



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

June 6, 2001

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the Federalism Symposium: A National Dialogue between Business and Government. Our day-long conference, hosted by the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, is dedicated to one doctrine and to one document, both of which are cornerstones of American liberty. The doctrine is federalism. The document is the Constitution of the United States.

The forms and substance of federalism continue to be hotly debated. Because the thought of America's Founders is an indispensable benchmark in great national debates, it is interesting to ponder how the Founders would look on the practice of federalism as it has evolved in this country over the past two centuries. Since we cannot speak to the Founders, we have the next best thing: a distinguished slate of speakers who will challenge us to take our thinking to the next level. Among other topics, they will examine federalism in light of the Commerce Clause, unfunded federal mandates, key decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, block grants, devolution of power, and governors' efforts to restore and renew federalism to its rightful place in the American Republic.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is to be applauded for launching its ambitious Federalism Initiative. The timing of this symposium is auspicious. In President Bush the nation has a chief executive who himself has been a business leader and governor, and who understands federalism's foundational role in the architecture of liberty. We have an excellent opportunity to frame public policy in ways that best balance the responsibilities of local, state, and national levels of government.

Thank you for participating in this exciting symposium. I look forward to a close examination of the ways we can help restore federalism in America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Engler".

John Engler
Governor



Frank Keating
Governor

Welcome to the Symposium!

I am honored to join Governor John Engler in hosting this Federalism Symposium -- a day of discussions among leaders of business, government and academia to explore one fundamental question: How do we balance the public and private sectors to assure economic growth and prosperity for our people?

I am especially grateful to the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and its Institute for Legal Reform for sponsoring this event, and to the distinguished speakers who will share their ideas and hopes with us. Sensible public policy requires thought, based on some bedrock principles. First among those principles must be the Constitutional concept of federalism, which deals with the balance of power, autonomy and influence between government and private life, and among the levels and branches of government. We are fortunate to have drawn from some of our nation's most accomplished thinkers for our Symposium discussions, and I know you join me in looking forward to hearing their thoughts.

Our goal also includes advocacy, the transmission of ideas to influence policy. That requires your participation, both in the Symposium discussions and in follow-up efforts to translate our conclusions into action.

We are grateful to you for being part of this important Symposium!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Keating".

Frank Keating

