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**LT. GOV. JOHNSON VISITS MANSFIELD,
DISCUSSES OHIO'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

MANSFIELD – Lieutenant Governor Bruce Johnson today addressed Mansfield and Richland County economic development and business leaders on the challenges facing Ohio businesses, and the state's efforts to assist Ohio firms in competing in the global economy. Johnson delivered the keynote address at the quarterly luncheon of the Mansfield-Richland Area Educational Foundation Economic Club.

“To succeed in the 21st century economy, business and government must be innovative and forward thinking,” said Johnson, who also serves as state development director. “Today’s businesses are facing new challenges and global competition as never before. By investing in new technologies, creating a business-friendly tax structure and strengthening our core education system, Ohio is striving to ensure future success and is sending a message to the world that ‘Ohio Means Business.’” Johnson also highlighted ways in which Ohio can maintain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace and how the state is transitioning from the primarily industry-based economy of the 20th century to a more diverse, knowledge-based economy that must adjust to maintain a competitive business climate.

In his remarks, Lt. Governor Johnson also highlighted Governor Taft’s proposed OhioCORE education reform plan, which aims to increase the capabilities of Ohio’s workforce in an increasingly high-tech and global economy. According to Johnson, a highly skilled and competent workforce augments existing economic development efforts by enhancing Ohio’s competitiveness and attractiveness to businesses considering investing in the state. “These are the requirements we need to improve Ohio’s educational system as we work toward building a strong, knowledge-based economy that will help this and future generations prosper for years to come,” said Johnson.

Additionally, Johnson cited Ohio’s recent tax reform as a significant factor in bolstering Ohio’s economy and attracting business to Ohio in the 21st century. The reform is eliminating the tax on tangible personal property, eliminating Ohio’s Corporate Franchise Tax and reducing personal income tax by 21%. It also makes Ohio an ideal location from which to reach the North American marketplace by exempting sales to out-of-state locations from the state’s Commercial Activities Tax.

Finally, Johnson touched on his views of the proposed Tax Expenditure Limitation (TEL) amendment. Johnson said the amendment could place severe limitations on the state’s economic development efforts and encouraged officials to consider how the TEL would affect their community and it’s ability to pursue future economic development projects.

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