



**Opening Statement of Chairman Sam Graves  
House Committee on Small Business  
Hearing: “Beyond the Beltway: Successful State Strategies for Small Business  
Growth”  
July 10, 2013**

Good afternoon. Thank you all for being with us today as we examine several innovative ways that states are attracting, retaining, and growing businesses. I appreciate all of our witnesses taking time out of their undoubtedly busy schedules to be with us.

There is a competition raging in our country. It is not a competition with the results published on the sports page. Rather, it is being played out on front page, and the business page. States are in fierce competition to create friendly environments to attract new businesses, keep the businesses they have, and grow them both to boost local economies and create jobs.

Each year, several trade associations, news media outlets, and think tanks attempt to rate each state to determine the best ones for businesses. Just this week, CNBC is releasing their 2013 rankings for America’s top states for business. Forbes magazine and Thumbtack.com, along with the Kauffman Foundation, release similar lists each year. While the methodologies for each of these surveys and studies was slightly different, they all judge states on criteria such as the cost of doing business, regulatory and tax regimes, and access to capital. The states we have represented at our hearing today consistently perform in the top 15 of these surveys, proving to be the cream of the crop when it comes to working for greater business development.

Although growth has been exceptionally weak following the recession nationally, the states represented here have bucked that trend and outpaced the national averages, some by significant margins. States like Virginia, Texas, Kansas, and South Dakota have significantly lower unemployment than the national average. Similarly, other states such as Texas, Utah, and Florida outpaced the growth of the national gross domestic product average of 2.5 percent in 2012. Simply put, some states are making excellent headway at attracting businesses to their states, and growing their economies accordingly.

And these states are not just courting businesses from other states, but also enticing companies with facilities overseas to come back to America. These states are proving that with lower taxes, smarter and less burdensome regulatory regimes, and access to affordable energy, the United States can and will continue to be a place where things are built and entrepreneurs can innovate and thrive.

Again, I thank all of you for being here with us today. I now yield to ranking Member Velázquez for her opening statement.