



STATE OF ARKANSAS
ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

Dear International Economic Development Council:

I want to welcome you to Arkansas for IEDC's 2017 Economic Futures Forum. While you are in Little Rock, I hope you are able to enjoy many of the sights, sounds and activities that make it one of the "Top 40 Best Places to Live" by *U.S. News and World Report*.

There is a lot of momentum surrounding Arkansas these days. As Governor, I am proud to say that 55,500 more Arkansans have jobs today than when I took office in January 2015. Our unemployment rate has remained below the national average for 16 consecutive months and recently hit an all-time low. Over the past two years, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and I have signed more than 150 agreements with companies locating or expanding in Arkansas, resulting in more than \$3 billion in new capital investment in the state.

As you are about to discover, Arkansas is a great place in which to work and play. Many fun and exciting events are planned for your entertainment during your stay. Tourism and economic development go hand-in-hand in Arkansas, and the tourism sector had an economic impact of more than \$7.2 billion on the state in 2015. I hope you have the chance to get out and enjoy our beautiful state and all it has to offer.

We are a small state with a big story to tell. During your visit, I invite you to see why Arkansas is great for business while you enjoy our gracious Southern hospitality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Asa Hutchinson".

Asa Hutchinson