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**Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Joins Coalition Seeking to Advance
Skilled Worker Immigration Reform**

Group seeks to strengthen job creation and innovation through improved access to international talent

Tampa, Florida (February 19, 2013) – The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce today announced its participation in “Business for Skilled Worker Immigration,” a coalition of 39 Chambers of Commerce to date, from across the country working together to advance skilled worker immigration reform as a means of driving job creation, innovation and other economic growth. The coalition will urge Congress to address this important talent issue as part of broader-based immigration reform expected to be taken up this session.

Business for Skilled Worker Immigration represents a strong cross-section of the nation’s business community, with broad geographic diversity among its members. With talent a key driver of the economy, coalition members seek to bring increased focus on the critical challenge of improving access to top international talent. Combined with current programs to strengthen domestic science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training, the coalition believes its efforts can help improve long-term economic competitiveness.

The group will focus on three specific proposals designed to improve current skilled worker immigration policy:

1. Increasing the availability of **temporary, skilled worker** (H-1B) visas;
2. Increasing the availability of permanent resident visas (green cards) for **STEM graduates and workers**; and
3. Creating new startup visas for immigrant **entrepreneurs** who launch businesses in the U.S. and meet certain employment and financing goals.

“The Chamber is committed to helping our businesses attract and retain local talent. Many international students attend our outstanding local universities and we want to keep that talent local. Now is the right time for immigration reform that will improve employers’ ability to access a deeper talent pool and create opportunities for more entrepreneurs to launch businesses locally and throughout the U.S.,” said Bob Rohrlack, president and CEO of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce.

The coalition plans to leverage the increased focus on broader-based immigration reform in Washington to advance immigration issues that are important to the business community. The Chambers who make up Business for Skilled Worker Immigration will engage in lobbying and advocacy efforts with members of Congress and the Administration; using communications activities to raise awareness among key business and government stakeholders, and the general public; and coordination of strategy to maximize the collective impact of efforts to advance skilled worker immigration reform.

A full list of coalition members is below and available on the coalition web page, along with additional information about [Business for Skilled Worker Immigration](#).

Business for Skilled Worker Immigration Coalition Members:

- Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Allegheny Conference on Community Development
- Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Bridgeport Regional Business Council
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership

- CEO Council for Growth / Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
- Columbus Chamber of Commerce
- Detroit Regional Chamber
- Fayetteville Regional Chamber
- Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition
- Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Louisville Inc.
- Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce
- Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce
- Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce
- Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lubbock Chamber of Commerce
- Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
- Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Orange County Business Council
- Overland Park Chamber of Commerce
- Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Rockford Chamber of Commerce
- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
- San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
- San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- St. Louis Regional Chamber & Growth Association
- The Business Council of Fairfield County
- Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce

About the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce is committed to serving our members and enhancing our community by building business success. The Chamber provides a greater return on investment and involvement by providing innovative leadership, inside access, influential advocacy and increased opportunities.

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