



For Immediate Release

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Southern Economic Development Council and the American Chamber of Commerce in Canada Announce Commerce Alliance

ATLANTA, GA. – April 28, 2014 - The Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) and the American Chamber of Commerce in Canada (AmCham Canada) have forged a two-year commerce alliance to advance the missions and support the growth of both organizations. The alliance opens the door for reciprocal memberships in both organizations, allowing the members of each to participate in the activities of the other. The goal of the alliance is to enhance cross-border networks for business development and encourage interaction among the members of both organizations. The alliance could foster employment opportunities and cultural and policy exchanges as well.

“This agreement opens exciting possibilities for cooperation and mutual benefit for both SEDC and AmCham Canada,” said SEDC Chairman Hal Johnson. “The South leads the nation in developing new sites for business growth. As commerce with Canada continues to grow, businesses in both countries will benefit from the network of contacts and professional expertise the two organizations represent.”

The Memorandum of Understanding between SEDC and AmCham Canada that establishes the alliance identifies several areas of potential cooperation. The alliance is designed to raise awareness of business opportunities in all the designated geographic jurisdictions of both partners and help the members of each obtain needed business resources and information. In addition to opening the meetings and conferences of each partner to the members of the other, the alliance will initiate a structured process of electronic communication and cooperative events to assist existing and potential members in generating business development opportunities. Such activities might include electronic committee participation around identified objectives of each organization.

“On behalf of the Canadian and American members of AmCham Canada, I am excited that we are forging this unique commercial alliance with our allies and members of the Southern Economic Development Council,” said Larry R. Wilson, Secretary, Board of Directors, American Chamber of Commerce in Canada. “Our mutual areas of interest in infrastructure, education, trade, commerce, culture, and government will benefit from our collaboration.”

The alliance outlines the following specific areas of cooperation:

- Develop and host Young Professionals events to help educate and mentor participants and groom new talent in the field
- Establish a digital format for data dissemination
- Offer reciprocal memberships
- Cross –advertise on each organization’s web site with information about benefits and activities
- Coordinate speaking opportunities for leaders from each organization
- Share economic forecasts and perspectives

In addition, AmCham Canada members who speak many languages will assist SEDC members in networking worldwide and provide content and expertise through SEDC’s learning portals. SEDC will provide contacts for AmCham Canada members in each of the 17 states in its footprint for direct communication and networking.

“The professional growth and business development opportunities opened up by this alliance are remarkable,” said the first Vice Chair of SEDC, Michael Philpot. “It’s a formula we can replicate to create models of cooperation, and we’re doing so with this agreement. We’re only limited by our imagination.”

“This new commerce alliance is bookended by two great nations,” said U.S. Consul General to Canada James Dickmeyer. “I look forward to a dynamic exchange of ideas and information that will lead to stronger economic development in the U.S. and Canada.”

Founded in 1946, the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) is the oldest and largest regional association of economic development professionals in the U.S. Through its conferences and meetings, research and publications, and in-person and online networking and educational opportunities, SEDC enables its members to reach their optimum potential in professional growth and development. The membership consists of nearly a thousand individuals representing states, counties, municipalities, nonprofits, and for-profit businesses.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Canada (AmCham Canada) is a private, nonprofit membership association that promotes the two-way flow of trade and investment between Canada and the United States. AmCham Canada’s membership is composed of large and small U.S. companies that operate within Canada as well as Canadian firms of all sizes that sell to or operate within the U.S. Headquartered in Ottawa, AmCham Canada has chapters in Ontario, Quebec, Calgary, Vancouver and Halifax. It is affiliated with the United States Chamber of Commerce.