

Matt Cabrey, Executive Director, Select Greater Philadelphia
Testimony before the PA House of Representatives' Majority Policy Committee
Attracting Business to Pennsylvania
Friday, September 13, 2019 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Philadelphia City Hall | Mayor's Reception Room (Room 202)

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to share insights and suggestions as it relates to attracting new businesses and jobs to Pennsylvania. I'm Matt Cabrey and I lead Select Greater Philadelphia, a Council of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia.

Select is *the* business attraction organization for the 11-county region of northern Delaware, southern New Jersey, and southeastern Pennsylvania. We are a non-profit entity funded by academic and business organizations, and we are focused on highlighting Greater Philadelphia's unique business assets to a national and global audience – and to regional audiences too – with the ultimate goal of growing the economic vibrancy of our collective community by attracting new businesses and new jobs to our Greater Philadelphia neighborhood. We at Select believe that when we work, think and act as a unified, collaborative community across our Commonwealth and across our region, we are stronger – and we have a more compelling and attractive message to communicate with business leaders and decision makers from around the world. At the core of our approach is storytelling - we tell the story of the incredible business assets we have across our community – talent, transportation infrastructure, quality of life, cost of living, and cost of doing business, access to quality education from kindergarten to high school and beyond, and more.

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We work closely the Commonwealth's DCED team – both OIBD and GAT – as well as with each of the economic development teams in the five counties of southeastern Pennsylvania to promote the region, and welcome new businesses. Regionally, a key to our work and success is the cooperative and collaborative engagements with each of the counties in southeastern Pennsylvania and especially with the City of Philadelphia's Department of Commerce, the team at PIDC, as well as with our colleagues at PHLCVB and Visit Philadelphia.

Specifically, Select Greater Philadelphia markets the region's business assets through paid, earned, and owned media; we cultivate relationships at national and international conferences and trade shows, and through speaking engagements; we organize and lead tours, provide data and information, and make connections for our guests and prospects with experts in the region who help to "close" the project and bring it to our community. In short, we serve as the marketers of the business story in our region, and as the navigators who help businesses and their leaders make an informed choice about why this region is the perfect fit to expand and grow a business and career.

Examples of our alignment with the team at Pennsylvania's DCED include but are not limited to:

- a) Coordinating the regional program and schedule with OIBD for the Commonwealth's in-country consultants when they are visiting Pennsylvania to learn about our assets;
- b) Serving as a "lead generator" to bring projects to southeastern Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth;
- c) Serving as a regional partner for meetings and tours when DCED generates the lead;
- d) Partnering on regional marketing initiatives, marketing missions, and conferences including: IAMC, Select USA, International Plastics Showcase; and recent business attraction mission trips to Europe organized with DCED's OIBD team as well as leveraging opportunities made available through regional initiatives such as tours organized and implemented by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association; and
- e) Serving as one of the partners in the Engage! program, listening to the challenges and opportunities shared by businesses, and offering insight and guidance to help them overcome hurdles.

Our active engagement with DCED and with each economic development team in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties to showcase our region in an effort to bring new businesses and jobs to southeastern Pennsylvania is highly valued by our team, and we need this work to continue to deliver on our mission and to grow the economic vitality of southeastern Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth overall.

Feedback we hear from businesses in the region is generally positive, though each county has its nuances and opportunities specific to that community.

Feedback we hear from guests visiting the region – business leaders, site consultants, and real estate professionals – is more of a "*Wow, we did not realize southeastern Pennsylvania has so much to offer and is such a great place to live, work and raise a family.*" They are generally surprised because their perceptions are not aligned with the reality of our business and quality of life assets.

We need to continue to close that gap between the misperception and the reality by investing more in the efforts by Select, and the county teams, as well as the Commonwealth overall to market Pennsylvania to a national and global audience as a place to not just visit, but to also establish and grow a business and a career, as the place to innovate, create, educate, prosper, and raise a family.

At the state level, here are ways we can continue to improve on the business attraction marketing and job creation work that our team at Select Greater Philadelphia and other like-minded organizations focus on every day:

- a) Continue to create a business-friendly environment by minimizing or eliminating restrictive regulations while at the same time further developing and promoting Pennsylvania as a welcoming place to establish and grow a business and a career. At the very least, let's not give companies, innovators, entrepreneurs, and job seekers any reasons to leave the Commonwealth.
- b) Invest in targeted business attraction campaigns that are supported by the public and private sectors, essentially delivering a win for all involved. This can and should be industry-specific initiatives that align with the skills and strengths of Pennsylvania.
- c) Create a dedicated funding source to support business attraction efforts. Similar to the success realized by investing in tourism and meeting/convention attraction, a dedicated vehicle to fund business attraction marketing will produce similar positive outcomes that we have seen over the years with tourism and conventions coming and returning to the Commonwealth.
- d) Think differently. Let's consider new ways to transform Pennsylvania into a technology and innovation leader that retains and attracts companies, talent and investment to all corners of the Commonwealth – from smaller towns desperate to find a new beginning, to large urban areas that are simultaneously thriving and wrestling with social services challenges.

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I not only applaud this Pennsylvania House of Representatives' Majority Policy Committee for inviting these ideas and insights in support of your collective efforts to enhance the business environment across the Commonwealth, my colleagues and I at Select Greater Philadelphia and our Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia look forward to working with you to further develop and implement ideas and policies that deliver winning outcomes as it relates to marketing our state's business assets, and attracting new businesses and jobs to communities across Pennsylvania. Working together to bring new companies to our communities, we'll infuse a new economic vibrancy across the Commonwealth.

Thank you for this opportunity, and I am happy to offer additional insights today and in the future.

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