



Business Disaster Assistance and Recovery Program

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U.S. Chamber Aids Disaster Response Efforts in Southern California

Washington, DC — The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) has dispatched a team to Southern California to assist the disaster response process. BCLC is working closely with businesses across the country to contribute to the region's recovery from the wildfires.

"We've learned that disaster response isn't just about saving lives. Disasters take a huge toll on jobs and communities," says BCLC Executive Director Stephen Jordan. "Organizations like the Office Depot Foundation, Safeway, Qualcomm and others are making a strategic, long-term commitment to helping Southern California recover."

Enabled by a grant from the Office Depot Foundation and in cooperation with the Small Business Administration and the International Economic Development Council, BCLC is in close communication and coordination with hundreds of chambers and small businesses across the area and around the country, contributing immediate relief and working to assess the extent of the economic damage and the long-term recovery needs.

To date, the U.S. business community has contributed more than \$20 million in cash and in-kind contributions to relief and recovery. Assistance pledges include \$5 million from Sempra Energy; \$1.5 million from Qualcomm; \$1 million each from Bank of America, GE Foundation, Target, and Wal-Mart; \$750,000 from Safeway and Safeway Foundation; free calling services and products from Verizon; and other notable contributions from such companies as Anheuser-Busch, Chevron, CVS/pharmacy, Microsoft and Toys "R" Us. A listing of corporate donations is available on BCLC's website, www.uschamber.com/bclc/2007wildfires.

The San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and its president and CEO Ruben Barrales are also playing a pivotal role, contacting local businesses and conducting preliminary damage assessments. Leaders in the business community are stressing that this is not just about the immediate crisis, but the long-term recovery as well.

BCLC is a 501(c)3 affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and is the Chamber's lead agency for corporate disaster assistance issues. The U.S. Chamber is the world's largest business federation representing more than 3 million business and organizations of every size, sector and region.

www.uschamber.com

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The Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) is a 501(c)3 affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. It is dedicated to serving the humanitarian, philanthropic, and civic needs and aspirations of American businesses. Visit www.uschamber.com/bclc.

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