



NEWS RELEASE

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BUSINESS, COMMUNITY LEADERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY GATHER TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AIDING SMALL BUSINESSES

The Business Roundtable's BusinessLINC Hosts Annual Conference Focusing on New York, Washington, D.C., other Distressed Areas

Washington, D.C. – BusinessLINC, a public-private collaboration that stimulates economic growth in distressed cities and rural areas by fostering partnerships between small and large businesses, kicks off its second annual conference today in Washington, D.C. Led by The Business Roundtable, the association of chief executive officers of leading corporations, BusinessLINC will bring together leaders from communities across the country to discuss strategies for economic development and share best practices.

A particular focus this year will be helping hard-hit small business communities most affected by the tragedy of September 11 and the on-going economic downturn, with a special emphasis on New York City and Washington, D.C. The conference runs October 11 and 12.

“The challenges facing the economy, particularly in New York City and Washington, D.C., make the partnerships facilitated by BusinessLINC coalitions more important than ever,” said Donét Graves, Jr., Executive Director of BusinessLINC. “This conference will focus on the work done on the ground to engage small and large businesses to improve the competitiveness of the companies involved and to help their struggling communities grow and thrive.”

The packed agenda features discussions with key Congressional representatives, panel discussions, and presentations by various local coalitions. Senator Christopher S. Bond (R-MO), the Ranking Member of the Senate Small Business Committee, Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH), a member of the House Small Business Committee, Representative J. C. Watts (R-OK), Republican Conference Chairman in the House, and Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) will address the attendees.

Currently, thirteen communities around the country host BusinessLINC coalitions: Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Flint (MI), Houston, the Mississippi River Delta, New York City, Richmond, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., the Southwest Border, and Indian Country (MN). New coalitions will soon be launched in Atlanta, South Florida, St. Louis, Kansas City, Hartford, and Los Angeles.

BRT'S BUSINESSLINC CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON ECONOMY

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BusinessLINC was created in 1999 by The Business Roundtable, the U.S. Treasury Department, and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The network is designed to bring large corporations and small businesses together to increase the exchange of business opportunities and experience and to promote the success of local, often minority and women-owned, businesses. The work is done at the local level, where each coalition is chaired by a corporate CEO, hosted by a local business, community, or civic association, and comprised of corporate partners. BusinessLINC stands for **L**earning, **I**nvestment, **N**etworking and **C**ollaboration, the key attributes for successful partnerships.

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The Business Roundtable is an association of chief executive officers of leading corporations with a combined workforce of more than 10 million employees in the United States and \$3.5 trillion in revenues. The chief executives are committed to advocating public policies that foster vigorous economic growth and a dynamic global economy.