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In the Loop

To: CEDC Board of Directors, CEDC Members and Interested Parties

From: Ted Sprague, CEDC President

Date: 9/29/09

SOMETIMES A WIN BECOMES A LOSS

After a three plus year recruitment and start up process, Cameron Family Glass powered down on September 13th. Needless to say this was a very sad event in the lives of the Cameron's and all the workers that spent thousands of hours working to make this plant thrive. The CEDC has been fielding many calls from other companies who have an interest in existing equipment, potential for the facility and others who have interests in the workforce. The rapid response team has already met with the former employees to assist in next steps for their careers. This is truly a difficult time for those families.

There has been much speculation as to why this happened and many rumors are floating around, most of them are untrue. The anonymous "blogs" are one reason for much of this speculation and rumor mongering. I make a point to not read the blogs as I find it difficult to sort through so many untruths, misinformation and outright lies. Why bloggers are not asked to put their names to what they write escapes me, but we'll save that for another day.

Suffice it to say, this project was a "start-up" from the beginning. A new venture proposed by a proud family to put Americans back to work in manufacturing. The family and team they surrounded themselves with were ambitious and tenacious. I am proud to have worked with all of them as they are some of the finest people I have ever worked with. As we have seen over the history of the United States companies and industries come and go. This does not mean the people who tried to make a go of it are not smart, earnest and talented. Many times they are, but other circumstances get the best of them.



September 29, 2009

SAVE THE DATE FOR ECONOMIC SUMMIT 2010 - - DECEMBER 3RD

The CEDC and Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce are teaming up once again to bring you - - “Economic Summit 2010” featuring “best guess” projections for 2010.

The event will take place Thursday, December 3rd from 5pm – 7pm at the Cowlitz Regional Conference Center. The event will feature one Keynote Speaker followed by a moderated panel of experts with Q&A from the audience.

We are looking forward to bringing you experts in their fields to share with you their thoughts and projections on specific areas of the economy. If you would like to sponsor this event, please contact Rick or myself soon as this is traditionally a sold out event.

CERB CONTINUES TO WORK TO CREATE JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY

One of the reasons for Washington’s high ranking by Forbes.com was the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). This is one of the few tools communities have access to in order to assist in private job creation and infrastructure development. At their most recent meeting, the CERB Board approved an essential project to move the EGT project along.

CERB approved a \$1 million loan to the Port of Longview for the construction of a new 500-foot long by 50-foot wide dock that will accommodate Panamax size ships. The structure will primarily handle cargo for Export Grant Terminal Development, LLC’s, proposed \$200 million grain export facility in the Port’s East Industrial Park. The project will create 50 jobs and is matched by \$6.7 million in public funds. The Board also approved an infrastructure project for an industrial park in Asotin County.

“CERB’s investment in these projects will support local communities and help lift us out of the current recession,” said Gov. Chris Gregoire. “These projects will grow jobs and income, and build stronger communities for our families.”

“These strategic infrastructure investments spur business development and job growth,” said Rogers Weed, director of the Washington State Department of Commerce. “CERB’s investments are vital to the state’s economy and to our local communities.”

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WE'RE NUMBER 2! WASHINGTON RANKS 2ND BEST STATE FOR BUSINESS BY FORBES.COM

Washington moves up a place from last year; also ranked No. 9 on State Business Tax Climate Index - up 3 spots. Washington is coming up a two-time winner this week with the news late Wednesday that the state ranks No. 2 on the Forbes.com 2009 Best States for Business. Virginia placed No. 1 and Utah was No. 3.

The Forbes rankings measure the cost of doing business in each state, labor supply, regulatory environment, economic climate, energy costs, taxes, growth prospects and quality of life. "Our high ranking is a testament to Washington's strong work force training programs, our schools, the ingenuity of the state's companies, our superior global ties and our desirable quality of life," Gregoire said.

Washington's lack of income tax helped earn the state a No. 9 position on another list - the 2010 State Business Tax Climate Index produced by the Tax Foundation of Washington, D.C. That list had Washington moving up from last year's No. 12 spot.

A common theme among the top-ranked states is an expanding, educated work force, Forbes.com said. Washington, Utah and Colorado ranked in the top four along with Virginia in a category that looks at high school and college attainment, as well as net migration and projected population growth.

Three of the biggest drops in the Forbes.com rankings were states where the housing boom and population surges once fueled rapid economic growth. In its 2007 ranking, Arizona, Florida and Nevada were the top three states in several areas including: five-year net migration, projected population growth, gross state product growth and five-year projected job growth.

"With the collapse of the housing market, the outlook is far less rosy," Forbes said. "People are expected to continue to flock to these three states, but the employment and economic forecast has worsened considerably in all three locales. Each of these states fell at least 10 spots in the current ranking."

Now we need to take these ranking and show they work in the real world to convince companies to expand and relocate into our area.

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HOW ABOUT SOME COMMON SENSE IN CONGRESS? BAIRD SAYS - - YES

Members of Congress should have ample time to read a bill before voting on it. It's a common sense notion that rarely is put into practice. Today, Congressman Brian Baird (D-WA) joined with Congressman Greg Walden (R-OR) in submitting a discharge petition that would bring Congressman Baird's "72 Hour Rule" (H. Res. 554) to the House floor for a vote. The straight forward, bipartisan legislation would require all major bills be posted online for at least 72 hours prior to being considered for final passage by the House of Representatives. Currently H. Res. 554 has 98 cosponsors.

"Members of Congress are too often asked to make decisions on bills that can be longer than telephone books and are only given a few hours to actually read them. That is simply wrong," said Congressman Baird. "This isn't about politics. Both parties are guilty. Now is the time to fix this once and for all, and put rules in place so that Congress is better able to serve the American people. People should have a chance to read what is in legislation before it becomes law, not after."

A discharge petition is a rarely used procedural tool available to every Member of the House of Representatives to call up legislation for a vote. To succeed, a petition must receive signatures from a majority of Members (currently this threshold is 218). Once a majority of Members sign on, the bill is discharged from the committee system and brought to the floor for consideration. This process was used to pass landmark campaign finance reform legislation; today that law is commonly referred to as McCain Feingold.

"Passing the seventy-two hour rule is common sense," said Congressman Baird. "If every American contacts their Representative and encourages him or her to sign this discharge petition, I'm confident that the seventy-two hour rule will become law."