



ALLIANCE FOR
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Committee

**Paul Jones, Wisconsin
Chairman**
*Chairman,
A.O. Smith*

**Michael Mullen, Illinois
Chairman**
*Founder,
CenterPoint Properties*

**Jim Stanley, Indiana
Chairman**
*Executive Vice President
and Group CEO,
Northern Indiana Public
Service Company*

February 13, 2014

Crain's Chicago Business
150 North Michigan Avenue, 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601

RE: Letter to the Editor submission in response to February 12 Joe Cahill column

For Verification: Please call Kelly O'Brien, President & CEO, Alliance for Regional Development, (312) 602-5148

"The Tri-State Region on the road to collaboration"

In response to the column "How the Midwest is frittering away its shot at economic development" we were disappointed that there was no mention of the positive collaborative efforts being led by the Alliance for Regional Development.

In 2013, our cutting-edge effort was encouraged to develop into a national model by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, which positioned us as a pilot program for other regions. To safeguard our neutrality and ensure the success of our critically important effort, the Alliance established itself as an independent 501c3 and is no longer a part of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce.

We agree the Summit was a huge success. The entire program was a balance of leaders from all three states and we continue to interact regularly with our region's state Commerce Secretaries and business leaders.

The Alliance is already an influential voice in regional planning. We actively supported adding the Illiana Corridor to the CMAP's GO TO 2040 comprehensive plan, and served as a resource for the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), resulting in the NIRPC board voting in favor of building the proposed expressway.

The Alliance is also engaged in workforce innovation. We are the coordinating organization for implementing the internationally acclaimed German Skills Initiative and were the first organization to endorse a manufacturing innovation campus for the west side of Chicago with the intention of scaling the concept to other locations.

Our next immediate project will be to organize working teams to identify and implement strategic projects to grow the tri-state region's economy and respond to the recommendations of the OECD Territorial Review that was the initial basis for our collaboration.



ALLIANCE FOR
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ours are the kind of efforts that create win-win relationships and foster cooperation for the common good. We are proud of these early accomplishments, and remain committed to working together to improve the tri-state region that we all share.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul W. Jones".

Paul Jones
Wisconsin Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Mullen".

Michael Mullen
Illinois Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Stanley".

Jim Stanley
Indiana Chairman