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CONTACT: Meghan Risch
CCTB
312.567.8540
mrisch@choosechicago.com

CHICAGO CONVENTION & TOURISM BUREAU LAUNCHES AGGRESSIVE CAMPAIGN TO COMMUNICATE BENEFITS OF HISTORIC McCORMICK PLACE LEGISLATION

CHICAGO – MAY 7, 2010 – The Chicago Convention & Tourism Bureau (CCTB) today announced an aggressive outreach campaign, coming on the heels of swift reforms from state legislators aimed at attracting and retaining business at McCormick Place. The Illinois General Assembly today passed historic McCormick Place legislation addressing the needs of its customers. Governor Quinn is expected to sign the bill, which gives unprecedented rights to exhibitors.

“This legislation is a big win for the state of Illinois and especially for our customers,” said Tim Roby, CCTB President and CEO. “Our customers asked for more flexibility and lower costs, and Springfield delivered. It is exactly the reform we need to keep our state vibrant and the trade shows coming back.”

“Thanks to this legislation, we will see a new era in Chicago conventions,” said David Causton, McCormick Place General Manager. “This truly changes the landscape here in Chicago, and we look forward to working with our partners and seeing this vision through to reality.”

The CCTB and McCormick Place have been in close contact with their customers throughout the legislative process and are now reaching out to them to explain the benefits they will see. The CCTB has been selling the city of Chicago and state of Illinois for more than 70 years.

“Discussing the legislation with our customers is our number one priority right now,” Roby said. “Our customers have kept a close eye on the process since the very beginning, and they deserve to know exactly how and when they will see the benefits. Make no mistake, they will see substantial changes.”

The legislation grants exhibitors the ability to do their own electrical work or contract it out, and bring in their own food for personal consumption.

“Our convention industry was at a breaking point, and the jobs and tax revenue it brings to our city and state were in jeopardy,” Causton said. “This process has been a collaborative effort. Many people, including our customers, rallied together to make this sweeping legislation possible. Now, after months of hard work, all we need is for Governor Quinn to sign this bill into law.”

The economics of the convention industry have been a focus point. Meetings and conventions held at McCormick Place support 66,000 jobs and generate \$251 million in tax revenue each year. The customers who come to Illinois spend close to \$8 billion in the state.

Over the next few weeks and months, the CCTB and McCormick Place will continue to work closely with its current and prospective customers.

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