

Press Release

Fifth Annual Akerman U.S. Real Estate Summit Announced

February 25, 2014

National Real Estate Elite to Gather in Miami to Discuss Emerging Market Trends and Investment Opportunities

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced that the fifth annual Akerman U.S. Real Estate Summit will be held on Friday, March 7 in Miami. Each year since the real estate downturn, the Akerman Summit has served as an exclusive forum for industry leaders to exchange insights on the trends impacting investment in U.S. commercial real estate and to explore creative avenues for growth.

“The U.S. real estate market is beginning to see an upturn, with investor and development activity having a measurable impact on key industry segments,” said Richard Bezold, chair of Akerman’s Real Estate Practice Group. “At the same time, volatile financial markets and government policies still generate clouds of uncertainty. The Akerman U.S. Real Estate Summit provides a forum for the nation’s industry elite to engage in peer-to-peer discussions on these evolving market forces while examining innovative strategies expected to create investor value in 2014 and beyond.”

The Akerman Summit will begin with a candid discussion between top industry executives Len O’Donnell, President and CEO of USAA Real Estate;

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Vincent Signorello, President and CEO of FECI; and Thomas K. Sittema, CEO of CNL Financial Group. The group will share their outlook for the real estate market; identify emerging development and investment opportunities; and discuss key lessons learned over the last market cycle. Constance Mitchell Ford, veteran journalist and Real Estate Bureau Chief of *The Wall Street Journal* will lead the discussion.

In addition, the day-long event will include a special insiders' view of two of the nation's most influential cities in urban redevelopment, New York and Miami. Former Mayor of Miami Beach, Neisen Kasdin, now Akerman's Miami Office Managing Partner, will lead The Honorable Carlos Gimenez, Mayor of Miami-Dade County, and Carl Weisbrod, newly appointed Chair of the City Planning Commission for New York City and a member of Mayor Bill de Blasio's Administration, through an intimate discussion that explores the parallels between two global gateway cities. The group also will discuss the unique development challenges and opportunities in New York and Miami that are expected to set a trend for policy, development and innovation for American cities.

The Akerman Summit also will feature keynote luncheon speaker, Michael Lyons, Head of Corporate & Institutional Banking of The PNC Financial Services Group.

More conversations will continue throughout the day. Speakers will explore the state of the global market and cross-border real estate investment opportunities; alternative financing vehicles such as the EB-5 Visa Program; as well as today's most active real estate sectors, including the retail and office markets. Patricia Goldstein, Vice Chairman and Head of Commercial Real Estate, Emigrant Bank; Bruce Mosler, Former CEO of Cushman & Wakefield and current Chairman of Global Brokerage; and Steven Witkoff, Chairman and CEO of The Witkoff Group, are among this year's speakers.

More than 300 industry leaders in commercial real estate development, investment, and financing are expected to gather for the Akerman Summit at the JW Marriot Marquis in downtown Miami. Akerman will unveil its annual industry outlook survey on the day of the Summit.

For more details on the Akerman Summit, including a complete agenda and the full list of speakers, visit www.akerman.com/REsummit2014.

The Akerman Real Estate Practice Group offers comprehensive and fully-integrated project counsel services to clients across the United States and in Latin America. With substantial industry experience and prominent local presence, Akerman represents clients in complex real estate transactions and financings, development and redevelopment projects, public private initiatives, and litigation. Recognized as a national tier one law firm for Real Estate Law by *U.S. News - Best Lawyers*, the group advises investors, developers, builders, lenders, retailers, owners, and corporate end users, often in high profile matters.

About Akerman LLP

Akerman LLP is a leading transactions and trial law firm known for its core strengths in middle market M&A, within the financial services and real estate industries, and for a diverse Latin America practice. With more than 600 lawyers and government affairs professionals and a network of 20 offices, it is ranked among the top 100 law firms in the United States by *The National Law Journal* NLJ 350 (2013). Akerman also is ranked among the top 50 law firms for diversity in *The American Lawyer's* Diversity Scorecard (2013). More information can be found at akerman.com or twitter.com/akerman_law.