantkes of Lincoln for pushing the issue forward with an Interim Study last summer and introducing similar R&D tax credit legislation this session. This was truly a coalition effort both inside and outside of the Legislative body and a significant victory for the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce since LB 555 was one of the key pieces of legislation under the Economic Development plank of our 2009 State Opportunities Agenda.

### **Business Coalition Reviewing Full Impact of Unemployment Insurance Stimulus Funds**

The Legislature adjourned without taking on the issue of expanding Unemployment Insurance benefits with the Reed Act distributions. The Lincoln Chamber remains part of a coalition of Chambers that continue to analyze the full impacts of the unemployment insurance provisions of the American Recovery

and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (a.k.a. Federal Stimulus Bill). The Stimulus Bill provides for “incentive payments” to states IF the state’s unemployment program contains certain benefit provisions. The payments, often referred to as Reed Act distributions, are available under two tiers. They are one time payments that require changes to state law.

The first tier payment would total \$14.5M and is tied to the state agreeing to base UI eligibility on a nonstandard base period. In addition, states willing to make the tier one changes are eligible for a second tier of payments if they change state laws in at least two of four ways that would expand eligibility to receive unemployment insurance. The tier two payments total \$29.1M for Nebraska. UI program expansions, and therefore ongoing costs, would be required in order to accept the federal stimulus dollars. The state is allowed until August 22, 2011 to certify it’s eligibility for the incentive payments. The coalition’s goal is to ensure sound policy rationales and sustainable overall UI policy will be what drives the final decision. The business coalition partners are weighing other changes to the UI system that could improve business competitiveness and balance cost considerations.

### **Chamber and Lincoln Leaders Meet With Governor on South Beltway**

Chamber staff and leaders recently held a meeting with Governor Heineman to talk about the priority of South Beltway under the state’s road building program. Senator Kathy Campbell, who sits on the Legislature’s Transportation Committee, joined us for the meetings, as did District #1 HWY Commissioner Rod Vandenberg and Crete Carrier CEO Tonn Ostergard. The Chamber was seeking clarification on where the South Beltway was on the state’s project list. NDOR Director John Craig and Deputy Director Monty Fredrickson also were in attendance. Traffic on HWY 2 in Lincoln has increasingly become a very serious and deadly safety issues. This \$185 Million project will require cooperation and coordination and funding commitments among federal, state, and local governments. The Chamber and other state and local Lincoln leaders are trying to ensure all parties are “on the same page”.

**Interim Study on Statewide Road Needs –** Senator Deb Fischer, Chairwoman of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee will introduce an Interim Study Resolution dealing with roads funding, selecting road priorities and may also include standards and classifications. At this point, the Chairwoman intends to hold eight or more public hearings across the state at the request of the Transportation and Telecommunication Committee to discuss funding, new ideas for funding and other related issues of concern. Senator Fischer plans to begin committee hearings in late August or September. This will be the first time since the 2004 Governor’s Roads Task Force report was submitted that there will be a statewide discussion of many of the issues addressed at that time. The Lincoln Chamber of Commerce participated and submitted testimony for the 2004 report and will continue our involvement in the Committee’s efforts over the interim and into the 2010 Session. Hopefully, Senator Fischer’s 2009 Committee Report will build on and enhance ideas we have worked so hard to accomplish.

**State Opportunities Agenda –** The Chamber is very happy with the results of our lobbying efforts this Session. With the passage of the Urban Growth District bonding bill, **LB 85**, early in the session we got an early victory for expanded local road funding options. The larger issues of how to fund statewide road needs with a stable and adequate funding source remains for another session, but at least the Transportation Committee kept LB 401, the High Priority Surface Transportation Development Act alive and is planning a statewide tour during the Interim seeking new ideas for road funding. **LB 164** and **LB 555** are both big wins under the Chamber’s Economic Development plank, and we are extremely pleased that the \$1 million dollar appropriations for the 2010 Special Olympics won passage. **LB 402** also passed to give Lincoln some breathing room on when we will need to hold a public vote on an Arena financing plan in order to seek turn-back sales tax funding under the state’s Convention Center & Sports Facilities Financing Assistance Act.

**2009 Opportunities Agenda Bill Status**  
**ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE**

<b>Bill Number &amp; LCoC Agenda Item</b>	<b>Primary Introducer</b>	<b>Bill Description</b>	<b>Priority Designation</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<a href="#">LB 85</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Amanda McGill	Authorize urban growth districts and provide bonding authority	NONE	Introduced 1/8/09 Urban Affairs 1/12/09 <i>Hearing 1/20/09, testified in support</i> <b>Enacted</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with road infrastructure objectives of our 2009 Opportunities Agenda
<a href="#">LB 264</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Deb Fischer	Set the initial average wholesale price of \$2.44 for new 5% gasoline tax component under for tax years beginning July 1, 2009	NONE	Introduced 1/14/09 Revenue Committee <i>Supported at Hearing 2/25/09</i> <b>Killed 4/21/09</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with road infrastructure objectives
<a href="#">LB 323</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Tony Fulton	Allocate greater portion of motor vehicle tax to road funding needs	NONE	Introduced 1/15/09 Trans & Telecom Comm. <i>Supported at Hearing 2/23/09</i> <b>Killed 3/05/09</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with road infrastructure objectives
<a href="#">LB 381</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Kent Roger	Adopt the Community Improvement District Act and the Transportation Development District Act	NONE	Introduced 1/16/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. Rereferred Urban Affairs <i>Hearing 2/24/09</i> <b>Held</b>	<b>Review and Monitor</b> – <i>may be consistent with road infrastructure objectives</i>
<a href="#">LB 320</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Friend, at the request of the Governor	Eliminate the variable gas tax	None	Introduced 1/15/09 Trans & Telecom <i>Opposed at Hearing 2/23/09</i> <b>Killed</b>	<b>Oppose</b> – <i>NOT consistent with road infrastructure objectives</i>
<a href="#">LB 401</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Mike Friend	Adopt the High Priority Surface Transportation Development Act and provide for issuance of revenue bonds to assist in financing highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other modes of surface transportation	NONE	Introduced 1/16/09 Trans & Telecom <i>Supported at Hearing 2/23/09</i> <b>Held</b> <i>Sen. Fischer has indicated her interest in keeping this bill in Committee and “taking it on the road” for public input during the 2009 interim period.</i>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with road infrastructure objectives

Bill Number & LCoC Agenda Item	Primary Introducer	Bill Description	Priority Designation	Activity	Recommendation
<a href="#">LR 6CA</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Russ Karpisek	Constitutional amendment to provide expanded racetrack gambling ( <b>player-activated electronic or video gaming</b> ) options with 40% of revenues going to HWY Trust Fund, 39% to racetrack gaming licensees and remaining 21% split among 6 other causes generally to assist thoroughbred racing, breeding, and equine activities. 1% is directed to the compulsive gamblers assistance fund.	NONE	Introduced 1/14/09 <i>General Affairs Hearing 1/26/09</i> <b>Held</b>	<b>Monitor</b> – gambling issue is something we’ve stayed out of, but additional road funding is needed
<a href="#">LB 536</a> Road Infrastructure	Senator Arnie Stuthman	Provide for Transportation Development Districts and permit expanded local options sales tax	NONE	Introduced 1/21/09 Revenue Committee <b>Supported at Hearing 2/25/09</b> <b>Killed 3/23/09</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with road infrastructure objectives

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

<a href="#">LB 16</a> Economic Development	Senator Tom White	Adopt the Taxpayer Transparency Act, which changes confidentiality in the expenditure of state funds, including refunds and credits used under agreements entered into on or after the effective date of this act under the Nebraska Advantage Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act, or the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Act.	<b>Executive Board Priority</b>	Introduced 1/8/09 Executive Board <b>Hearing 2/20/09</b> <b>Placed on General File with Executive Board Amendment, <a href="#">AM692</a>, <a href="#">AM 692</a> and <a href="#">AM 955</a> adopted 4/30/09</b> <b>Advanced to Select File 4/30/09</b> <b>Advanced to Final Reading 5/20/09</b> <b>Enacted 5/29/09</b>	<b>Monitor</b> – Impact on e.d. public relations and support  <b>Support</b> with Adoption of AM 692 and LB 955
<a href="#">LB 124</a> Economic Development	Senator Hansen	Extend and provide job training program	None	Introduced 1/09/09 Appropriations Comm. <b>Hearing 3/11/09</b> <b>Held</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with economic development agenda
Bill Number & LCoC Agenda Item	Primary Introducer	Bill Description	Priority Designation	Activity	Recommendation
<a href="#">LB 164</a> Economic	Senator Abbie Cornett	Several changes to allow use of wage credits for ALL new employees	<b>Revenue Committee Priority</b>	Introduced 1/12/09 Revenue <b>Hearing 1/21/09</b>	<b>Support</b> – consistent with economic development

Development		under the Super Advantage Tier, updating the retail definition to assist in state mail/internet sellers with a majority of sales out of state, elimination of the sunset for Tiers 1 and 3 of NE Advantage, eliminating the sunset on the Microenterprise Act and adjusting the investment/wage index for 2009 and beyond.		<i>Supported at hearing Advanced to General File with Revenue Committee Amendment, <a href="#">AM 234</a> 2/09/09 Advanced to Select File 3/18/09 Advanced to Final Reading 4/17/09 Enacted 4/22/09</i>	objectives
<a href="#">LB 171</a> Economic Development	Senator Danielle Nantkes	Doubles state R&D tax credit from current 15% of federal credit to 30% of federal credit	None	Introduced 1/12/09 Revenue <i>Supported at Hearing 2/18/09 Killed</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent with economic development and tax relief objectives
<a href="#">LB 555</a> Economic Development	Senator Tom White	Doubles state R&D tax credit from current 15% of federal credit to 30% of federal credit for university collaboration	<i>Senator Mello Priority</i>	Introduced 1/21/09 Revenue <i>Supported at Hearing 2/18/09 Advanced to GF Advanced to SF Advanced to Final Reading 4/07/09 Enacted 5/27/09</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent with economic development and tax relief objectives
<a href="#">LB 182</a>	Senator Dave Pankonin	Appropriate \$250,000 for DED for the Heritage Nebraska/Main Street Program	None	Introduced 1/12/09 Appropriation <i>Hearing 3/11/09 Held</i>	<i>Monitor</i>
<a href="#">LB 640</a>	Senator Ken Schilz	Provide “opt out” option for local option sales tax refunds under state incentives	None	Introduced 1/21/09 Revenue <i>Hearing 3/18/09 Held Killed 4/30/09</i>	<i>Oppose</i> – Not consistent with economic development objectives

### CVB & EVENT FACILITIES NEEDS

<a href="#">LB 153</a> Statewide Tourism and CVB Agenda	Senator Scott Laughtenbaugh	Adopt the Tourism Liability Act; which outlines standards of care and limits liability for small tourism facilities in order to promote more agri- or eco-tourism	NONE	Introduced 1/9/09 Judiciary Committee <i>Hearing 3/4/09 Submitted letter of support in partnership with NE Farm Bureau. Held</i>	<i>Support</i> with letter on behalf of Chamber and CVB as a partner in statewide tourism and CVB promotion agenda
<b>Bill Number &amp; LCoC Agenda Item</b>	<b>Primary Introducer</b>	<b>Bill Description</b>	<b>Priority Designation</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<a href="#">LB 266</a> Companion proposal is <a href="#">LR 6CA</a> CVB & EVENT	Senator Russ Karpisek (& Senator Deb Fischer)	Adopt the Racetrack Gaming Act and change provisions relating to horseracing	NONE	Introduced 1/14/09 General Affairs <i>Hearing 1/26/09 Held</i>	<i>Monitor</i> – gambling issue is something we’ve stayed out of, but additional road funding is needed and this may be an issue that would help

FACILITIES NEEDS					improve a local event facility (i.e. Lancaster Event Center) as per the plans of 2015 Vision for a 1 mi. track.
<a href="#">LB 402</a>  CVB & EVENT FACILITIES NEEDS	Senator Bill Avery	Extend the application acceptance deadline under the Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act (Arena Turn Back Funding)	<i>Speaker Priority</i>	Introduced 1/16/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. <i>Testified in support at Hearing 2/26/09</i> <i>Advanced to General File 3/4/09</i> Avery <a href="#">AM 1138</a> adopted <i>Advanced to Select File 4/22/09</i> <i>Advanced to Final Reading 4/29/09</i> <i>Enacted 5/22/09</i>	<i>Support</i> on behalf of Chamber and CVB as consistent with our CVB & event facilities needs.

### TAX RELIEF

<a href="#">LB13</a>  Tax Relief	Senator Tom White	Alters the Governor's \$115M annual property tax credit act passed last session to create a homestead exemption provided to residential properties only.	None	Introduced 1/8/09 Sen. Heath Mello named added 1/9/09 Revenue <i>Hearing 2/20/09 Held</i>	<i>Monitor</i> – impact on budget and tax discussion. Is a tax shift, rather than true property tax relief through spending restraint (same as underlying credit)
<a href="#">LB 69</a>  Military Affairs & Tax Relief	Senator Abbie Cornett	Phased exclusion of military retirement benefits from taxation as prescribed	None	Introduced 1/8/09 Revenue <i>Hearing 2/4/09 Held</i>	<i>Support</i> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with Tax relief, e.d. and military affairs objectives
<a href="#">LB 70</a>  Military Affairs & Tax Relief	Senator Abbie Cornett	Exclude military retirement benefits from taxation as prescribed	None	Introduced 1/9/09 Revenue <i>Hearing 2/4/09 Held</i>	<i>Support</i> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with Tax relief, e.d. and military affairs objectives

### STATE BUDGET PRIORITIES

Bill Number & LCoC Agenda Item	Primary Introducer	Bill Description	Priority Designation	Activity	Recommendation
<a href="#">LB 315</a> (State Budget Bill) CVB & Event	Speaker Flood, at the request of the Governor	\$1M state appropriation for 2010 Special Olympics	None	Introduced 1/15/09 Appropriations Comm. <i>Hearing 2/23/09</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent with CVB Agenda and State Budget Priorities

Facilities Needs				<i>Advanced to General File 4/29/09 Comm <a href="#">AM 889</a> AM 889 Adopted and Advanced to Select File 5/05/09 Enacted 5/19/09</i>	
<a href="#">LB 317</a> CVB & Event Facilities Needs	Speaker Flood, at the request of the Governor	Transfer \$1M from cash reserve fund for 2010 Special Olympics	None	Introduced 1/15/09 Appropriations Comm. <i>Supported at Hearing 2/23/09 Within mainline budget</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent with CVB Agenda and State Budget Priorities
<a href="#">LB 124</a> Economic Development	Senator Hansen	Extend and provide job training program	None	Introduced 1/09/09 Appropriations Comm. <i>Hearing 3/11/09 Within mainline budget</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent with economic development agenda

### MISCELLANEOUS & MAC ISSUES

<a href="#">LB 107</a>	Senator Ken Haar	Require employers to provide a reason for termination as prescribed	None	Introduced 1/09/09 Business & Labor Comm. <i>Hearing 1/26/09 Submitted opposition Advanced to GF with <a href="#">AM 490</a> 3/11/09</i>	<i>Oppose</i> – Not consistent w/regulatory statement in core values.
<a href="#">LB 34</a> Immigration (e-verify system)	Senator Brad Ashford	Require employment verification of employees by employers and by contractors who want to be awarded a public contract	None	Introduced 1/08/09 Judiciary <i>Hearing Held</i>	<i>Monitor</i>
<a href="#">LB 191</a>	Senator Tony Fulton	Adopt the Small Business Regulatory Relief Act (waiver of fines for small business in certain circumstances)	None	Introduced 1/12/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. <i>Submitted Letter of Support at Hearing 2/05/09 Held</i>	<i>Support</i> – consistent w/ regulatory statement in core values
<a href="#">LB 335</a>	Senator Mike Friend	Require electronic employee verification for certain tax incentives	None	Introduced 1/15/09 Revenue <i>Hearing 2/06/09 Advanced to GF 2/19/09 Killed 5/29/09</i>	<i>Monitor</i>
<b>MAC Issues</b>					
<a href="#">LB 17</a>	Senator Tom White	Provide a tuition waiver for combat injured veterans	None	Introduced 1/8/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. <i>Hearing 1/22/09 Held</i>	<i>Support</i> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with military affairs objectives

<a href="#">LB 69</a> Military Affairs & Tax Relief	Senator Abbie Cornett	Phased exclusion of military retirement benefits from taxation as prescribed	None	Introduced 1/8/09 Referred to Revenue <b>Hearing 2/04/09</b> <b>Held</b>	<b>Support</b> consistent with tax relief, e.d. and military affairs objectives
<a href="#">LB 70</a> Military Affairs & Tax Relief	Senator Abbie Cornett	Exclude military retirement benefits from taxation as prescribed	None	Introduced 1/9/09 Referred to Revenue <b>Hearing 2/04/09</b> <b>Held</b>	<b>Support</b> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with Tax relief, e.d. and military affairs objectives
<a href="#">LB 73</a> Military Affairs	Senator Abbie Cornett	Ratify Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	None	Introduced 1/9/09 Ed. Comm. <b>Hearing 1/20</b> <b>Advanced to GF</b> with <a href="#">AM 468</a> 2/27/09	<b>Support</b> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with Military Affairs objectives
<a href="#">LB 279</a> Military Affairs	Senator Bill Avery	Require notification to military installations regarding development of real property	None	Introduced 1/14/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. <b>Hearing 2/12/09</b> <b>Held</b>	<b>Support</b> with letter or testimony from MAC as consistent with statewide military affairs objectives
<a href="#">LB 280</a> Military Affairs	Senator Bill Avery	Create the Commission on Military Affairs	None	Introduced 1/14/09 Govt, Mill. & Vet Comm. Hearing 2/12/09 <b>Advanced to GF</b> 3/23/09	<b>Support</b> with testimony from MAC as consistent with statewide military affairs objectives
Military Affairs Agenda		Appropriation for Lincoln Airport Authority flood levy issue and Guard Armory in Lincoln.	None	This was not included in Governor's budget but Senator Avery is working on getting money. He is keeping the MAC Committee informed of progress.	<b>Support</b> with lobbying efforts from MAC committee – consistent with MAC Agenda

**Nebraska Renaissance Recommendations for Growth** – This group has developed an Action Plan for Growing NE, which consists of over 70 specific recommendations related to taxes, economic development incentives, government structure and spending, health care policy, and prioritization of government spending for productive expenditures. The working title of the draft is: ***Make More, Keep More, and Enjoy It More : How to Attract & Retain More People in Nebraska.*** The recommendations are not yet public, surveys to narrow priorities have been completed, and the authors are currently refining the report. Bruce serves on the fiscal policy and strategic spending committees for the NE Renaissance Group. Board (and Public Policy Steering Committee) members Nick Cusick and Rich Herink joined the group earlier this year. We expect the Renaissance group to re-start their efforts after the Legislative session.

## **FEDERAL ISSUES:**

### **Federal Fly Back Set**

The Federal Fly-Back has taken off like a rocket, as Bellevue, Omaha and the State Chambers have signed on to this event, which we have now confirmed for Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at the Strategic Air &

Space Museum. We will begin with a Nebraska “Nebraska Breakfast” to hear policy reports from the NE congressional delegation. We’re planning on keeping the same format as the traditional congressional NE Breakfast held in Washington, D.C. throughout the session. We’ll next have briefing sessions led by the Senators and Congressmen. We’re also very excited to announce that through the efforts of Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Chamber board (incoming Chairman) member Bob Milligan, we have secured U.S. Chamber President/CEO Tom Donahue as a keynote speaker for lunch. Individual tickets for the event \$95.00 and sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information or to make your reservation today, please contact Jaime Henning at 436-2366 or [jaimehenning@LCOC.com](mailto:jaimehenning@LCOC.com).

### **Health Care Reform**

The Obama administration has set an ambitious timeline for health care reform to be completed by Congress before the August break. The details of reform are still not set but it is clear that Administration and advocacy groups would like to see a government health plan option as part of the reforms. It is unclear exactly what changes will be proposed to the way we currently finance, settle legal claims, and deliver health care, but early estimates are that it will require about \$800 Billion to \$1.2 Trillion in additional taxes to cover the uninsured and other upfront expense of reform.

The Chamber has several members who participated in Sen. Ben Nelson’s recent health policy input roundtables. We also are planning a health care reform panel discussion as soon as the Congressional committee mark-ups are completed. We welcome input from all members on this important national issue. Please contact Bruce Bohrer at [bbohrer@lcoc.com](mailto:bbohrer@lcoc.com)

## **LINCOLN PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Annual Lunch**

The annual Partnership breakfast will be held at lunch this year. The event is set for June 18 at the Cornhusker Hotel and will feature Ronnie Bryant, President and CEO of the Charlotte Regional Partnership. Ronnie is the former Chairman of the International Economic Development Council, and has held leadership positions in Charlotte, Pittsburgh and St. Louis, among others. He will be discussing regionalism.

At the same time, the Partnership is working with the Regional Innovation Grant oversight committee and the Lincoln Area Development Partnership (our regional marketing group) on a day-long event June 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss innovation and regionalism. Professionals from economic development, workforce development and education will be invited along with community leaders and elected officials. The event will be held around the Partnership’s annual lunch (see below). Additionally, the annual economic development forum for smaller Southeast Nebraska communities has been cancelled this year in favor of this event.

### **Project Update**

#### **Current Expansions**

Several companies continue with their expansion plans in spite of the recent economic downturn. Fiserv (formerly Information Technology Inc.) will be finishing its 60,000 square foot office expansion this summer and moving in new associates. Perot Systems plans to complete its new office facility this fall and hire 150 IT associates. The U.S. Veterans Administration announced a new 66,000 square foot facility at Williamsburg that will house its current employees and the group will immediately hire 30 additional staff with room for expansion.

Assurity Life Insurance has completed the necessary approvals to move forward on its new headquarters facility in the Antelope Valley. The Partnership worked with the Chamber of Commerce on testimony in favor of the project to the Lincoln City Council to get approval of the redevelopment agreement for the project. Assurity hopes to break ground in 2010.

Additionally, two small biotech companies continue to grow in Lincoln. Gallup also announced it would move its downtown operation to Fallbrook, securing the 150 staff people employed by Gallup at its downtown operation. Two other facilities in east Lincoln are unaffected by the move.

Nelnet also recently announced it would be closing its operation in Jacksonville and moving at least 100 of those jobs to Lincoln.

## **Open Projects**

### **I. Summary**

- Leads generated in 2009 (New Companies) 17
- Leads generated in 2009 (Existing Companies) 7
- Site visits in 2009 3
- Current open projects 57

### **II. Activity Trends**

Many projects were put on hold from October 2008 through February of 2009. However, we are starting to see trends that former projects are beginning to regain momentum and the activity of initial contacts has increased dramatically.

From April 1 through June 1, we have had 17 contacts with companies looking to expand into Lincoln or expand current operations in Lincoln. That compares with only seven contacts in the first three months of 2009. Additionally, the quality of the clients has improved dramatically with a number of calls in industries tied to “green jobs” including several manufacturers.

## **Business Attraction**

### **Marketing Events**

#### **Trade Shows and Conferences, Spring 2009**

*CoreNet* – The largest international real estate executive organization in the United States held its spring conference in Dallas. Lincoln had one representative work at the trade show in the State of Nebraska booth. Total contacts for the event were: 50 site selectors and corporate real estate executives.

*IAMC* – The Industrial Assets Management Council is a national industrial real estate organization. Lincoln will have materials distributed through the State of Nebraska at its spring event. There were eight site selectors and corporate real estate executives attending a Nebraska event.

*Area Development* – Lincoln attended this event in June with the State of Nebraska which features one-on-one contacts with national site selection specialists. There were 15 site selection contacts at the event.

### **Marketing Materials**

The Partnership is currently in the process of a complete overhaul of its marketing materials. We are currently working with Snitily-Carr on a new first impression piece. The final edits are being completed. The piece highlights our strong points but uses people in the community to tell the story. Currently the four key points are: workforce, innovation & entrepreneurship, business costs and quality of life. After the first impression piece is completed, we will begin working on a new community profile, and then work on industry specific pieces. We are borrowing a number of ideas from successful programs, including Charlotte and Austin.

## **OPERATIONS/YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP**

### **Young Professionals Group Areas of Focus**

#### **Philanthropy Committee Update**

The philanthropy committee is hosting a luncheon on June 11 focused on Career karma and how volunteerism can impact your career. This event will be followed with a hands-on volunteer project scheduled for Saturday, July 25.

### **Political Voice Committee Update**

A luncheon was held with chief of Police Tom Casady and Fire chief, Niles Ford. The political voice committee meetings feature an elected official each month. Upcoming events include a City Council lunch in September and the Chamber's Federal Fly Back in August.

### **Membership**

Membership is focusing on renewals and company presentations. A new member orientation lunch will be held on Wednesday, June 24 at the Chamber.

### **Networking Committee Update**

Friday, June 19th is the YPG golf tournament at High Mark Golf Course. The July 2nd networking event will be held at the Haydon Arts Center and the August 6th event will be at Red9. Mini-Networking events for specific industries: June 16th for Non-profit young professionals at Libations Too.

### **Marketing Committee Update**

The marketing committee will be hosting an event on June 17th that will focus on marketing specifically to women. Be the One for Her – How to make your brand what women want in today's economy. They continue to work with updating the website and producing all emails and materials for all YPG events and programs.

### **Entrepreneurship Committee Update**

The committee will hear from Red 9 in July and Firespring in August on their business plans. They are working on an event to be held in October around intellectual property.

**All event & membership information can be found at [www.lincolnypg.com](http://www.lincolnypg.com)**

### **Chamber Services & Events**

#### **In Focus Seminar Series**

Kari Hasemann-Herbert, Directions EAP will present:  
Customer Service: Taking it to the next level  
Thursday, June 4, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., at the Chamber

*No Seminar in July*

Bailey Lauerma will present:  
Building Brand Loyalty: Your business image – creating one that lasts  
Thursday, August 6, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., at the Chamber

#### **Business After Hours**

Thursday, May 25, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.  
6500 Telluride Drive

Sponsored and hosted by Lexus of Lincoln. Be one of Lincoln's first to see the new 2010 IS C, Lexus convertible. Valet parking.

#### **Business and Education Connection**

Monday, June 22 and Tuesday, June 23

The Chamber is partnering once again with Lincoln Public Schools to provide teachers and career counselors with an opportunity to learn about the various industries and career opportunities available to

students as they make choices that impact their future careers. Businesses being toured include National Research Corporation, FiServ, State Farm Insurance Company, Gene Seek, Teledyne ISCO, Nanonation and BryanLGH Medical Center. This program is sponsored by State Farm Insurance Companies, Lincoln Public Schools, Arrow Stage Lines and TierOne Bank.

### **Federal Fly Back**

Thursday, August 20

Strategic Air and Space Museum

8:00 a.m. Registration

8:30 a.m. Nebraska Breakfast

10:30 Briefing Session Breakouts (energy, healthcare, agriculture, NE young professionals, general appropriations, stimulus and transportation)

12:00 p.m. Lunch and keynote address from Tom Donohue, President US Chamber of Commerce

The Lincoln Chamber is spearheading this jam-packed event with the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. The entire congressional delegation will return to Nebraska for this premier policy event.

\$95 Individual

\$75 YPG members

\$1000 Corporate Table Sponsorships also available

*Registration information for all events can be found at [www.lcoc.com](http://www.lcoc.com)*

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Total membership remains over 1400 strong, but there has been a slight contraction from the beginning of the year. The membership and events team have been busy making calls to renewing members, prospects, and the general membership. Several have expressed cash flow as the reason for the postponement of their annual investment. There are now several payment options including monthly direct debit.

Many of the new members recruited in May came through the efforts of Chamber employees. The internal membership campaign put us in front of over 250 prospective members to educate business leaders about our work and accomplishments. To date, 20 of these businesses have joined.

Ribbon Cuttings are a great opportunity to meet members at their places of business. The Chamber emcees the event, invites over 100 volunteers from our Ambassadors Council, and celebrates a recent business success in our community. We have participated in 13 such events during April and May, nearly 1 every 4 business days. The reasons for most of these have been Grand Openings, expansions, and renovations. Each of these stories is testimony to the strength of our local economy and the effectiveness of your Lincoln Chamber.

### **CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**

#### **Organization**

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual BE A TOURIST campaign kicked off in May with a press conference at Pioneers Park. Passports can be picked up at the Lincoln CVB Visitors Center at 7<sup>th</sup> and P, website or at the main offices at 1135 M St. With the cost of travel and more families seeking opportunities closer to home, this year's program is the perfect opportunity to enjoy Lincoln. When coupled with an overnight stay, this becomes a great family friendly vacation close to home!

Program highlights include:

- Program runs May 21 – August 14 and features a passport program to area attractions
- Visit [www.lincoln.org](http://www.lincoln.org) for hotel specials

- 25 different prizes awarded at end of summer, prizes valued from \$25, up to \$800!
- Children's winner to enjoy a skybox, throwing out the first pitch and gift basket to a Saltdogs game with a pregame picnic.
- Adult winner to receive overnight stay at Embassy, Misty's gift certificate and 2 tickets to the LIED
- Photo contest winner to receive a \$50 gift certificate to Wal-Mart. The winning photo will be featured on the CVB website

The HOT ROD SUPERNATIONALS rolled in to State Fair Park on MAY 29-31.

Early estimates have over 2000 participant cars and over 25,000 people in attendance at this event. This is the first of a 3 year deal with this organization and they will be back again in 2010 and 2011. Lincoln continues to be a popular destination for these events and we look forward to many successful years ahead. Current evaluation of 3 potential sites in Lincoln is ongoing, as we need a new facility since State Fair Park is no longer available in 2010.

Volunteers are needed for the 2010 National Special Olympics. Groups and individuals interested should visit [www.2010specialolympics.org](http://www.2010specialolympics.org) or call 467-2010. The organization is in need of 8,000 volunteers to make this event happen next year. The success of this event will certainly increase our chances to land new events in the future of this size.

In the last 6 months, the CVB has presented to 16 different Lincoln church or civic organizations that have an interest in helping with Special Olympics in 2010, but more importantly have an interest in learning more about the CVB and how they can bring events to the community. The community is beginning to see the benefit of tourism to our local economy.

National Tourism Week was celebrated in May and we celebrated this event with visits to our local hotels. We delivered treats and welcome cards for the front desk, which thanked guests for visiting Lincoln. We also invited them to our visitor's center at 7<sup>th</sup> and P to register for an overnight hotel, Saltdog's tickets and dinner.

### **Sales/Marketing**

In the month of May, the CVB sales staff issued 21 sales leads to its shareholders with the potential of 14,192 hotel room nights. In total, 11 events were booked for the month which resulted in 7,993 hotel room nights and an estimated economic impact of \$2.3 million for the city of Lincoln. Additionally, the staff met face to face with 24 potential clients as well as prospected 55 new events.