

CEA CORPORATE RELATIONS

Every business is affected by government rules and regulations. That's why so many companies believe in the importance of communication with public officials. For some companies, that means working with representatives on the federal level. But many others are quickly learning the value of communication with officials on the local level. In fact, the national trend toward governmental devolution has led to an increase in corporate relationships with local administrators. For their part, local administrators have worked hard to accommodate the needs of the people they serve without compromising commercial growth. Our organization, *County Executives of America*, is acutely aware of the balance that must be struck between the public and private sector if we are all to progress in the 21st century.

What is County Executives of America?

Founded in 1952, *County Executives of America* is a non-partisan association consisting of nearly 700 local governments in the United States, each led by a chief elected executive of a county government or consolidated city/county government. Among them are the most active local leaders from counties, cities, and parishes across the country. Our board of directors includes many of these leaders, all with outstanding records of public service. Some, such as **County Executive Robert Eckels** from Harris County, Texas and **County Executive Andrew Spano** are internationally recognized figures in the field of public-private partnerships. Others, such as **County Executive Wayne K. Curry** of Prince George's County, Maryland are widely known for their economic development programs that have spurred growth, investment, and prosperity for vendor and consumer alike.

County Executives of America's members represent over 48% of the nation's population, including the largest county governments in the country such as Westchester County, New York; San Francisco County, California and Oakland County, Michigan. In fact, county jurisdictions are often larger than congressional districts and do far more than the district representative on Capitol Hill, giving them the power to shape public policy on both national and local levels.

As the fastest growing form of government in the United States, county executive responsibilities have expanded to include many of the services once afforded only to the states. With the federal and state governments experiencing diminishing resources, county executives have filled the need for a centralized local authority to formulate and implement public policies, distribute property tax dollars, and administer community programs. In fact, we believe the most ambitious policy experiments today are taking place at the local level and it is *leaders like ourselves* who are ushering in a whole new era of political thinking.

What we are seeing today is the rise of a confident, passionate and focused generation of policy makers, all of whom are convinced that there are very few policy decisions now made in Washington that wouldn't be made better at the local level. County executives spend a great deal of time working with fellow policy makers at all levels of government, from the nation's governors to leaders in congress to the president, in an effort to make government more responsive, more efficient and perhaps most importantly, more customer friendly. The revolt against the overreaching power and intrusiveness of government is as old as the nation itself. From coast to coast, from border to border,

county executives are abuzz with policy entrepreneurship. And they are going beyond the confines of government into the domestic, even global, marketplace for answers to public policy questions.

Public-Private Partnerships

In order to identify, address and resolve significant policy issues at the county level, county executives are choosing to consult with those in the business community on important issues such as environmental regulation, public safety, health care and economic development. That's why *County Executives of America* has created the **Associate Member Program**, a strong network of public-private partnerships between local government leaders and the business community. The program is built for the express purpose of exchanging ideas and contemplating new, innovative, and sometimes experimental solutions to pressing challenges at the local government level. Together, businesses and local governments can collaborate on creating opportunities for the people they serve.

The **Associate Member Program** also helps businesses of all kinds achieve their specific goals in the local U.S. market by sidestepping the convoluted and time-consuming nature of the federal government and going directly to local leaders who make critical economic decisions for their communities. *County Executives of America* is already working with some of the top corporate leaders in the nation. Our Associate Members include firms like 3M, Honeywell, Browning-Ferris Industries, and Texaco. Through our program, these firms participate in an advanced information network directly linking them to county executives across the nation. This allows them to get the right information from the right people so they could make the smartest business decisions. **[quote from Petra could be near here]**

Become An Associate Member of County Executives of America

Becoming an Associate Member of *County Executives of America* is the fastest way to reach out to county executives throughout the United States. You will enjoy an active relationship with our association and have a full year of program benefits, including:

- Numerous opportunities to engage in a dialogue with county executives and local government leaders on various issues and challenges facing all our members.
- An open invitation to attend all CEA meetings and special events across the country.
- Printing one full-page ad in CEA's monthly publication, *Executive Summary*; currently received and read by government, association, and industry executives.
- Making presentations on topics of your concern before CEA elected officials and members during CEA meetings and special events.
- Publishing your perspective on current public policy questions in *Executive Summary*.
- Receiving various mailings and fax bulletins by CEA, which include comprehensive policy issue developments, legislative tracking, conference schedules, and special events.

No other organization can combine the strength of county leaders with the force of private entrepreneurs as successfully as *County Executives of America*.

For further information on becoming an associate member, feel free to contact our main office in Washington D.C. at 1-202-289-4805 or call our toll-free number at 1-800-296-8438.