Gov. Rick Perry's Remarks at the Galena Park Biodiesel Production Facility

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Thank you, Greg (Bafalis, CEO) for inviting me here today. It is a real pleasure to be among some of the brightest and most creative minds in the bio world today. And I can say that it is an even greater honor to be governor of a state that, thanks to many of you, is leading the charge in developing alternate sources of energy. Not only are these new methods efficient and cost-effective, they’re also environmentally safe. This past July, I came to Houston to announce Texas’ Bioenergy Strategy, putting forward priorities that will create a balanced energy portfolio for our state. The real push toward bioenergy came in 2004, when we began the effort to build industry clusters comprised of leaders in six industries that economists believe will be the engines for future economic growth in the United States. Of all the industries that make the Texas economy hum, not one of them could make it without reliable sources of energy.

In a time when much of our energy comes from regions of the world that aren’t exactly pro-American, it is our job to develop energy independence for our state and nation. So we’ve been working to encourage new approaches that will not only put Texas on the cutting edge of creative energy development, but also make our state more self-sufficient. Although our history with oil and gas established Texas as the Energy Capitol of the World, we’re strengthening our grip on the title with innovations in alternate energy sources. You might be surprised to learn that we are the number one producer of wind energy, and rank second only to sunny California in solar energy production. Over the past year, Texas has become the number one biodiesel-producing state in the nation. In a state that grows by 1,000 new residents each day, we cannot rest on our laurels or stick with what has always worked. If we are to keep our economy growing, we must continue our support of renewable and alternative energies. That’s where the team at Green Earth Fuels comes in.

Today, with products like your biodiesel, alternative energy sources are not only providing clean and environmentally friendly products, but are yielding a greatly diversified and growing bioeconomy in our state. That’s because bioenergy and fuel products are successfully competing with traditional manufacturing processes. And the biodiesel produced at this plant is tipping the scales even more because it can easily be integrated into the mechanics of our lives today. The incentives offered by your product are endless: Reduced emissions and air pollution, convenient integration into our daily lives, stability in the source of the alternative fuel, and a chance to greatly reduce our country’s dependency on oil that comes from a highly volatile part of the world.

By competing aggressively for your customer’s business, you contribute to a growing momentum for the Texas economy. Forbes magazine recently ranked Texas in the top five of the Best States for Business for 2007. And, for
the fifth year in a row, we have been the top exporting state in the Union. Your commitment to excellence is contagious and it is making our state a better place to live. Thank you for all of your hard work, your innovative approaches and your contribution to a state economy that is still strong and growing. Let's continue working together to make Texas stronger, cleaner and more mobile.