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670,000 New Jobs Needed in Illinois Over the Next 10 Years to Revive and Grow the Economy

Illinois Chamber Joins American Free Enterprise. Dream Big. Campaign

Chicago, IL—Today, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce announced its support for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Campaign for Free Enterprise. This new national effort, called [American Free Enterprise. Dream Big.](#), is a comprehensive, multiyear campaign to raise awareness among all Americans about the essential role that free enterprise plays in the success of our country. The announcement comes on the heels of the U.S. Labor Department’s report last Friday that the national jobless rate is just over 10% — a threshold last passed over 25 years ago.

“Illinois, like the rest of the country, has been hit hard by economic downturn these past few years,” said Doug Whitley, president and CEO of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. “Spurring job growth and getting our local economy back on track is our biggest challenge. That is why the Illinois Chamber has joined forces with the Campaign for Free Enterprise. We need to remind people that free enterprise has created more economic benefits for more people than any other system in history.”

Nationwide, the U.S. Chamber estimates 20 million jobs will be needed in the next decade to keep America competitive. Of those 20 million, over 670,000 jobs will need to be created in Illinois in the next 10 years to compensate for the jobs lost in the recession and to accommodate new workers entering the workforce.

“We intend to play a vital role in the campaign by engaging the citizens of Illinois on the importance of the free enterprise system and its contributions to job creation,” Whitley said. “Free enterprise is what makes dreams possible, and we want to help preserve those dreams for generations to come.”

A series of events will take place across the country in the coming weeks to announce state-by-state job growth goals and to cultivate discussions about how to meet the [20 Million Job Challenge](#). Plans are also underway to showcase the role of individual business leaders through an online video contest and the DREAM BIG Small Business of the Year award.

“The Illinois Chamber is a critical partner in our efforts to engage and enlist Americans in this movement,” stated Brian Gunderson, vice president for the campaign. “That is why the campaign is taking to the road to spread the word. The values of individual initiative, hard work, freedom of choice, and the free exchange of trade, capital, and ideas built this great country. And we hope that all

Americans will pledge their support for the preservation of these values through this historic campaign.”

[American Free Enterprise. Dream Big.](#) is the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s comprehensive, multiyear campaign to support free enterprise through national advertising; grassroots advocacy; citizen, community, and youth engagement; and research and ideas leadership.

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce promotes the interests of Illinois business by working to improve the state’s business climate. The Illinois Chamber aggressively advocates legislation and public policies that support economic growth, and is a source of timely and reliable information on matters important to its members, Illinois employers and the general public. The Illinois Chamber also provides effective programs and services to its 3,500+ members to meet their business needs, including immediate answers to tax and human resources concerns and access to compliance seminars and publications.

The U.S. Chamber is the world's largest business federation representing more than 3 million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region.

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