

To Whom It May Concern:

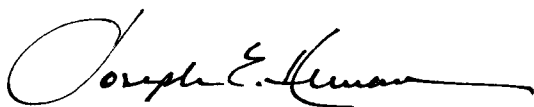
I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Melanie Darke Solmos. Melanie served as the Ombudsman and then the Deputy Director of Business Development for the Indiana Department of Commerce (IDoC) during my term as Lt. Governor. In addition to her normal duties, she served as my proxy on the Water Pollution Control Board, the Air Pollution Control Board and the Solid Waste Management Board, all rule making boards necessary for the implementation of state and federal laws. She assisted me in addressing the concerns of my business constituency and worked on several special projects within the IDoC. Specifically, she lead the effort to make the IDoC ISO 9000 compliant by documenting the procedures of all 11 divisions, including Business Development, International Trade, Tourism, Community Development, Energy Policy, etc. and was a key participant in the strategic planning and reorganization of the agency.

As Ombudsman, Melanie exercised significant leadership ability, prompting the decision to make her the Deputy Director of Business Development. As deputy, she managed 14 individuals all tasked with bringing new business to the State of Indiana and supporting the existing business growth.

Melanie displayed the utmost professionalism and dedication. Her intelligence, motivation and technical knowledge enabled her to understand a wide range of issues and attend to them successfully. She quickly developed productive relationships with leaders in the business community, numerous state agencies, legislators, and special interest groups. Her common sense approach and her political acumen allowed her to make a solid contribution to state government.

I do not hesitate to recommend Melanie for any role in which leadership, effective management, and an appreciation for the challenges of business apply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph E. Kernan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph E. Kernan
Former Governor
State of Indiana