



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Feb. 18, 2010**

### **Governor Rendell: Federal Recovery Funds Make Three Large-Scale Wind Projects Possible, Bring Gamesa Employees Back to Work Filling Orders**

Announces \$22.8 Million for Projects Creating, Retaining Hundreds of Jobs

**Ebensburg** – A Cambria County wind turbine manufacturer that had to temporarily lay off 79 employees last November after new orders fell will be able bring back those workers and hire an additional 50 people thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Governor Edward G. Rendell said today.

During a visit to the Gamesa Wind USA plant, Governor Rendell announced \$22.8 million in grants through the federal Recovery program that will not only put people to work at Gamesa, but will also create another 257 jobs at three large-scale wind farms.

“A year ago this week, President Obama -- after only 28 days in office -- and Congress took action to move the United States out of its darkest days since the 1930s by passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act,” said Governor Rendell. “While some naysayers – often, critics who have little personally at stake - - have questioned whether it was the right thing to do, the reality is that the Recovery Act kept our nation from sinking deeper into economic quicksand.”

The Governor noted that 2 million Americans today have good jobs because of the federal stimulus. In Pennsylvania, the act helped avoid massive layoffs, provided relief to families in need, made higher education more affordable for students, and enabled employers to hire and retain workers doing jobs that are vital to the state’s future, such as developing renewable energy resources.

“One of the premier examples in Pennsylvania, if not the nation, of how we can build a 21<sup>st</sup> century green economy is the Gamesa plant we’re visiting today. With the support of federal Recovery Act funding, this plant will return to full production and start up a second manufacturing line. That means a great deal to the workers who went back on the job this week.”

Eric Sheesley was one of those workers, said the Governor. Sheesley was laid off from his first shift quality inspector job just before Thanksgiving in 2009. He, his wife and two kids live in nearby Nanty Glo, and while his wife was able to pick up extra hours at her receptionist position, the family mostly relied on Eric’s unemployment compensation to get by. Because of the federal Recovery funds, however, he returned to work on Monday, Feb. 15.

“Eric’s experience is only one of the many positive stories made possible thanks to the federal Recovery Act’s support for advanced energy projects,” said Governor Rendell.

Since the Recovery Act was passed, Pennsylvania companies and communities have received more than \$800 million for green energy projects. Those funds are in addition to the nearly \$1 billion in state funds spent to help grow this sector in the last seven years. As result, according to the Pew Center, Pennsylvania ranks third for the growth of green jobs just behind the powerhouse energy states of Texas and California.

The \$22.8 million that Governor Rendell announced today through the Recovery-funded Green Energy Works! Wind grant program will create or retain 387 jobs, leverage more than \$200 million in private investments, and reduce harmful carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 450 million pounds annually -- the equivalent of removing 39,000 passenger vehicles from the road. The three projects receiving grant funding include:

- \$7.8 million for Gamesa to install 19 two-megawatt wind turbines at the Chestnut Flats Wind Farm in Cambria and Blair counties. The project is expected to create 85 jobs.
- \$10 million Iberdrola Renewables’ South Chestnut wind project to install 23 two-megawatt turbines in Fayette County that will create 129 jobs.
- \$5 million for the Broad Mountain Wind Energy Center’s installation of eight turbines near Frackville in Schuylkill County under a project that will create 43 jobs.

“If not for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, these projects wouldn’t happen now and these Gamesa workers wouldn’t be back on the job making the 50 turbines that each of these projects will use.

“It’s clear that the stimulus is working: it’s providing a lifeline to families, slowing job losses, and helping our economy rebound. In January 2009, America lost 750,000 jobs. One year later, that rate had slowed to only 20,000 jobs and the nation’s GDP grew at its fastest pace in six years during the fourth quarter of 2009.”

For more information on how the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is working in Pennsylvania, visit [www.recovery.pa.gov](http://www.recovery.pa.gov).

**Media contacts:**

Neil Weaver, DEP; 717-787-1323

Gary Tuma, Governor’s Office; 717-783-1116

###