

GCP ADVOCACY TACKLES NORTHEAST OHIO BUSINESS ISSUES

Advocacy is one of the Greater Cleveland Partnership's (GCP) strongest advantages. Backed by the power of more than 15,000 businesses, including the smallest and largest Northeast Ohio employers, elected officials can't ignore what the GCP has to say about business.

"Our advocacy successes over the past two years are impressive," said Carol Caruso, GCP's senior vice president of government relations. "We help the Greater Cleveland business community have a strong voice in City Hall, Columbus and Washington, D.C. on issues that matter most—technology, innovation, job creation, business attraction, connect physical development, workforce and education."

All GCP advocacy efforts are driven by a formal public policy agenda that includes:

- Saving the Defense Finance and Account Service (DFAS) operation in Cleveland from closure
- Passage of state tax reform
- Passage of state tort reform



Carol Caruso, vice president of advocacy for the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), is shown signing an agreement supporting value-driven health care, an initiative of U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Mike Leavitt (standing). The GCP and COSE were among only a handful of local organizations invited to sign the agreement of support at Secretary Leavitt's speech at the City Club on Jan. 30.



GCP members mingle with public officials, including Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, at the annual Public Officials Reception.



Newly elected U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown makes the GCP Board of Directors his first meeting with the Cleveland business community.



Cuyahoga County Commissioner Peter Lawson Jones (center) meets with GCP members.



GCP Board Member Bill Christopher, executive vice president of Alcoa, meets with U.S. Sen. George Voinovich in Washington, D.C. on Northeast Ohio air quality.

- Securing a role for the NASA Glenn Research Center in space exploration
- Renewing Ohio's Third Frontier Grant program

"We're pleased with what we were able to accomplish on behalf of the business community," said Caruso. "But we're not finished. We're stretching ourselves to identify other critical challenges and legislative solutions."

GCP's advocacy team, which includes members, industry leaders and policy experts, are currently developing an agenda that will drive the organization's work through 2008. It will focus on:

- Tackling urban issues including health care and housing through a likely partnership with other urban chambers

of commerce throughout Ohio.

- Preparing Northeast Ohio for new federal air quality standards that will go into effect in two years. The resulting penalties could increase the cost of doing business in Northeast Ohio and become a deterrent to business attraction and expansion.
- Exploring business sustainability or alternative energy options, investments and discoveries.

The agenda will be rolled out at GCP's Annual Meeting on March 20 at the State Theater in Downtown Cleveland. Register online at www.gcpartnership.com or call (216) 592-2222. <<

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