Gov. Perry Celebrates the Successes of the Texas Emerging Technology Fund

Highlights Fund's positive impact on North Texas

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

Thursday, March 05, 2009

Thank you, Robert [Vrij, President, Americas Region, Alcatel-Lucent] and thank you for the strong contribution that Alcatel-Lucent makes to the Texas economy.

It’s good to see Commissioner Staples here today. You’ve been a strong supporter of our Emerging Technology Fund and I can tell you the folks in here appreciate that.

It is a pleasure to be here to celebrate what that Fund is doing for our state in general and this region in particular. What it’s doing is super-charging the research environment in our state, harnessing our people’s amazing ideas and encouraging even greater efforts to inquire, innovate and invest.

Y’all know that Texas is blessed with wonderful universities and a cadre of bright and talented researchers, whose ideas traditionally gathered dust on the shelves of university libraries, with no clear path to people they would benefit.

The Emerging Technology Fund is our solution to that problem, but it’s not what you’re used to seeing from government.

It’s different because it is not about giveaways, but incentives and investment that spur innovation.

Texans like bright ideas, but we LOVE turning those ideas into ventures that should ultimately turn a profit and benefit the state. However, the benefits yielded by this effort aren’t just financial.

Consider the impact that companies like 21-Century Silicon and Solarno will have on our...
state’s push for energy independence. Think of how Syndiant and WHAM! can improve the way we communicate with each other.

Reflect on how Modria’s products will make businesses more efficient, or how the Chipotle Group’s approach can solve key water issues.

Finally, think of the quality of life improvements that will flow out of new medical technologies being developed at companies like Gradalis, MacuClear, and OrthoKinematics.

Y’all aren’t just affecting a balance sheet, your work will change lives.

Today we celebrate the companies that are being created out of our efforts to find those great ideas born in university laboratories, and invest in their development into products, that can ultimately create jobs, turn a profit and keep our state’s economy humming.

These partnerships also benefit our universities. I would argue that our Emerging Technology Fund is THE mechanism for enhancing a school’s magnetism for investment and innovators.

I know there is a lot of talk about Tier 1 universities in Texas and it is an important conversation, because higher education is essential to any state’s overall success, and the success of our citizens.

However, those conversations must include mention of the successes we’re celebrating this evening, which will ultimately yield better benefits in terms of funding, innovation and life-changing outcomes, because of the accountability and ownership at the heart of this Fund.

They are part of the Texas mindset and the things that breed success in every area of endeavor, the kind of success that is increasingly rare in the world during these tough economic times.

Despite global economic concerns that are striking fear into the hearts of investors, business owners and families, Texas is actually doing comparatively well.

Because we made the conscious decision to hold down spending, cut taxes and create a more predictable regulatory climate, our state is better prepared than most to handle the current crisis.

Add to that our strategic investments with programs like our Emerging Technology Fund, and you can understand why we lead the nation in exports, job creation and Fortune 500 companies.

In these tough times, we need to continue to invest wisely in opportunities that will strengthen our state and create jobs for Texans.

That’s why I have asked the Legislature to continue funding strategic investments like the ETF and our Enterprise Fund. They give us a competitive advantage over other states that grows more important by the day.

As companies are driven away from states that heap new taxes and regulatory burdens on their heads, I believe they will continue to seek out Texas. When they get here, they will find a bias for relevant research and a culture of innovation that rewards the best and brightest.

So, this evening, I speak on behalf of some 23 million Texans whose tax dollars flow into this fund, and whose lives may someday be changed by the technologies you create.

Congratulations and keep up the good work. May God bless you and, through your efforts, may He continue to bless the great state of Texas.