

## **Tampa's Defense and Security Leaders Talk Strategy with Congresswoman Kathy Castor**

(Tampa, FL September 30, 2011)- Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation (EDC)'s Defense and Security Task Force welcomed U.S. Representative Kathy Castor to a strategy session held at Saint Leo University's downtown Tampa Education Center. Representing Florida's 11<sup>th</sup> District, Congresswoman Castor requested the briefing to learn first-hand the ongoing efforts being made to attract more defense and security businesses to the Tampa Bay area and to lend her support behind the effort.

"Defense industries and our supporting small business owners are key in creating jobs and revitalizing the local economy. With MacDill Air Force Base, CENTCOM and SOCOM headquarters as major draws, we can develop a tremendous business base here in Tampa," said Castor.

Military representatives with the Task Force, chaired by RADM Jon Bayless (Ret.), Strategic Partnerships for Sypris Electronics, say a lot of technical advances in defense and security are taking place at MacDill Air Force Base (AFB) and the University of South Florida that need to be communicated nationally and globally.

Castor also assured the Task Force that new aerial tankers for the 6<sup>th</sup> Air Mobility Wing are still on track to come to MacDill AFB and will require new construction on the base and training. The project is slated to span a ten year period.

Tampa Hillsborough EDC Chair Rhea Law, chair, Board of Directors and CEO of Fowler White Boggs, is encouraged by the progression of the project. "Defense and Security is one of the core job clusters we want to enhance. We need to be proactive to entice businesses to do business with MacDill AFB," said Law.

Congresswoman Castor applauded the work of the Task Force. Keith Norden, President and CEO of the Tampa Hillsborough EDC, added, "We are committed to getting the message across to all targeted businesses that our private and public sector partners are enhancing our business climate," he said, concluding that "leadership is accommodating the needs of local expansions and newcomers to the area."

The creation of the Defense and Security Task Force is part of Tampa Hillsborough EDC's pledge to be the catalyst for improving Hillsborough County and its three municipalities' competitive position in attracting jobs and capital investment.

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### About Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation

Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation is officially recognized by Enterprise Florida as Hillsborough County's primary economic development team in partnership with Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Plant City and Temple Terrace and private investors. Its primary mission is to create jobs that pay above average wages and to broaden the tax base by generating new, sustainable capital investment.