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**Midwestern Governors Convene in Des Moines**  
*Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting of the MGA*

**DES MOINES** – Midwestern governors convened today in Des Moines to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Midwestern Governors Association (MGA). The meeting, *America’s Smartland – Deploying the Midwest’s Entrepreneurial Spirit*, celebrated the collective strengths of the region and addressed how the Midwest can better showcase itself to other regions and countries.

Iowa Governor Terry E. Branstad, current MGA Chair, hosted the meeting and spoke with a panel of other Midwestern governors, including Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton and Kansas Governor Sam Brownback. Joining the current governors were former Illinois Governor James Thompson and former Missouri Governor Bob Holden. The governors discussed the progress of the Midwest as well as steps the region can take to highlight its entrepreneurial spirit.

“The Midwest has a rich history and a promising future, which I was excited to discuss with my fellow Midwestern governors. Every state can benefit from cross state collaboration – from regional transportation planning to coordinated talent attraction and improvement to an aligned strategy to drive growth in the biosciences. Through a unified vision we can nurture the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of the region and improve our competitive advantages in a global economy,” said Governor Branstad.

Governor Mark Dayton, who is the Vice Chair of the MGA, said, “The MGA has helped Midwest Governors to work together and ensure that our states are the best places to live, work, get an education and grow a business. I also want to thank Governor Branstad for his excellent leadership as Chair of the MGA this year. ”

Governor Brownback said, “Through the MGA, governors are able to work together across state lines. This cooperation strengthens our region’s industries, ensuring the Midwest is not just a national, but an international leader in all sectors of the economy.”

During the meeting, participants heard about growing and attracting talent, maximizing the region’s educational strengths, and the feedback from young Midwestern entrepreneurs.

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, the MGA is also sponsoring a video contest that promotes a positive Midwestern narrative and helps the world learn about the strengths of the region.

For more information on the video contest, as well as additional information on the meeting, visit [www.midwesterngovernors.org/AmericasSmartland.htm](http://www.midwesterngovernors.org/AmericasSmartland.htm).

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*The MGA is a nonprofit, bipartisan organization that brings together the governors of Midwestern states to work cooperatively on issues of importance to the region. Current members of the MGA are Gov. Pat Quinn (Ill.), Gov. Mitch Daniels (Ind.), Gov. Terry Branstad (Iowa), Gov. Sam Brownback (Kansas), Gov. Rick Snyder (Mich.), Gov. Mark Dayton (Minn.), Gov. Jay Nixon (Mo.), Gov. John Kasich (Ohio) and Gov. Scott Walker (Wis.).*