

## U.S. Senator John Cornyn talks Shared Workforce Training

**Author:**

Jessica Rodrigo

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn came to Victoria on Tuesday to learn how a community can forge a strong bond with its regional industries.



Dale Fowler, president of the Victoria Economic Development Corp., was one member of a small group who welcomed the Republican senator during his first visit to Victoria's Caterpillar plant. Fowler said Cornyn has a strong interest in the ever-changing subject of workforce development and visited Victoria to learn more about the community's approach to workforce issues.

Victoria's ongoing commitment to preparing the current and future workforce is something Fowler and Cornyn agreed is keeping the area's employment rates low.

"What a great success story," Cornyn said Tuesday. "This sort of thing makes me feel better because I see the community come together to meet the workforce needs of big employers like Caterpillar."

The senator visited the Victoria excavator manufacturing plant and the site of Victoria College's Emerging Technology Complex with members of the community, including representatives from the Victoria Chamber of Commerce and Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent.

The community's partnership between industry and education leaders is something other areas of the country could learn from, Cornyn said.

"Its a win-win proposition," he said. "It doesn't happen everywhere, but it needs to happen in more places."

Tom Butler, president of Victoria College, had a chance to share plans for the complex with the senator before the press conference. Butler said he believes Cornyn has a clear understanding of how the project will add to the

workforce training efforts in the area.

"I'm glad to see that he has that focus," Butler said.

The relationships between the city government and private businesses are good examples of how the community can benefit, Cornyn said.

"We need to hold these up as a model, not only for the rest of the state, but for the rest of the country," he said.

Because not every student will attend a four-year college, Cornyn said, it is important for students to start training early and learn what they can to become employed.

Victoria College's push to build the Emerging Technology Complex is one that he said will attract people to train and continue moving the area's development forward.

"It's a great combination and story," Cornyn said.

Butler said he was flattered to hear there was strong support for the training efforts by the college and area industries.

"It was very gratifying to hear his remarks," Butler said "It validated a lot of the things that we are doing."

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