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## **JOHNSON UNVEILS TOOL TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES FIGHT HIGH ENERGY COSTS**

**AKRON** - Lieutenant Governor Bruce Johnson today unveiled the Ohio Small Business Energy Saver, a Web-based tool to assist small businesses in saving money on their energy costs. The tool employs smart and efficient energy usage practices designed to help small business owners identify ways to save energy, estimate the cost and return on investment for each measure, ranks the measures and builds a plan for savings.

“Energy costs have made a tremendous impact on company budgets,” said Johnson, who also serves as state development director. “Now more than ever, it’s imperative for businesses to utilize energy saving technologies to remain competitive and successful in today’s marketplace. Business owners must pay attention to the resources they are spending on their day-to-day energy usage and this tool will help them identify where their money is going and how they can save some of those funds.”

The Ohio Small Business Energy Saver is offered as a collaborative project between the Ohio Department of Development, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and Ohio’s major utility companies – AEP-Ohio, Columbia Gas of Ohio, Dayton Power and Light, Dominion East Ohio, Duke Energy, FirstEnergy and Vectren. The tool was customized to meet the needs expressed by small business owners at the 2005 Ohio Small Business Summit and announced as part of Governor Bob Taft’s State of Ohio Energy Policy & Action Plan in February 2006.

“As energy prices rise, tools like the Ohio Small Business Energy Saver are vital to assisting our state’s small business customers control their energy costs,” said PUCO Chairman Alan R. Schriber. “The PUCO is proud to have worked with the Governor’s Jobs Cabinet and Ohio’s investor-owned utility companies in developing a tool that will provide small business customers with valuable energy saving tips.”

The Ohio Small Business Energy Saver is a free, Web-based program administered through the Ohio Department of Development with financial support from Ohio's investor-owned gas and electric utilities. The tool is designed to help small and medium-sized businesses calculate the returns on investment for different energy efficiency measures. With this easy-to-use tool, businesses can identify ways to save 10 to 20 percent of their energy use, depending on how much control they have over their building and equipment and whether they have already taken steps to improve their efficiency. For more information regarding this energy tool please visit [www.business.ohio.gov](http://www.business.ohio.gov).