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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indiana Chamber Outlines Need for Bipartisanship at Statehouse

August 26, 2008 (INDIANAPOLIS) — The Indiana Chamber of Commerce today called for bipartisanship in the final installment of its “Letters to Our Leaders” public policy campaign to the state’s two major party candidates for governor.

“Teamwork in one form or another is something most of us have to engage in everyday on our jobs for the greater good of the company. Unfortunately, when it comes to politics, working together and seeking compromise too frequently prove to be stumbling blocks,” declares Indiana Chamber President Kevin Brinegar.

“Too often, partisanship drives our political process – to the point where winning the next election by any means is more important than being able to govern effectively if elected. This turns off voters and makes it very difficult to solve problems and achieve real progress once in office.”

The Indiana Chamber says both parties coming together to generate positive policy changes can and has produced significant results. A couple of samples:

- In 1999, Indiana moved to the forefront of K through 12 education standards and accountability measures. A key driver was the General Assembly working in a bipartisan fashion to create Indiana’s Education Roundtable.
- In 2002, the governor teamed with legislative leaders of both parties to help craft comprehensive tax reform. That started a series of legislative sessions that featured cooperation across the aisles and passage of important economic development initiatives

Since July 8, the Indiana Chamber has released a letter each week to the candidates and the general public on a key issue facing the state. The overall goal: to offer guidance on policies that will help focus the gubernatorial campaigns on what really matters to Hoosiers.

“While today’s bipartisanship letter is the final message in the series, in many ways it also marks the start of this effort for us,” Brinegar offers. “We intend to keep these policies top of mind for the candidates and the public right up to the election and into the next legislative session. The upcoming gubernatorial debates in Merrillville, Jasper and Bloomington will offer the perfect opportunity for the candidates to address these and other policy topics.”

The bipartisanship letter plus the accompanying video commentary are available at www.indianachamber.com/letters. There, Hoosiers can also view all of the issue letters, as well as take the opportunity to share their thoughts on the Chamber blog.

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The Indiana Chamber of Commerce has been the state’s largest broad-based business advocacy organization for over 85 years. The more than 4,800 member companies employ 800,000 Hoosier workers.