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A National Perspective toward Innovation

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A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE TOWARD INNOVATION

Session Chair – James P. McIlroy
Speaker – Richard D. Rosen

INTRODUCTION

James P. McIlroy

Well, after that lovely meal, I would like to welcome you all to the third session of this year's conference on the comparative aspects of innovation in Canada and the United States.

My name is Jim McIlroy. I am an international trade lawyer based in Toronto, and I am a member of the executive committee of the Canada-United States Law Institute, and on behalf of the executive committee, I would like to thank Dr. King and all of the people that have worked so hard to put on this conference.

I think it is going to be a very successful one, judging by what we heard this morning. Today I have the pleasure of chairing this session, which is entitled a "National Perspective Toward Innovation," and our speaker today – I think you will agree with me – is highly qualified to speak on this topic.

Richard Rosen is the Vice President, External Business Relations at the Battelle Memorial Institute, which is headquartered here in Ohio, in Columbus, and as we will soon see, Battelle is a global science and technology enterprise that develops and commercializes technology and manages laboratories for customers.¹

And one of the key responsibilities of our speaker is to develop public-private collaboration strategies. Now, as a Canadian, I have always been interested in the very different national perspective that Canadians and Americans have on the respective roles of the private sector on the one hand and the public sector on the other hand.

And this morning I was looking at the materials, and under tab 2, we have a bill HR 4654, which was a bill, which was introduced three months ago,² and it is called the National Innovation Act of 2006.³ I don't know what the

¹ Battelle, <http://www.battelle.org> (last visited Oct. 5, 2006).

² National Innovation Act of 2006, H.R. 4654, 109th Cong. (2006).

³ *Id.* § 1.

status of the bill is, but I was very intrigued by a finding that Congress had made.

And I am just going to briefly read it to you because I think it highlights a key concept that we should keep in mind when discussing the Canadian perspective, as opposed to the American perspective. One of the Congressional findings states – and I quote – "That a national private sector led and government supported plan is required if the United States is to adequately respond to the challenges of increased global competition and take advantage of the opportunities this changing global dynamic presents."⁴ What I found interesting is, first of all, Congress is saying we need a plan. I find that refreshing.

Secondly, they are saying this plan will be led by the private sector. It is to be private sector led,⁵ and the role of the government is to support this private sector led plan⁶, and I also found it fascinating that Congress said they want to respond to the challenges of globalization.⁷

And in Canada, that's typically where we end it; whereas then they went on and they said they want to take advantage of the opportunities,⁸ which I found very interesting because, in Canada, globalization really seems to be a challenge, and the opportunities are not something that is stressed as much as the challenges part of it.

So I'd like to say this: I think in Canada our innovation strategy traditionally has been more public sector led, than private sector led by governments and organizations such as the National Research Council, publicly funded universities, as we heard this morning, whereas in the United States I think the private sector has played a larger role.

Although this may be changing, I am not aware of any companies in Canada that do what Mr. Rosen's company does, which is to annually work with more than 1,000 federal, state, and local government agencies and private sector companies to develop and apply science and technology.⁹

I am going to stop talking now so that we will have lots of time for questions and answers after Mr. Rosen's presentation.

So please join me in welcoming Richard Rosen to the Canada-United States Law Institute.

Richard?

⁴ *Id.* § 2.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ H.R. 4654.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Battelle, *supra* note 1.