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*Three U.S. Cabinet Officials Address More Than 300 Economic Development Professionals
The Honorable Dr. Ben Carson, the Honorable Linda McMahon and the Honorable Wilbur Ross spoke
at IEDC's FED Forum April 10*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 18, 2017) –Dr. Ben Carson, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Linda McMahon, Small Business Administrator and Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce, addressed attendees of the International Economic Development Council's FED Forum last week.

FED Forum, the only annual conference focused exclusively on federal economic development programs and policies, was held April 9-11 at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, D.C. All three Cabinet members spoke on Monday, April 10, to a crowd of more than 300 economic development professionals.

At the keynote luncheon, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross discussed his goals and plans for his term, as well as challenges the economy may face in the future and how to overcome them.

“In current months, I look forward getting your assistance as we develop policies that put American workers and businesses first.” commented Ross.

Dr. Ben Carson spoke of the need for civic servants and economic developers to work together to ensure prosperity for all groups, saying, “We have to think in a broad, holistic way, recognizing that when one of us succeeds, we all succeed.”

U.S. Small Business Administrator and former CEO of World Wrestling Entertainment Linda McMahon was a surprise guest to attendees, and spoke briefly about her desire to engage with economic developers throughout her term.

“I just want to give all of you the assurance that SBA wants to be your partner in any way that we can,” McMahon said. “Any ideas that you can bring to us and help us understand a bit more how we can help with the economic development and growth that all of you are part of, please do reach out and let us be even better partners to all of you.”

In addition to the three Cabinet members, high-ranking government agency officials and experts in federal economic development policy also spoke at the event:

- **Robert D. Atkinson**, President, The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF), Washington, DC
- **Emilia Istrate, Ph.D.**, Managing Director, Counties Futures Lab, National Association of Counties (NACo), Washington, DC



- **John Lettieri**, Co-Founder, Economic Innovation Group, Washington, DC
- **Andrew T. Levine**, President & Chief Creative Officer, Development Counsellors International, New York, NY
- **Mark Popovich**, Director, Good Companies/Good Jobs Initiative, Aspen Institute, Washington, DC
- **Patrick J. O'Brien**, Director, Office of Economic Adjustment, United States Department of Defense, Arlington, VA
- **Peggy Philbin**, Acting Executive Director, SelectUSA, Washington, DC
- **Dr. Phillip A. Singerman**, Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services, Office of the Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology, US Department of Commerce, Gaithersburg, MD
- **Jeffrey Werling Ph.D.**, Assistant Director, Office of the Director, Macroeconomics Division, Congressional Budget Office, Washington, DC

Keynote speakers discussed key points in the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 budget, as well as their outlook on changes in federal economic development policy and programs.

The proposed budget includes extreme cuts or even elimination of many federal economic development programs such as the Economic Development Administration. To counter this, IEDC created the “Why Invest in Economic Development?” brochure to urge Congress to protect funding to these programs, which was distributed and discussed at FED Forum.

In addition to plenary sessions and breakout sessions, attendees were able to attend several special events throughout the conference. One group volunteered their time for a service project at the Three Part Harmony Farm in Northeast D.C. Saturday afternoon. Saturday evening, attendees were able to register for a performance by the Capitol Steps, a musical troupe that performs political satire.

Monday evening, attendees were invited to a networking reception at the Capitol. Both economic development professionals and Congressional staffers were in attendance.

About the International Economic Development Council

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,000 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers typically work for cities, counties, states, public private partnerships and chamber of commerce and promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC’s members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. IEDC’s members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities and improve the quality of life in their regions. www.iedcONLINE.org.