

GUEST COLUMN

Summit spurs growth

By Fred Kasten

Attaining a more aggressive level of business involvement in the UW System's efforts to spur new economic growth in Wisconsin is essential.

That is why Robert W. Baird & Co. and many other corporate sponsors have joined the UW System in the annual economic summit conference scheduled for Oct. 27-28 in Milwaukee at The Midwest Airlines Center.

The agenda is packed full of in-depth presentations and discussions on issues important to business, including an October 28 panel on the health-care cost crisis confronting us all. Attending and actively participating in the conference, its many workshops and practical discussions, is a good way for the business community to put some private sector energy and ideas behind economic growth in our state.

Recognizing the value of this event, many other distinguished business leaders have committed to participating. The summits are a good opportunity for these leaders to work in partnership with education and government to promote economic growth.

An inescapable fact in our economy is that private business depends on strong markets, available capital, good transportation, reliable low-cost energy, a trained work force, a fair tax policy, and sensible regulation. A pro-growth business climate works to promote business expansion and worker prosperity.

The business community should turn out in force to participate in these important discussions and to share hard earned insights into what promotes growth and what stands in its way. Sitting on the sidelines when it comes to economic growth initiatives is something our state and its businesses cannot afford.

Business leaders often say they are too busy to attend conferences. We hope the economic summit we have planned this year warrants your involvement because it is relevant, fast-paced and will focus on issues critical to you. We urge business leaders to attend the conference and get behind this important effort to promote accelerated economic growth. Your state and your business depend on it.

For information, or to register, visit www.wisconsin.edu/summit or call 800-222-3623 or 414-227-3200.

Kasten is chairman of Robert W. Baird & Co., a co-sponsor of Wisconsin Economic Summit IV.