



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

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**LOS ANGELES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA
AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS
URGE FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN AMERICA'S ECONOMIC GATEWAY**

Southern California's premier advocacy trip to Washington, D.C. brings largest-ever bipartisan delegation to nation's capital to advocate for transportation, public safety, education and more

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today on Capitol Hill, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and nearly 200 business and community leaders from Southern California joined together to kick off *Access Washington, D.C. 2007*. This year's advocacy trip includes the largest-ever bipartisan delegation of Southern California leaders including: Anaheim Mayor Curt Pringle, Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom, Orange County Supervisor Pat Bates, Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent David L. Brewer III, LAUSD School Board President Marlene Canter, five Los Angeles City Councilmembers and more than 20 Southern California business and trade organizations.

"As California goes, so goes the nation," Mayor Villaraigosa said. "Southern California is America's economic gateway. Without the appropriate federal investments in Southern California's transportation infrastructure, goods movement, housing and education, Washington, D.C. lawmakers risk derailing vital job creation and destabilizing the nation's backbone for trade and economic development."

Southern California is America's economic gateway. With 43 percent of imports coming through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, Southern California is the top entry point for all goods, visitors and immigrants entering the U.S. Southern California is also the largest manufacturing center in the nation and the entertainment industry capital of the world. With more than 18 million residents and 1.5 million businesses, the region's economy and transportation infrastructure are vital to the rest of the state and nation.

"Southern California's economy ranks 15th in the world and our population is larger than 47 states in the nation," said L.A. Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben. "During *Access Washington, D.C. 2007*, we're asking Congress to invest in this national asset, which delivers tremendous return on investment to America."

The Southern California economy is essential to the future growth and prosperity of the nation. According to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the region accounts for approximately six percent of the nation's total share of employment, wages and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Without investment in Southern California ports, airports, public transportation systems, housing and education, Washington, D.C. lawmakers risk derailing vital job creation and destabilizing the nation's backbone for trade and economic development.

During *Access Washington, D.C. 2007*, the nearly 200-member delegation of civic, business and community leaders will meet with more than 50 elected officials and policymakers to advocate for a comprehensive set of investment opportunities designed to build and maintain the infrastructure needed to support Southern California's schools, anti-gang programs, transportation systems, public housing and more. A complete list of legislation and issues is available at http://www.lachamber.org/ADC%20LBDoc_Policy.pdf.

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