We would like to thank all the members and legislators who joined us in Twin Falls for the 37th Annual IACI Public Policy Conference. This was the best attended conference in recent history, and the IACI staff greatly appreciates each of you! Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) kicked off the conference on Sunday with an update on the numerous federal issues that Congress is currently grappling with. The Congressman specifically touched on the budget debate and the potential impacts to Idaho. IACI also surprised the Congressman by awarding its inaugural Prosperity Star Award to him for his continuing hard work on behalf of the business community.

Superintendent Tom Luna and wife Cindy joined the opening reception to thank IACI members for their support during the last legislative session of significant education reform. The Superintendent asked for continued support and cooperation as the state works to implement the components of the legislation.

The first discussion panel on Health Care Reform was led by Dr. David Pace, President and CEO of St. Luke’s Health Systems, and Zelda Geyer-Sylvia, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Idaho. This panel discussed how the federal health care plan may affect our state’s employers, as well as the state budget, and how a possible expansion of Idaho’s Medicaid program might be funded. Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter was the featured speaker Tuesday morning. He complimented IACI membership for their hard work in supporting education reforms in Idaho. He also reported on his efforts to make sure the state recovers in a fiscally responsible manner within Project 60. IACI President Alex LaBeau said, “Governor Otter has demonstrated tremendous leadership in navigating our state through a sea of challenging times, always being mindful that it is business that creates jobs — not government. Unlike the financial disasters faced in many states, Governor Otter has managed to keep our state recovers in a fiscally responsible manner.”

The second discussion forum was focused on Redistricting, as presented by Secretary of State Ben Ysursa. He provided a good overview to the current redistricting process and indicated there will likely be significant changes in the current 35 districts due to the 2010 census results. The Annual Meeting was also held, at which IACI board members were approved for new terms, and both the 2012 Statement of Public Policy and 2012 Public Policy Priorities were adopted.

Legislative Leadership provided an update to the IACI Board, which was open to all membership this year, reporting on this year’s session, as well as expectations for the 2012 session.

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The 2012 Annual Conference Summary

Friday, June 24, 2011

Pat Harwood Award

Gregory S. Casey, the current President and CEO of BiPAC and a former IACI President, was awarded the 19th Annual Pat K. Harwood Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor given by the Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry.

“Greg was chosen for this award for his leadership, service, courage, political wisdom, integrity and sense of humor,” said IACI Board Chair Mark Benson, Vice President with Potlatch Corp., in presenting the award. A very surprised Greg was awarded the honor just minutes before giving his keynote address at the IACI Annual Meeting. Read complete details in the news release.

Environmental Excellence Award

The IACI Environmental Excellence Award provides annual recognition to businesses which have achieved outstanding results in environmental protection and enhancement.

Union Pacific Railroad was recognized this year for decreasing pollution, more efficiently using natural resources, and implementing remediation and redevelopment projects throughout the state.

Full award details are included in the news release.

Golf Tournament

Congratulations to Bob Naerebout, Rick Naerebout, and Brian Boer and Rep. John VanderWoude, who won the scramble format tournament on a tie breaker with last year’s winning team of John Eaton, Pam Eaton, John Revier and Jeremy Pisca! In third place were Mark Klopman, Jason Kreizenbeck, Senator John McGee and Mike Reynolds. Kudos also go to Mark Benson who won the individual gross competition, and Jack Lyman who won the net competition!