

January 18, 2006

The Honorable Deval L. Patrick
Governor of the Commonwealth
The State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

We are writing to both congratulate and thank you for your decision to rejoin the New England Governor's Conference. As you said at the time of the announcement, "Massachusetts is stronger if we can act in concert with the other states in the region." We could not agree more.

Dan Smith, President of Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems and a member of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MBR), often refers to our area as "The Great State of New England." It is in this spirit that the MBR joined last fall with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and national Council on Competitiveness – along with 17 other regional partners – to convene the Regional Innovation Summit at MIT. The goal was to bring together our region's rich intellectual capital, business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit to answer a critical question: how do we better collaborate to accelerate innovation and bolster the region's global competitiveness? More than 200 regional leaders from business, government and education attended the day-long event. A summary is included for your review.

From these discussions, several themes emerged. Most significantly, participants from a variety of industry sectors discussed the importance of convening routinely as a region around issues that will drive our regional innovation economy into the future. They also expressed the need for leadership in developing a regional innovation agenda that includes areas such as defense and advanced manufacturing, energy and the environment, education, health care and information technology. Specifically, the region needs to identify who those leaders will be, as well as the role of public and private universities, the business community, business and trade organizations, and government in providing that leadership.

As Susan Hockfield, President of MIT, said at the Regional Innovation Summit: "The particular importance of this Summit lies in the opportunity it offers to engage all the stakeholders in innovation in a common dialogue. We need new links between research and development, between the academy and business, and between the public and private sectors." With Massachusetts once again a member of the New England Governors'


Conference, the opportunity exists for that leadership to emerge and these "links" to be established.

From the Summit, other important themes emerged as well, such as: collaborating better and more often across communities, business sectors, jurisdictional boundaries, and academic disciplines; engaging the public, policy makers and the international community so that they understand the value of growth sectors to the future economy of the region and support the initiatives that are already identified that would foster this growth; planning more collaboratively to develop a strategy so we can mobilize our resources, align it to that strategy, and implement the goals; and celebrating our entrepreneurship and unique regional resources. Too often, the region forgets that it has been a center for innovation in agriculture, education, health care, technology, science and transportation, to name just a few of the fields we have pioneered. We would welcome the chance to work with you and the New England Governors' Conference to determine whether these themes can be incorporated into its agenda moving forward.

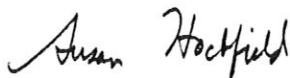
Randall Kempner, Vice President for Regional Innovation at the Council on Competitiveness, summarized the importance of regionalism in three words: proximity – being close together fosters greater formal and informal interaction that can lead to innovation; diversification – regions are large enough to develop a diversified economy that has multiple industries; and differentiation – regions are small enough so that industry leaders can impact the quality and types of local assets that differentiate them from other regions. Even with these advantages, it is still very difficult to promote regional solutions due to the ways that boundaries have been drawn and historical focus on localities and states. As we heard at the Innovation Summit, that challenge can and must be overcome.

As you note, the decision to rejoin the New England Governors' Conference provides an important opportunity to engage on a regional basis in a variety of issues. Building upon the lessons learned at the Regional Innovation Summit, we welcome the opportunity to work with you and the New England Governors' Conference to compile our best ideas and create an agenda that will position our region for future success by building a stronger innovation platform in New England.

Sincerely,



Joseph P. Campanelli
President and CEO
Sovereign Bancorp
*Chair, Massachusetts Business
Roundtable*



Susan Hockfield
President
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Deborah L. Wince-Smith
President
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