

Governor Quinn Opens First Chicago Ideas Week

Written by Katelyn Tye

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Proclaims "Ideas Week" in Illinois to Support Innovation

CHICAGO – October 10, 2011. Governor Pat Quinn today opened the first-ever Chicago Ideas Week conference and proclaimed this week "Ideas Week" in Illinois. Chicago Ideas Week is a seven-day celebration of ideas, innovation and community, that will focus on bringing the world's best speakers together with the Midwest's best thinkers. Today's event follows Governor Quinn's launch of a program last week to give Illinois entrepreneurs access to \$78 million in capital for new and innovative business ideas.

"Illinois is proud to be home to some of the brightest minds in science, technology, business and education," Governor Quinn said. "It only makes sense that the best minds in the world should come together here to develop innovative ideas and technologies that will help create the jobs of today and tomorrow to move our economy forward."

Chicago Ideas Week was founded by Brad Keywell, chair of the Illinois Innovation Council introduced this year by Governor Quinn (www.illinoisinnovation.com), and co-founder of Groupon and Lightbank. The purpose of the conference is to bring the world's leading visionaries together for collaboration and discussion that could lead to breakthroughs and new understanding of some of the world's most important issues.

"This week provides a world-class platform that is designed to showcase our state as a center of innovation and entrepreneurship," said Keywell, creator of Chicago Ideas Week. "We are thrilled by the support we've received from both the city of Chicago and Illinois state

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government leaders for this celebration."

The week-long celebration of ideas will take place at some of Chicago's most prominent landmarks and will feature more than 150 key figures in business, science, health, technology, journalism, the arts, sports and government. Former President Bill Clinton, Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City and Kasim Reed of Atlanta are among the featured speakers. For a full list of speakers and more information about each session, visit www.chicagoideas.com.

"Ideas Week" in Illinois is the latest step Governor Quinn has taken to solidify Illinois' place as the leading state in the Midwest for entrepreneurship and innovation. Last week Governor Quinn launched the Advantage Illinois program to provide Illinois businesses and entrepreneurs with access to the capital they need to start new companies and expand existing business. Advantage Illinois will leverage \$78 million in federal funding that will allow businesses to bring innovative ideas and new products to market and accelerate job creation and economic growth in Illinois. Earlier this year, the Governor created the Illinois Innovation Council with the goal of keeping Illinois on the cutting-edge of the global economy.

This year Governor Quinn's leadership has been instrumental in expanding the availability of more than \$150 million in investment capital through enactment of the Technology Development Account II, implementation of the Angel Investment Tax Credit and the Advantage Illinois program.

A copy of Governor Quinn's proclamation is attached.

WHEREAS, innovation has long been a hallmark of the Illinois economy, however success in today's era requires an extensive network of support; and

WHEREAS the nature and pace of innovation have changed dramatically and our global economy is increasingly driven by our ability to find and nurture value through new products, improved processes or advanced scientific discoveries; and

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WHEREAS, American innovations in science and technology, fueled by public and private research investments and accelerated through entrepreneurial activity have created economic prosperity, enhanced quality of life, and aided those who bravely provide our nation with safety and security; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Innovation Council is working to identify and advance strategies to foster and accelerate the innovation and economic growth that will create the jobs of today and tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science estimates that up to half of all economic growth in the United States over the past five decades is due to innovations in technology; and

WHEREAS, the state's economic growth is tied to its ability to successfully execute long-range research, development and innovation projects that address challenges facing our industries and that cultivate areas of likely scientific and technological advancement; and

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WHEREAS, to accelerate the innovation economy in the Midwest, the Illinois Innovation Council is advancing a common platform and fostering an ecosystem through which startups, innovation-driven enterprises, service providers, research institutions, colleges, universities and civic leaders can connect, share ideas, raise capital, and access the services and resources necessary to accelerate the growth of businesses, create new industries and generate jobs; and

WHEREAS, from October 10-16, 2011, Chicago Ideas Week will bring the world's top speaker together with Chicago's best thinkers to create an ecosystem of innovation, exploration, and intellectual recreation.

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THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby do hereby proclaim October 10-16, 2011 as **CHICAGO IDEAS WEEK** in Illinois, and encourage everyone in the Land of Lincoln to recognize, celebrate and support the vital role that innovation plays in the in the economic future of our state.