



International Trade Council highlights Export-Import Bank's services and impact on Houston

The Partnership held its quarterly International Trade Council on June 2 in the Partnership board room. Council Host Andrew A. Pidgirsky, Partner, International Practice Team Leader, Adams and Reese, LLP welcomed Council Speakers Paula Swain, Managing Director, Structured & Project Finance, Export-Import Bank of the United States and Darcie Durham, Director State and Local Government Operations at Boeing.

The Export-Import Bank of the United States is the official export credit agency of the United States federal government. Ex-Im Bank provides financing for transactions that would otherwise not take place because commercial lenders are either unable or unwilling to accept the political or commercial risks inherent in the deal.

"We support Houston and Houston-based companies," said Swain. According to Swain, it is a misconception that the bank only serves large corporations. "We work with large companies and their entire supply chain, which often comprises small businesses," she said. "In fact, 20 percent of the bank's direct clients are small businesses." Harris County is home to the largest number of small businesses that utilize the Ex-Im Bank.

Providing the business perspective, Durham discussed how Boeing utilizes the Ex-Im Bank. "We depend on the bank as a last resort when other options fall through," said Durham. "Their primary goal is to promote U.S. products and services like Boeing aircraft." Many companies and stakeholders, including Boeing, have expressed their support for the Ex-Im Bank's re-authorization needed by July 1.

Ex-Im Bank's total authorizations for 2014 are supporting an estimated \$27.5 billion in U.S. export sales and approximately 164,000 American jobs across the country.