

## Advocating Locally AmCham-China's government advocacy matches companies' expansions

progress in moving toward this goal, the political reality is that in China policy tends to be localized.

AmCham-China understands clearly the balance between local and national policy. For more than 25 years, the organization has played a leadership role in building bridges between our member companies and China's national, provincial and local governmental leadership. As our membership has invested in increasingly diverse locations across China in recent years, our government advocacy program has expanded to meet these growing needs.

To support our member investments in the second and third-tier cities, AmCham-China has led delegations to provinces across the country. We have built bridges tying the international business community to the provincial and local Chinese governments and domestic industry.

AmCham-China has been very aggressive in reaching out to governments across the country. In 2007 and 2008, AmCham led delegations to Hubei, Liaoning, Hebei, Henan, Sichuan, Fujian, Heilongjiang, Anhui, Tibet and Shaanxi provinces, and the municipalities of Tianjin, Chongqing and Shanghai. In addition, over the last two years, we have participated in 13 central and provincial level events and meetings, including the Central China Expo held this year in Wuhan.


These efforts are part of an important push to ensure that members are aware of all of the regional investment options available for their companies and also to

connect them with the local government officials who will promote an easy process for investment. In order to make wise investment decisions it is critical that businesses have the resources available to them to make proper evaluations. It is one of AmCham-China's foremost goals to make sure that they get them.

While we expand our presence throughout China, we also continue to develop a solid relationship with China's national level leadership in Beijing. Indeed, the reality is that both local and national politics and regulatory issues impact our members, especially as they expand to the second and third-tier cities. All politics may be local, but the top leaders are critical to the overall direction of policy that filters down to the provinces.

AmCham-China clearly has a footprint—if not a foothold—throughout the country, and will continue to represent our members' interests vigorously. At both the local and national levels, this effort is crucial to improve the business climate and help our members capture the opportunities in China. As AmCham-China expands its presence around the country, government advocacy at the local level will continue to be a top priority for us.

**James Zimmerman**  
AmCham-China Chairman



**F**ormer Speaker of the US House of Representatives Tip O'Neill once famously said that "all politics is local." He was making the case that American voters look to the issues that affect their everyday lives when deciding how to cast their ballots. They may care about budget deficits and defense spending, but when they go into the voting booths they more heavily weight having money to provide for their families and the safety of the streets in their neighborhoods.

Similarly, people and businesses in China care about local conditions the most. It is no secret that China is an ethnically and geographically diverse country. Conditions, culture and policies are not the same in every location. This extends to the world of business. The most important concern for companies is the economic condition in the city they operate.

Different laws are applied with different degrees of vigor depending on location in China. Policies may be vastly different in Kunming and Wuhan, and neither may be as Beijing lawmakers originally envisioned them. Power comes from Beijing, but its use is not uniform.

It is in China's best interest to strive toward internationally recognized standards throughout the country. And while the government has made some