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Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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CONTACTS:

Abby Ottenhoff 312/814.3158
Rebecca Rausch 217/782.7355
Gerardo Cardenas 312/814.3158
Mica Matsoff 312/814.8199 (DCEO)

Ohio joins Illinois FutureGen coalition

Ohio Governor Strickland stresses importance of placing FutureGen in location that quickly benefits other coal states

SPRINGFIELD – Ohio has become the latest state to support locating the federal FutureGen clean coal project in Illinois, joining a growing alliance of coal producing and consuming states that believe it essential to site FutureGen in a location that will maximize the transferability of the project's technology.

Pennsylvania, Indiana, Kentucky and Wisconsin have previously endorsed locating the \$1.4 billion FutureGen plant in Illinois, at one of two sites in Tuscola or Mattoon.

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, the Illinois Congressional delegation, and state and local partners across Illinois have been working for more than four years to bring the \$1.4 billion FutureGen project to Illinois.

The FutureGen Industrial Alliance, which is developing the facility for the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), is expected to announce its final selection from the four remaining sites in mid-December. The two other sites are in Texas.

“I believe it is essential to site both the FutureGen power plant and its carbon capture and sequestration pilot project in a location that maximizes the value of this significant federal investment to the entire nation. And, I believe that place is Illinois,” Ohio Governor Ted Strickland wrote in the letter to the FutureGen Alliance.

“Illinois has the right combination of geology, expertise, and transportation infrastructure, all strengthened by state and community support. More importantly, the characteristics of the Illinois sites have much more in common with those of coal producing states with a significant portion of the nation's power plant fleet. Both the challenges and lessons learned at Illinois sites will translate more quickly in Ohio.”

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In response to the letter of endorsement, Gov. Blagojevich said, “I would like to personally thank Governor Strickland and the state of Ohio for their support in our quest to become home to FutureGen. It is important to note that states that produce and consume coal are paying close attention to this competition. It is vital that this project is placed in a location that offers the best opportunity to replicate FutureGen’s technology. With all of our strategic assets, we are confident that Illinois is the place for FutureGen.”

Indiana and Kentucky have been aligned with Illinois on the FutureGen project for many months. Pennsylvania joined the fold last month when Governor Ed Rendell submitted a letter to the FutureGen Alliance in support of FutureGen in Illinois. Just last week, Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle offered his state’s endorsement.

FutureGen is designed to be the cleanest fossil fuel-fired power plant in the world. The facility will convert coal into hydrogen and electricity, while capturing and safely storing the carbon dioxide deep underground. It will lay the groundwork for developing similar plants around the country and the world, pioneering the capture, rather than release greenhouse gases. Illinois is a coal state whose geology will maximize the transferability of FutureGen’s technology. In 2006, Ohio mined 22.7 million tons of coal according to the Energy Information Administration. In addition, 87 percent of Ohio’s electricity is produced using coal.

FutureGen will produce 275 megawatts of electric power, which is enough electricity to power 150,000 homes, as well as hydrogen for fuel cell technology that will serve as the next generation “battery” to operate everything from a computer to a car.

Members of the FutureGen Alliance represent the largest energy companies in the United States, plus major energy companies in Asia, Europe and Australia.

For more information on FutureGen, please visit www.FutureGenForIllinois.com.