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January 9, 2014

Penny Pritzker, Secretary of Commerce
U.S Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Regarding:
United States-Mexico High Level Economic Dialogue
Document Citation: 78 FR 70281

Dear Secretary Pritzker,

As an elected representative from Arizona's Legislative District 1 and Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives, I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts with you on the High Level Economic Dialogue between the United States and Mexico.

Lying at the center of the 2,000 mile long border between Mexico and the United States, Arizona has long been a cultural and economic focal point between the two countries. It is imperative, if the greatest benefits to both nations are to be achieved that Arizonans from both the public and private sector be involved in the United States-Mexico High Level Economic Dialogue (HLED).

Promoting Competiveness and Connectivity:

Arizona's ports of entry are critical to promoting competitiveness and connectivity between the two nations. The deferred maintenance alone, however, is estimated at \$6 billion, according to the State of the Border Report co-authored by Erik Lee, Executive Director North American Center for Transborder Studies at Arizona State University.

"We are way behind in constructing infrastructure to facilitate trade along the U.S.-Mexico border," Lee said. Deteriorating roads, bridges and ports of entry have added hours to the time it takes business and tourist to cross, and those delays have caused some businesses to move operations overseas, Lee added. The investment needed to bring Arizona's ports of entry up to par would be recouped with a few years due to the increase in economic activity.

Facilitating competitiveness through greater connectivity between the two nations requires that HLED not ignore the role played by state government and public-private partnerships. The work of the Arizona-Mexico Commission on creating competitive and sustainable development along the U.S.-Mexico border region exemplified how important Arizona will be to maximizing HLED's efforts and implementing a master plan for the region.

Fostering Economic Growth

Sustainable economic growth begins at the local level, when citizens in small, midsize and large urban areas as well as rural ones are involved. Fostering economic growth means encouraging people and businesses to pursue new opportunities, to seek innovative solutions to existing problems, and to find ways to improve conditions for everyone. This requires that government at both the national and state level work together to reform regulations so that people and business are motivated to take on the risks associated with these endeavors.

Arizona has recently passed a number of measures to make the state an ideal place for businesses, and the state has decreased regulatory burdens for both domestic and international businesses. Mexico is going through a similar set of reforms, including energy deregulations and tax reform. Both nations and the states along the border must move forward aggressively with trade reforms that foster growth and maximize the competitive advantages of all stakeholders.

Partnering to promote development and security

I believe that border and economic security challenges can be resolved and opportunities realized if collaboration with all stakeholders is given a chance, despite differences of opinion. And to that end, I would like to see representatives from federal, state, local and community stakeholder groups be given a seat at the HLED table.

Sincerely,

Andy Tobin

Sincerely,



Andy Tobin
Speaker of the House