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June 13, 2013

Mr. Kenneth W. Lund, Executive Director
Colorado Economic Development Commission
c/o Office of Economic Development and International Trade
1625 Broadway, Suite 2700
Denver, CO 80202

RE: Support of "City for Champions" proposal for Regional Tourism Act funding

Dear Mr. Lund:

I'm writing to express support on behalf of Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance for the "City for Champions" proposal. I urge you to approve maximum funding for this multi-part endeavor as it will result in an increase in tourism to our state and region; boost the economic vitality of our local economies; and celebrate our destination's unique history and traditions.

Support for the project means a higher probability of success in retaining, attracting and growing the many base sector companies in our region tied to our sports economy. The more sports and wellness related attractions and events taking place in our region adds to the environment of our mega cluster of wellness, which includes sports, healthcare, IT, our military and our non-profit organizations. These industry sectors along account for more than half of the \$27 billion regional economy we have in the Pikes Peak region. And, when you tie in the value of our higher education sector and their work in these sectors, it has the potential to create one of the most dynamic sectors of business and industry in our state.

As tourism is the third largest employer accounting for more than 14,000 regional jobs, and provides substantial benefit to the other major sectors of our market, I strongly feel this project will enhance this industry and our area's image to the world.

Thank you for your consideration. I trust the commission finds this project compelling, and am happy to answer any questions or provide additional detail on our organization's support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Raso", written over a horizontal line.

Joe Raso, President and CEO
Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance