



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL
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L.A. AREA CHAMBER NAMES GARY L. TOEBBEN NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO

LOS ANGELES, CA – The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce announced today the selection of nationally recognized business leader Gary L. Toebben as its new president and CEO. Toebben will assume his post on July 1, 2006, succeeding Rusty Hammer, who resigned for health reasons after leading the Chamber for five years.

“Los Angeles is a remarkable business and economic engine for California and the world,” said Dave Nichols, senior vice president, AT&T and L.A. Area Chamber Board Chair. “Gary Toebben knows business advocacy inside and out. With his stellar credentials, 30-year track record and relationships at the national, state and local levels, we are confident that Gary is the best person to help us harness this engine and accelerate the Chamber’s continued growth.”

“Gary Toebben is one of the best Chamber executives in the nation,” said Hammer. “I’ve enjoyed working with him over the last several years on national issues involving Chambers. He is an excellent choice to take the L.A. Area Chamber to the next level, and he will do great things for Los Angeles.”

Toebben is a former chair and current trustee of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives. Most recently, Toebben served as president and CEO of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, where he achieved national recognition for creating a model 21st century chamber of commerce, incorporating policy advocacy and business development with programs that cultivate community leaders and develop a skilled workforce. While at the NKCC, Toebben built the organization into a leading regional advocate for investment in infrastructure and public transportation, tourism development, and labor and economic development.

“I believe Los Angeles is the most vibrant region in the nation right now, and our diverse, entrepreneurial and energetic business community is fueling that growth,” said Toebben. “The L.A. Area Chamber plays a vital role not only in developing the region’s diverse businesses and economy, but also in influencing public policy and community leadership. I am honored to join this prestigious organization at such a fortuitous time in L.A.’s development.”

Toebben's leadership record also includes serving as president of both the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives and Kansas Chamber of Commerce Executives, member of the Kansas Governor's Transportation Advisory Board, and chair of the University of Colorado Institute for Organization Management Board Regents.

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"What Rusty Hammer proved as the previous president of the L.A. Area Chamber is the power of collaboration," said Chris McKenzie, executive director, League of California Cities. He leveraged the unique coalition-building power of a regional chamber to bring together businesses, both big and small, toward common causes. I have known and worked with Gary for years, and nobody is better prepared to build on those achievements than Gary Toebben."

"Toebben has an unparalleled track record as a chamber executive," said Maria Contreras-Sweet, president, FORTIUS Holdings and a member of the Chamber's search committee. "His experience in today's political and economic climate is crucial in making sure that our business community is able to effectively navigate complex government, environment and community issues. I'm excited to have Gary taking the helm of the L.A. Area Chamber."

"The Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati region is home to nine Fortune 500 companies, which is a testament to the kind of business-friendly environment that Gary and the region's business leaders have worked to create and maintain. Our loss is L.A.'s gain—big gain," said Helen Carroll, community relations manager, Toyota Engineering and Manufacturing, North America, Inc., the headquarters for Toyota's manufacturing operations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Carroll also serves as chair of the NKCC board.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Toebben and his wife Janice, a vice president with US Bank, have four grown children.

Toebben was selected unanimously after a comprehensive, six-month national search conducted by Korn/Ferry International.

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The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.org.