



Iowa **Business Council**

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# News Release

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## Iowa Business Council Launches Innovative Safeguard Iowa Partnership

*The coalition of business and government leaders is committed to keeping Iowa secure*

Des Moines, Iowa – (January 29, 2007) – Recognizing the need for business to work with government to ensure Iowa’s resiliency to natural and human-caused disasters, the Iowa Business Council has teamed with the State of Iowa and the non-profit Business Executives for National Security (BENS) to launch the Safeguard Iowa Partnership.

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership is a voluntary coalition of the state’s business and government leaders, who share a commitment to combining their efforts to prevent, protect, respond, and recover from catastrophic events in Iowa. The statewide partnership will serve to help integrate business resources, expertise, and response plans with those of government during all stages of disaster management.

“Business leaders recognize that their companies’ ability to maintain or restore operations, following a disaster, depends on the continuity of the community around them,” said Iowa Business Council Chairman Max Phillips, President of Qwest Iowa. “The diverse industries that support Iowa’s economy are inter-dependent. By working across industry sectors, and with our government partners, we can help protect Iowa’s future, its economy, and the quality of life Iowans enjoy.”

“Recent national disasters have demonstrated the importance of planning in advance of a crisis,” said Iowa Lieutenant Governor Patty Judge. “There is enormous capability resident in Iowa’s business community that government cannot replicate. We’ve needed this kind of partnership – and the commitment from both business and government that it represents – to facilitate effective public-private collaboration.”

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership will focus first-year efforts on improving communication during crises, identifying and cataloging business resources and expertise that could be called upon during a disaster, and exercising new operational capabilities between business and agency partners.

The Iowa Business Council has endorsed the Safeguard Iowa Partnership and will provide early sponsorship. Founding business partners include: Alliant Energy, Deere & Company, Hy-Vee, Iowa Health System, MidAmerican Energy, Pella Corp., Pioneer Hi-Bred International,



Principal Financial, Rockwell Collins, Ruan Transportation, Vermeer Manufacturing, and Wellmark Blue Cross - Blue Shield. The University of Iowa, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa are also partners. Public agencies supporting and working with the partnership include the Iowa Department of Public Defense, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Department of Public Safety, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The catalyst for this initiative was former Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack who, one year ago, suggested that the Council work with the non-profit Business Executives for National Security (BENS). BENS has facilitated similar partnerships and programs in New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts, Los Angeles and Orange County, Calif., the San Francisco Bay Area, and Kansas City, Mo. The Safeguard Iowa Partnership is in the process of hiring an executive director, expected to be named in February.

#### Iowa Business Council

*Founded in 1985, the Iowa Business Council is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, self-funded organization whose members include the top executives of 20 of the largest businesses in the state, the three Regent university presidents, and the state's largest banking association. Collectively, these companies and institutions employ more than 180,000 Iowans and have made more than \$25 billion worth of capital investments in the state. The purpose of the Council is to engage the personal commitment of these executives in active leadership roles on major initiatives that offer opportunity to enhance Iowa's overall economic vitality. For more information, please visit our Web site at [www.iowabusinesscouncil.org](http://www.iowabusinesscouncil.org).*

#### Business Executives for National Security

*BENS is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization comprised of more than 500 business leaders nationwide. It was founded in 1982 by business executive and entrepreneur Stanley A. Weiss, guided by the belief that America's security is everybody's business. Led by President and CEO General Charles G. Boyd, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), BENS has established a track record of applying business skills and best practices to achieve measurable, demonstrable improvements in government practices. [www.bens.org](http://www.bens.org)*

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NOTE: General Boyd is a native of Rockwell City, Iowa. A combat pilot in Vietnam, he was shot down on his 105<sup>th</sup> mission and survived 2,488 days as a prisoner of war. The only POW from that war to achieve the four-star rank, General Boyd's final military assignment was as deputy commander in chief of U.S. forces in Europe. He later served as Executive Director of the Hart-Rudman Commission that warned before 9-11 of the growing threat of terrorism to the U.S. homeland.