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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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CONTACTS:

Cheryle Jackson	312/814.3158 (office)
Abby Ottenhoff	312/814.3158 (office)
Rebecca Rausch	217/782.7355 (office)
Andrew Ross	312/814.8193 (Opp. Returns)
Catherine Foster	630/252.5580 (Argonne)

GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF TASK FORCE IN EFFORT TO LAND HIGH TECH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROJECT WORTH \$1 BILLION INVESTMENT IN ILLINOIS

CHICAGO - As part of his historic plan to spur economic growth and create jobs throughout the state, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced that the state is launching a coordinated campaign to help Argonne National Laboratory win its site selection bid to host construction of a major U.S. Department of Energy project that could bring \$1 billion in investment and hundreds of jobs to the Chicago area. The Rare Isotope Accelerator (RIA) will provide intense beams of rare isotopes (short-lived nuclei not normally found on earth) for a wide variety of studies in nuclear structure, nuclear astrophysics, and fundamental interactions. The U.S. Department of Energy recently issued a Presolicitation Notice for the construction of the RIA.

"Argonne National Laboratory has been at the forefront of scientific discovery since it was chartered as the U.S. Department of Energy's first national laboratory in 1946. It is critical that the public and private sectors in Illinois work together to support Argonne as the location for this important new facility. To help ensure this necessary support, I have asked Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, to spearhead a public-private task force with Argonne Director Dr. Hermann Grunder and University of Chicago President Dr. Don Randel to bring RIA to Illinois where it belongs," Governor Blagojevich said.

The initial task force members include – U.S. House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-IL), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Senator Peter Fitzgerald (R-IL), U.S. Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL), Northwestern University President Henry S. Bienen, AFL-CIO President Margaret Blackshere, Chicago Federation of Labor President Dennis Gannon, Argonne National Laboratory Director Dr. Hermann A. Grunder, Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago President R. Eden Martin, Northern Illinois University President John G. Peters, University of Chicago President Don M. Randel, Illinois Coalition Chairman Samuel K. Skinner and University of Illinois President James J. Stukel.

"The Rare Isotope Accelerator project is a marvelous opportunity for Illinois. Securing RIA would allow us to continue to act as a pioneer in scientific discovery on the world's stage, while also producing major economic benefits here at home in the form of job creation and investment," U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) said.

"Argonne National Laboratory is a shining example of what can be accomplished right here in Illinois. RIA would not only bring \$1 billion and hundreds of jobs into Illinois, it would also be another strong signal that our state is a national and international leader in cutting-edge scientific research. The public-private partnership we

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are launching today is a crucial step in the right direction," U.S. Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) said.

"The entire Illinois delegation, including Speaker Hastert and Senators Durbin and Fitzgerald, have been meeting to discuss RIA for sometime now and all have expressed a strong willingness to do whatever it takes to help bring RIA to Illinois," said U.S. Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL), Chairman of the House Science Subcommittee on Energy. "The creation of this task force, and the involvement of businesses, labor, civic organizations, and Illinois research universities, is certainly a positive development. I look forward to working with Governor Blagojevich and the task force to demonstrate Illinois' commitment to making the RIA project a success."

Governor Blagojevich's Deputy Chief of Staff for Economy and Labor Julie Curry, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Director Jack Lavin, DCEO Chief of Staff Kristi Lafleur, Assistant to the Governor Sol Ross and DCEO Deputy Director for Technology and Industrial Competitiveness Dennis Sienko were also appointed to the task force.

The construction of the Rare Isotope Accelerator, funded in full by the U.S. Department of Energy, is projected to cost \$1 billion. It's estimated that approximately 65% of project contracts and 60% of procurements would be placed in Illinois, meaning that a total of at least \$637 million will be spent in state. Argonne National Laboratory, located just outside of Chicago, is a leading contender for the location of this major scientific research facility. What the project offers the country, and the world at large, is a path to new technologies that use the new knowledge in practical and commercial applications, such as for medical purposes, energy production and national security.

Argonne has a number of unique strengths that make it an attractive choice for location of the isotope accelerator project. It is the only laboratory in the world with on-site expertise in the variety of technologies on which the RIA concept is based. These include, among others, extensive experience with linear accelerators based on independently phased superconducting resonators, the stopping of high energy rare isotopes in helium gas and their subsequent rapid extraction as high quality beams of positive ions, broad experience with liquid metal cooling technology essential for RIA production targets at beam powers of 100kw and above, and an on-going program of basic research with first generation beams of rare isotopes.

"Not only will RIA be responsible for the creation of hundreds of new construction jobs, as well as hundreds of new high-wage, high-skill research positions, but it will keep Argonne, its public and private partners, and Illinois at the forefront of scientific discovery. I look forward to working on this exciting new opportunity for Illinois," said Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

"The Rare Isotope Accelerator offers scientists the ability to study entirely new forms of matter, promising a fundamental understanding of how our world and universe came to be," Dr. Hermann Gruner, Director of Argonne National Laboratory said. "In addition, establishing properties of rare isotopes has the potential to help keep us safer by tracking the source of devices that might be used by terrorists, and could also reduce the need for testing nuclear weapons by monitoring the stockpile."

The *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn't work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from. Governor Blagojevich will announce his plan for the Northeast region in the coming months.

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