



News Release

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Iowa Business Council released latest *Iowa Competitiveness Index* at Annual Meeting

Third annual Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award recipients were announced

Des Moines, IOWA – January 30, 2012. The Iowa Business Council (IBC) held its 26th Annual Partnership Meeting on Monday, January 30, in Des Moines. The Council highlighted key initiatives including the latest results of the *Iowa Competitiveness Index*. The recipient of the third annual *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award* was also announced at the Annual Meeting. Governor Terry E. Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds addressed more than 250 business and education leaders, legislators, elected officials, and Iowa Business Council members.

The Iowa Business Council focuses on significant policy matters it considers key to driving strong economic growth in the State.

“IBC member companies and institutions employ a quarter million Iowans and have invested billions of dollars of capital in physical and human resources here,” said Tom Aller, 2011 IBC Chair and President of Interstate Power & Light, an Alliant Energy Company, in his introductory remarks. “Maintaining a competitive business posture and offering an attractive place for employees to work and live is critically important not only to large business, but also to the many small and mid-size companies which contribute daily to the state’s economic growth and success.”

THE IOWA COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

In July 2011, the Iowa Business Council released the results of the first *Iowa Competitiveness Index* (ICI) – a “report card” distinguishing positive or negative economic activity for specific measures. The latest results of the *Index* were released at the Annual Partnership Meeting.

Of the five *Index* indicators, four “Overall Trends” remained unchanged at “No Significant Progress” – economic growth, education and workforce readiness, governance and fiscal matters, and workforce demographics and diversity. The health and well-being indicator dropped since the July 2011 *Index*, from “Improving” to “No Significant Progress.”

Aller highlighted key results of the 2012 ICI:

- **Economic Growth** – Three of the five metrics have changed since July 2011.
 - *Per capita income* and *total employment* in the state have both gained slightly.
 - *Manufacturing as a percentage of the Gross State Product* has decreased.
 - *Gross State Product* and the *Knowledge Jobs* metric have remained steady.

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- **Education & Workforce Readiness** – The five metrics for workforce and education readiness have all changed since the last ICI.
 - *Proficiency in 8th grade reading* has remained steady with *proficiency in 8th grade math* improving only slightly.
 - *ACT performance* has remained steady.
 - About 90 percent of *Iowans less than 25 years old have attained at least a high school degree* – keeping Iowa in the top ten.
 - *Iowans over 25 years of age attaining at least a Bachelor's degree* remains low with Iowa ranked in the bottom third nationally.
- **Governance and Fiscal Matters** – Three of the five metrics have changed since July 2011.
 - *State and local debt as a percentage of Gross State Product (GSP)* has remained steady since July. However, it still is three percentage points higher in 2011 than 2000.
 - *State and local government as a percentage of GSP* has moved little over the last ten years.
 - The number of Iowa's *full-time government employees per 10,000* has improved over time. In 2000, 601 Iowans per 10,000 were employed by government with that number dropping to 506 in 2009, and 492 in 2010.
 - *State and local tax per capita* has remained steady.
- **Health and Well-Being** – Since July, three of the five metrics have declined.
 - In 2000, 21.5 percent of *Iowans were considered obese*. In 2010, that number rose to 29.1 percent.
 - Iowa has seen a significant drop in the *percentage of smokers 18 years and older* since 2000, but the state ranking slipped two spots to 19th.
 - *Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births* has improved since 2000. However, Iowa's infant mortality ranking dropped from 5th to 10th since the first ICI back in July.
 - *Primary care physicians per 100,000* and the *Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index* have remained the same.
- **Workforce Demographics and Diversity** – The data for this issue area is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. It has not changed since July. However, the Iowa Business Council continues to call for Iowa to aggressively deploy initiatives that incent workforce attraction.

The Council will annually review relevant data and information in the ICI to measure the vital trends of Iowa's business environment and, at the same time, identify areas that need attention. To view the *Index* in its entirety, please visit the IBC Web site at www.iowabusinesscouncil.org.

IOWA PARTNERS IN EFFICIENCY AWARD

Stan Askren, 2012 IBC Chair and Chairman, President & CEO, HNI Corporation announced the third annual recipient of the *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award*. This year's recipient, the Iowa Utilities Board Electric Transmission Franchise Process, reduced lead times from 80 days to 64 days, eliminated 17 process steps, reduced the number of hand-offs from 70 to 50, and dramatically reduced the number of delays from 176 to 79 – an improvement of 55 percent. The other finalist for the 2012 *Iowa Partners in Efficiency Award* was the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics Chemotherapy Infusion Schedule.

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.

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ABOUT THE IOWA BUSINESS COUNCIL

The Iowa Business Council (IBC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 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 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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