



MAYOR PHIL GORDON



March 7, 2011

Honorable Members of the Arizona Delegation:

With the final year of my term as Mayor of Phoenix well under way, I'd like to begin by thanking each of you for your help on a range of issues over the past seven years. Just as our City is the better for your leadership, past and present, I am a better person for knowing most of you well and working with all of you. While 2011 marks the end of my mayoral administration, I'm sure we will have the chance to work together again, be in it the private sector or by continuing to serve the public.

Leaving is never easy. Leaving while your City, the fifth-largest in America, continues to face steep economic challenges is especially hard. The recession, lowered home values and high unemployment have continued to pinch Arizonans. To counteract this pressure, our City has redoubled efforts to create jobs, enhance public safety and partner with the education community to ensure opportunity for all students, no matter their skin color, no matter their level of prosperity.

Rarely have such efforts been more critical. As you are doubtless aware, with the State of Arizona's budget bleeding red ink – potentially meaning massive funding cuts for cities and education – resources have never been more difficult to come by. We continue to do more with less, but without adequate funding, there comes a breaking point. Among the worthy efforts hanging in the balance:

#### Phoenix Sky Train

At a time when the City is striving to create 35,000 jobs regionally by year's end, this central focus of our Green Phoenix initiative – a train linking our light rail line to all 3 airport terminals – continues to be critical. Stage One, underway and scheduled for completion by 2013, will account for more 6,000 jobs in that time. Today, as you read this, more than 250 subcontractors are at work on Sky Train, along with more than 1,300 design and construction employees. Stage Two, set to be done by 2020, is also shovel-ready. It will create approximately 2,000 jobs and save 200 more.

#### Public Safety Funding

Consistently, residents of Phoenix rank curtailing crime alongside economic development as their top priorities. In response, City management has managed to keep street-level law enforcement personnel figures relatively stable, despite more than \$185 million in budget cuts over the past two years and the lowest city-employee-per-capita ratio since the 1970s. This commitment has paid dividends: Currently, crime in Phoenix is at a 20-year-low in every major category. With that said, police department hiring has not happened for years and unfilled positions have been phased out. Without enhanced revenues, we fear that our progress will be erased as cartels, human smugglers and drug operations probe our defenses.