

**Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago**

**Fifth Annual Summit on Regional Competitiveness**

**October 16, 2017**

**Closing Remarks**

KELLY O'BRIEN: Well, thank you. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, the work of the Alliance for Regional Development, at its core, is changing the culture of economic development. And I appreciate what Karin said in terms of how important economic development and workforce is, the linkage there. My days in Washington, D.C., I can tell you, that's what we focused on, and I think it's important.

Serving as a neutral platform, convening leaders from government, academia, and the private sector, that's really what the value of a platform like the Alliance can do. And it does not take a crystal ball to know that strong regions win. More and more examples of this can be found in the U.S., as well as in internationally. By virtue of being in this room, I assume that you get it.

So, the question is, how do we make sure that other people get it? What can you do? Who do you know that can be impactful in this quest for growing the regional

economy? I greatly appreciate you being here today.

Please do not let this be your only involvement. Encourage leaders to support the Alliance. Join one of our working teams, write an op-ed to your local newspaper pointing out the need for more collaborations.

Tell business owners and professionals, working across state lines, to share with us their experiences of what's working and where the challenges lie. Be agents of change. Be a part of making that happen.

As I conclude, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge some key people that make the Alliance happen, as well as today's summit happen. So, I would like to thank Shalora Jasper, our Director of Operations, who works tirelessly, and is truly my right-hand person, and a gift from God. So, a round of applause for Shalora.

Other members of my team include Tim Syth from Wisconsin and Clint Sabin, who's here today. Clint has been collecting the yellow pages. So a round of applause for them, please.

I'd like to thank the Alliance team managers. I know they've both been on stage today, but without their expertise we would not be making the headway that we're making. So, Anne Edmunds and Steve Schlickman, thank you.

As I mentioned earlier, we have the support of an

economist by the name of Morton Marcus, who's provided a lot of data, which I appreciate. Chancellor Debbie Ford, who is a part of the board, but without her assistance, we would not have an additional staff person who works on our behalf at the Water Council in Milwaukee, as well as allowing the University of Wisconsin-Parkside to serve as the fiscal agent for the Alliance. So, thank you to Chancellor Ford.

We recently engaged an author to help us with the report that we're going to be drafting, really kind of putting together a document that captures the legacy of this work going back to engaging the OECD through our working teams, and through today's Summit. So, Ed Zodde (phonetic), if you could raise your hand. Many of you may be getting calls from Ed. So, thank you.

All of our sponsors, as I mentioned earlier, we are so fortunate to work at Bryan Cave, and Greg, thank you again for that opportunity. The Chicago Community Trust has been a sponsored every year of the Alliance, since our inception. The BNSF Railroad is one of our new sponsors. And of course, EDA, which has been a supporter going back to helping the OECD happen, as well as a major supporter of the Alliance. So thank you for EDA. We appreciate your support.

I mentioned earlier, our incredible Board of Directors, and the host here today, the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Their terrific team is an honor to work with, and I want to pay special attention to Jerry Boyle. Jerry, are you here? Raise your hand. Thank you.

I think there's many others. I can see there's a table back there. I see, Mary Jo is here, and Brett Oliver is here, and Jennifer Schrader, and we have Greg Fitzpatrick. I'm not sure if I'm missing anybody in the room. I'm sorry. But I know Alicia Williams, Rhonda Rodham (phonetic), Brenda Cadena (phonetic), Laura -- I'm just butchering these names and I apologize. Laura LaBarbera (phonetic), and some others from the bank. Thank you to all.

And again, five years we've been doing this. So it's really -- we've got this down to a science now, but it's really because of your professional expertise. And thank you for this opportunity.

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