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Gov. Perry Tells Tech Industry Leaders Texas Is Wide Open for Business

DALLAS – Gov. Rick Perry today told representatives of the high-tech industry that Texas is a willing partner as companies look to expand and create new jobs.

“One of my top priorities as governor is to create jobs, opportunity and prosperity for the people of Texas,” Perry told the TechNet Texas Innovation Forum. “And as our economy has evolved the state has embraced the future by developing and implementing new, aggressive strategies to create an environment in which employers are free to grow.”

Perry cited the \$295 million Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF) as one of the key steps the state has taken to create more jobs and that will help Texas families find careers that lead to a better quality of life.

Two TechNet members have benefited from the Enterprise Fund, Perry noted – Texas Instruments and Maxim.

“The \$50 million TEF investment to the University of Texas at Dallas played a decisive role in Texas Instruments’ decision to build a new \$3 billion research and manufacturing plant in Richardson that will create up to 1,000 high-paying jobs.” Perry said. “And other technology employers will benefit from a better educated workforce.”

The TEF also has been instrumental in securing other high-tech jobs for Texans, including:

- \$1.5 million to Maxim for a new semiconductor facility in San Antonio that will likely create 600 new jobs over the next three to four years.
- \$25 million to a new Center for Advanced Diagnostic Imaging in Houston, which will help create 2,200 highly skilled jobs putting Texas at the forefront in the biotechnology field.
- \$40 million to Sematech to help establish the Advanced Materials Research Center in Austin, which will accelerate the development of critical research in nanotechnology, biotechnology, and other areas, and will generate more than 4,000 high-tech jobs in Texas over the next 10 years.

“These projects and others, such as the half-billion expansion by Samsung, are building Texas’ reputation as a leader in the new economy,” Perry said.

Beyond creation of the TEF, Texas took several additional steps to attract employers and new jobs, Perry said, including passing the most sweeping tort reform in the nation and making excellence in education the top spending priority in good times and lean.

The tort reforms passed last year by the Texas Legislature and approved by voters in a constitutional amendment will have long-lasting impact in the state, Perry said. One respected economist estimated that the state's lawsuit reform measures will eventually lead to the creation of more than 240,000 permanent jobs and add \$36 billion to the Texas economy.

Over the past six years, Texas has increased spending on public education a record \$7.1 billion, including \$1.2 billion last year despite a record \$10 billion shortfall.

Test results have proven the wisdom of the state's priority on education, Perry added, with test scores continually rising while the state set higher standards for students and schools.

Perry said the steps Texas has taken are paying off in terms of job creation, too.

The data shows Texas is on the leading edge of the national economic recovery and has gained 112,000 net jobs in the past ten months.

In the first quarter of this year, exports to Mexico have increased 22 percent, Perry said, and 12 separate industries in Texas export more than a billion dollars worth of goods and services to Mexico. The computer and electronics industry is leading the way in exports to Mexico, exporting more than \$11 billion annually.

Texas is now the leading exporting state in the nation, with much higher export totals to nations in Asia and Europe as well as Central and South America.

Texas also attracted nine of the 20 largest capital investments of 2003. Perry noted that Texas has continued to build on, "a stunning record of success" with this year's announcement that Vought Aircraft will consolidate operations and bring 3,000 jobs to Dallas.

The Vought announcement was the largest job announcement nationwide in the first quarter.

Hewlett-Packard, recently moved 500 manufacturing jobs from Roseville, Calif., to Houston. Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina said the company's decision was based on the attentiveness of state officials, a better education system, a higher standard of living and better transportation.