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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOV. BLAGOJEVICH PRAISES GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR PASSING RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE'S EFFORTS TO LAND HIGH TECH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROJECT WORTH \$1 BILLION INVESTMENT IN ILLINOIS

CHICAGO - Governor Rod Blagojevich praised the General Assembly today for passing House Joint Resolution 0100, which urges the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to select Illinois and Argonne National Laboratory as the home of a major 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. Governor Blagojevich formed a public-private partnership in September to strength Illinois' chances of securing this critical project. State Senator Kwame Raoul (D-Chicago) and State Rep. Eileen Lyons (R-Countryside) introduced the resolution, which can be found at

<http://www.legis.state.il.us/legislation/>

"This is another strong signal to Washington that Illinois is united in our efforts to bring the Rare Isotope Accelerator where it belongs - our nation's first national laboratory. We are lucky to be living during a time when the impossible becomes possible almost every day at Argonne, which is why it makes so much sense to house this important scientific endeavor in such a dynamic and cutting edge facility. With the crucial leadership of our public-private partnership and the support of the General Assembly, I am confident the U.S. Department of Energy will be overwhelmed by our impressive case," Governor Blagojevich said.

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Jack Lavin is spearheading the public-private task force with Argonne Director Dr. Hermann Gruner and University of Chicago President Dr. Don Randel. Other 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, Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago President R. Eden Martin, Northern Illinois University President John G. Peters, Illinois Coalition Chairman Samuel K. Skinner and University of Illinois President James J. Stukel.

The construction of the Rare Isotope Accelerator, funded in full by DOE, is projected to cost \$1 billion. It's estimated that approximately 65 percent of project contracts and 60 percent of procurements would be placed in Illinois, meaning that a total of at least \$637 million will be spent in state. Argonne National Laboratory,

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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 medical purposes, energy production and national security.

“Argonne National Laboratory is the obvious selection for this very important project that would be both a powerful scientific and economic engine for our state. I, along with my colleagues in the General Assembly, will continue working with Governor Blagojevich and his public-private task force to bring the Rare Isotope Accelerator to Illinois,” State Senator Kwame Raoul (D-Chicago) said.

“I want to thank Governor Blagojevich for his leadership because the Rare Isotope Accelerator is such an important project because it has applications in medicine, national security, environmental science and so many other fields. Argonne has the tools and the expertise necessary to not only make this a huge win for our state but for our nation as well,” State Rep. Eileen Lyons (R-Countryside) said.

Argonne has a number of unique strengths that make it an attractive location for 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.

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. This grassroots effort is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business.

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