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For Further information contact:  
Duncan Stewart, Executive Director  
518-275-4920

**ALBANY CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY ELECTS OFFICERS FOR 2009 TO LEAD NEW  
CONCEPT PLAN UTILIZING \$10 MILLION IN FUNDS APPROVED BY GOVERNOR PATTERSON**

The Albany Convention Center Authority Board today unanimously elected the following officers for 2009:

**Gavin Donohue, Chair (President/CEO, Independent Power Producers of NY)**

**Michael Perrin, Vice-Chair (Deputy County Executive, Albany County)**

**Joseph F. Pennisi, Treasurer (Executive Director, NYS Workers Compensation Board)**

**Michele Vennard, Secretary (President/CEO, Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau).**

In addition, the nine member board will soon be fully seated with the recent appointment of Ms. Kai Earle by County Executive Breslin and the proposed appointment of Mike Yevoli by Mayor Jennings.

“I am privileged to be able to continue serving as the Chair” said Gavin Donohue, who had been acting Chair following the resignation of the Chair position by his predecessor last year. “This has been an exceptional group of dedicated individuals to work with and the addition of two new members demonstrates the local political support key to our future success”, he continued. “With the vision of Governor Patterson by providing funding, the entire board is committed to a public/private partnership for this project that will create local jobs and serve the meeting facilities needs of the Capital Region for years to come.”

“I am pleased to have appointed Ms. Earle to the Albany Convention Center Authority board,” said **Albany County Executive Mike Breslin**. “A convention center and hotel in downtown Albany will benefit our entire region. Ms. Earle’s experience brings a new perspective to the Board and I am confident she will make significant contributions to the development of a convention center.”

“A new convention center, which will create hundreds of new jobs, and which will attract thousands of visitors of visitors annually to our City, will further our efforts to stimulate our economy and enhance our urban center,” said **Mayor Jennings**. “A new convention center will benefit not only Albany, but, as a catalyst for economic development, it will ultimately benefit the region and the State as a whole. I continue to strongly support the construction of a new convention center, and I thank the members of the Convention Center Authority for their dedication to this project and their efforts to adjust and privatize elements of the project – it is the right way to go.”

With the Governor’s recent commitment to provide \$10 million in Empire State Development grant funds, the Board has initiated the Authority’s application to ESDC for grant funding to begin land acquisition, pre-construction planning, environmental investigation, and archeology and historic

conservation activities for the New Concept Plan. The Plan now calls for the development of a 266,000 square foot convention facility and the privatization of the hotel and parking garage. Since the unveiling of the New Concept Plan last month, new interest from hotel developers has been piqued. In addition, numerous local businesses, associations and other organizations have expressed their support for the development of a convention center noting the impact it would have in energizing the local economy.

Other recent quotes in support:

**Assemblyman Jack McEneny offered:** “Clearly, if Albany is ever to fully function as the capital city for the 19 million citizens of New York State, then the development of a modern convention center here and now is absolutely critical to our future”

“The need for a modern convention facility in Albany was never more apparent to me than earlier this month when our association hosted its 50<sup>th</sup> annual conference at the Empire State Plaza. As the decision-making capital of the state, Albany plays host to numerous opportunities for not-for-profit organizations to voice their issues and raise awareness of their causes. Having a more modern convention center that offers the latest in wireless technology and ‘green meeting’ options would solidify our decision to host our annual conference in Albany in the foreseeable future”, **stated Jennifer Mauer, CAE, Managing Director, NYS Association of Professional Land Surveyors, Inc.**

“ When the Albany Convention center is open, you will most likely have our business, and potentially the business of the many other medium-sized conferences in New York who are desperate for affordable venues upstate”, **said John Carlino, Executive Director of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers.**

Additional board member and other information may be found at the authority’s website, [www.accany.com](http://www.accany.com).

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