

December 2, 2009

Dear President Obama:

We are encouraged by your decision to host a forum on jobs and economic growth and look forward to being constructive partners in the dialogue on restoring prosperity to our nation. Generating a robust recovery with expanded job growth will require working together with a clear national purpose. We are hopeful the December 3 forum will result in bi-partisan initiatives that advance our leadership in today's global economic environment.

As CEOs of some of the world's leading technology companies, we have an understanding of the economic pain being felt today. We are also aware of the promise that lies across the horizon if we are strategic in our planning. The solutions we offer below are aimed at moving us forward—towards success. These ideas are guided by the twin principles of advancing technological innovation while recognizing the challenges associated with the nation's budget deficit.

Accelerate Release of Recovery Funds

Last February, the high-tech community pushed for inclusion in the stimulus package several key domestic priorities: increased broadband deployment and adoption, universal health IT, and increased energy efficiency, including important investments in Smart Grid and renewable energy. We strongly encourage you to ensure that implementation of these programs is completed as swiftly and effectively as possible. Funding these initiatives will result in jobs today, and will secure our global competitiveness in the future. Improved healthcare, energy, and broadband are priorities for most of the world; however, our nation is lagging in global leadership in these areas. This must change and the recovery funds are an opportunity to immediately begin effecting change.

Cultivate the World's Best and Brightest Workforce

To take full advantage of the stimulus funding, we must strengthen the ability of our workforce to adapt to changing market demands driven by innovation and investments in new technologies, clean energy, environment, health, and infrastructure. It is no longer sufficient to train workers to meet specific current needs; we should ensure access to training programs that focus on future market demands, including proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and math. We appreciate the groundwork already underway in this area. For the United States to remain a world leader in innovation, we need to increase America's domestic pipeline of highly skilled workers, while also attracting and retaining the world's best and brightest workers. We should do everything possible to retain highly educated foreign professionals already in this country whose companies want them to stay, and those individuals seeking advanced degrees at our college and universities.

Create Certainty to Spur Investments

To remove the uncertainty that is deterring businesses from making investment and hiring decisions, action is needed both in the immediate and long term. Before the end of this year, we encourage enactment of a permanent extension of a strengthened research and development tax credit and other key business tax incentives set to expire at the end of this year. In the longer term, we must keep pace with our major trading partners' tax systems by revising our own international tax code to ensure American companies and workers are able to compete on a level playing field with foreign competitors at home and abroad. Along with expiring tax provisions, providing pension relief through an extended timeline for catch-up payments should be addressed to avoid crushing obligations resulting in further economic contraction.

Restore Our Global Economic Leadership

Finally, American innovation and long-term economic and job growth will only be strong if we continue to open new markets to U.S. goods and services around the world where 95 percent of all consumers live.

The American standard of living depends on rebuilding our manufacturing sector and thus requires focusing on developing more trade opportunities with the rest of the world. We were encouraged to hear your recent commitments to expand the Trans-Pacific Partnership and to win passage of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement. Bolstering our economic ties with the Asia-Pacific region is vital to the success of the U.S. technology industry and will generate significant benefits here at home. These efforts, including promotion of trade in green technologies through a comprehensive Environmental Goods and Services Agreement and conclusion of a strong Doha Round, will expand exports and improve our manufacturing sector.

We hope you will consider these recommendations as you proceed with efforts to further jumpstart the economy. We look forward to working with you to advance our shared goal of job growth and economic expansion.

Sincerely,

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Krista Botsford President, CTO Botsford EcoTech Partners LLC	John A. Swainson CEO CA, Inc.	John T. Chambers Chairman & CEO Cisco	Michael S. Dell Chairman & CEO Dell Inc.
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