

Challenge Returns for General Assembly

One year ago the Chamber addressed the legislative prospects in respect to the comprehensive tax restructuring (coupled with reassessment, personal property tax reforms and budget deficit relief) that was eventually enacted six months later. At that time we said:

“Legislators in the House and Senate, Democrat and Republican, have an immense job ahead of them. They must craft a plan that addresses today’s short-term needs, while not overlooking the all-important long-term objective of enhancing our state’s business environment.”



Today, entering the 2003 General Assembly, the state faces an estimated \$760 million budget deficit for the next biennium (through fiscal year 2005). Also on the table, as of early December, is a 10-year, \$1.25 billion economic development and jobs proposal offered by the administration.

Thus, the same words of one year ago still apply. There are glaring and immediate budget needs, with no easy answers in sight. Yet, short-term fixes will not solve the overriding problem of an economy that must diversify and adapt to create the high-skill, high-wage jobs of the 21st century.

The administration’s Energize Indiana plan bears consideration. Many of the initiatives are similar to what the Chamber has been espousing for much of the last decade and actively seeking as part of our *Economic Vision 2010* plan since it was introduced in 2000.

Whether the called-for use of current and future tobacco funds is the best way to fund the Energize Indiana program will be determined as part of the legislative process. What must be remembered at this point is that the state must enhance its economic development effort or today’s budget woes will be repeated regularly in coming years.

The Chamber and its many allies played a vital role in last year’s successful tax restructuring. Your input and active participation will once again be crucial. Let your senators and representatives know the importance of the 21st Century Research and Technology Fund, Indiana-based venture capital pools, rural economic development, additional investments in education and workforce development, and the other initiatives proposed.

Working together we can succeed. The Chamber, as always, will be out front leading the way.

Sincerely,

Kevin Brinegar
President

BizVoice

January/February 2003
Volume 6, Number 1

**BizVOICE
Publisher**
Kevin Brinegar
kbrinegar@indianachamber.com

Editor
Tom Schuman
tschuman@indianachamber.com

Layout/Graphics
Tony Spataro
tspataro@indianachamber.com

Proofreading
Laura Adams

Advertising
Ann Triplett
(317) 264-6898
atriplett@indianachamber.com

Advertising Billing
Liz Hodge

Contributors
Jay Archer
Peter G. Christman
Tony Cooper
David Funke
George Raymond
Linda Sparks

Mission
To inform and influence

**Indiana Chamber of Commerce
Chairman**
Jerry Semler
American United Life
Indianapolis

Vice Chair
Jean Wojtowicz
Cambridge Capital Management Corp.
Indianapolis

President
Kevin Brinegar

BizVoice (ISSN 1521-0146) is published bimonthly by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, 115 W. Washington, Suite 850S, P.O. Box 44926, Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926. *BizVoice* magazine is provided as a benefit of membership in the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. Non-member subscriptions: \$25.20 per year (includes sales tax). Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *BizVoice*, 115 W. Washington, Suite 850S, P.O. Box 44926, Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926.

Indiana Chamber of Commerce
115 W. Washington, Suite 850S
P.O. Box 44926
Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926
Phone: (317) 264-3110, Fax: (317) 264-6855
Internet address: www.indianachamber.com
E-mail: bizvoice@indianachamber.com

© Copyright 2002, Indiana Chamber of Commerce

Indiana Chamber
The Voice of
Indiana Business.