



Florida's Director of Trade and Economic Development Dale Brill Reaffirms Role of Small Businesses in Driving U.S. Exports



Appearing on the Neal Asbury Show on WZAB-AM, Dale A. Brill, Ph.D., Florida's Director of the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development, reaffirmed that Florida's small-to-medium sized companies are the heart of its industry and economy, buoyed by Florida's ranking as having the second largest concentration of exporting businesses in the U.S. In fact, more than 95 percent of Florida's 43,000 exporting companies are small or medium in size, and account for 63 percent of Florida exports -- the largest share of exports by SMEs in the entire nation by a large margin.

"We recognize that to sustain growth in Florida we must invest in a strong research-based higher-education system that is producing the intellectual property in leading industries to bring to market innovative products, produce new start-ups and in the long-run provide the talent to employ our diverse workforce demands rather than looking elsewhere to recruit talent. The outgrowth of this was our Accelerate Florida program, which enlisted public and private partners in all industries, including international, to eliminate red tape on projects that would create jobs for our citizens and to assist them in maximizing their growth potential," said Brill, who advises the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Legislature as they formulate policies and strategies designed to promote economic diversification and improvements in Florida's business climate and infrastructure.

Brill added that in January, the Florida legislature approved the Governor's Economic Stimulus Program targeting small business, which provides \$10 million in funding and technical assistance to small businesses which need the capital and technical assistance to grow their business and create jobs.

Like exporters in states throughout the U.S., Free Trade Agreements passed in recent years have done wonders for Florida's exporters. Brill notes that FTAs create a trickle down effect across the econ-

omy, as evidenced by the ensuing demands at Florida ports, which generate hundreds of millions of dollars in investments to expand terminal access so that new operating lines can be brought on line to increase the coming and going of cargo.

"As a state that is defined by its strategic international position, we are certain that the Florida economy will continue to thrive by pursuing open access to foreign markets for the goods and services produced by Florida companies. With a highly-skilled, multi-lingual workforce and a dynamic multimodal hemispheric infrastructure, Florida is well positioned to maintain its well-earned title as the Gateway of the Americas," concluded Brill.

The Neal Asbury Show tackles key trade issues every Thursday from 11:00 AM until Noon on WZAB-AM 880. The show is streamed live on line at WWW.880THE-BIZ.COM, which is affiliated with Bloomberg Radio and CNBC.



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