



February 15, 2011

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Economic Development Day Gives Statewide Professionals Chance to Discuss 2011 Legislative Agenda *Group names Rep. McNiel Legislative Advocate of the Year*

Oklahoma City – Members of the statewide organization of economic developers met at the state Capitol today to educate legislators on their 2011 legislative agenda and name their legislative advocate of the year.

The Oklahoma Professional Economic Development Council (OEDC), an affiliate of The State Chamber of Oklahoma, has a pro-business, pro-jobs agenda that supports Governor Mary Fallin's vision for Oklahoma.

OEDC's Economic Development Day at the Capitol featured remarks from Lieutenant Governor Todd Lamb, President Pro-Tempore Brian Bingman and Secretary of Commerce David Lopez. The program also included discussion of OEDC's 2011 legislative agenda with members. Chad Warmington, Executive Vice President of The State Chamber of Oklahoma, also discussed the importance of economic developers getting actively involved in promoting pro-business legislation both at the Capitol and with their local leaders back home.

"Our elected officials are bombarded with a number of pressing issues, so it is vital that we stress the importance of economic development to the future of Oklahoma," said Lyle Roggow, president of the Duncan Area Economic Development Foundation and Chair Elect of OEDC. "Our governor is supportive of a pro-business agenda and we need to support her efforts to keep Oklahoma on the right track for positive growth."

During the program, Oklahoma Rep. Skye McNiel, R-Bristow, was named 2010 Legislative Advocate of the Year by OEDC. This award is given each year recognizing one legislator who the OEDC membership felt should be recognized for outstanding support of economic development legislation.

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"As a small business owner herself, Rep. McNiel understands business issues and the importance of positioning Oklahoma to be a pro-jobs state," said Roggow. "McNiel has provided great leadership and we commend her for her efforts on legislation affecting economic development in Oklahoma."

McNiel joins a list going back to 1996 of distinguished past recipients, including former Speaker of the House Chris Benge, former President Pro-Tempore Senator Glenn Coffee, and Rep. Dan Sullivan.

Following the program, members of OEDC took their agenda to legislators to discuss the importance of the key economic development bills and the impact those bills have on job growth and business in Oklahoma.

“Though balancing the budget is a top priority this session, lawmakers need to understand that the economic development decisions we make this year will impact our state for decades to come,” said The State Chamber’s President Fred Morgan. “That is why it is so important that The State Chamber and our grassroots economic development partners like OEDC together seek to educate and promote a pro-jobs agenda for this legislative session.”

For more information about OEDC, or for a full list of Legislative Advocate of the Year past recipients, visit www.oedc.net.