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U.S. Chamber Awards Blount Chamber with 5-Star Accreditation

Maryville, TN, February 24, 2010 -- The United States Chamber of Commerce today awarded the Blount Chamber with 5-Star Accreditation for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the community.

“Accreditation validates a chamber as having programs that benefit their local economy and for positively influencing action in their community,” said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, U.S. Chamber Executive Director of Political Affairs and Federation Relations. “We applaud this organization for advancing the principles of free enterprise.”

Accreditation is the only national program that recognizes chambers for their effective organizational procedures and community involvement. In order to receive Accreditation, a chamber must meet minimum standards in their operations and programs, including areas of governance, government affairs, and technology. This extensive self-review can take 3-6 months to complete.

The accreditation process began in January of last year and was one of the first assignments for the 2009 board chair, Bill Marrison. “The process allowed us to renew, improve and promote sound business practices, policies and procedures,” said Marrison. “We hope our members and the community are proud. Out of the nine accredited chambers in Tennessee, Blount County is one of only two that received the 5-star accreditation status.”

Local chambers are rated Accredited, 3-Stars, 4-Stars, or 5-Stars. State chambers are recognized as either Accredited State Chamber or Accredited State Chamber with Distinction. The final determination is made by the Accrediting Board, a committee of U.S. Chamber board members.

“We were particularly proud of the special recognition that was given by the

U. S. Chamber's examining committee in the areas of recognizing volunteers, grassroots efforts, member events and reaching short and long term goals," said Chamber president & CEO Fred Forster. "Perfect scores were cited in facilities, technology and communications.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation, representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region. Visit www.uschamber.com

The mission of the Blount County Chamber of Commerce is to develop a robust economic base by providing the 1350 members with access to information, business resources and activities that enhance the quality of life for all who live, work and play in our region. Visit www.blountchamber.com.