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## **Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce & MDA Boards Vote to Approve Regional Partnership**

*Members to Vote on Historic Merger of Organizations February 18*

Syracuse, NY – The Boards of Directors of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce and the Metropolitan Development Association have voted to endorse a partnership between the two organizations. The approved resolution is a critical step towards the formation of a new, regional organization to serve as the primary economic, community and business development catalyst in Central Upstate New York.

“The Chamber Board’s overwhelming support of this partnership is clear recognition of the true value and potential of a combined organization,” said Darlene Kerr, president of the Chamber. “As one organization, we have the unique opportunity to create New York’s most effective business leadership organization that will provide quality programs and services to our more than 2,000 members, while advancing regional economic growth.”

“The action by both the Chamber and MDA boards is an encouraging vote of confidence in our goal to create an organization with a common vision that will build regional credibility, impact, and influence,” said Robert M. Simpson, president and CEO of the MDA. “Through a unified agenda, this new organization will position us to successfully transform the Central Upstate economy by effectively promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and business development at the regional level, building new, region-wide collaborations and alliances.”

The recommendation for the Chamber and MDA to form a new organization was issued on January 7 by a Strategic Partnership Committee. The committee, formed by the organizations’ Boards in July 2009, examined the mission, programs and services, structure, membership, and staffing of both organizations to determine whether a formal partnership would better serve their respective members and the region.

The new organization will deliver business services and regional economic development leadership. Dual membership levels will feature “Partner” memberships for businesses seeking access to traditional Chamber services, and “Investor” memberships to provide leadership, resources and strategic implementation support for a regional economic development agenda.

Chamber and MDA members will vote on the proposal February 18. If approved by the memberships, integration of the Chamber and MDA would occur in the second quarter of this year. For more information about the committee’s recommendations and the proposed Chamber-MDA partnership, visit [www.chambermda.com](http://www.chambermda.com).

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