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STATE SOLAR SYMPOSIUM SHINES LIGHT ON NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN CLEAN ENERGY SECTOR

NASHVILLE --- With Tennessee uniquely positioned to recruit thousands of new jobs in the solar-energy industry over the next decade, more than 150 of the state's economic development professionals have lined up for the first-ever Tennessee Solar Symposium tomorrow, **November 10, at the Renaissance Hotel in Nashville**. The event – being hosted by the Tennessee Economic Partnership (TEP) and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) – will empower communities across the state to more effectively compete in the emerging solar industry.

Gov. Phil Bredesen will offer a keynote address at the Symposium at 10 a.m. CST in the Music City Ballroom.

“This event is the latest step in the state's focus on clean energy investment and job creation,” Bredesen said. “The Symposium brings together the leading economic development minds and advocates in this state to share ideas, resources and information to move the needle on clean energy jobs and growth in Tennessee for the foreseeable future. Our investment in the solar sector and these new technologies is a focused and collaborative effort to capitalize on opportunities that bring new, good-paying jobs to our state.”

ECD Commissioner Matt Kisber, who has helped bring more than \$27 billion in new capital investment to Tennessee over the past five years, said the economic development opportunities associated with the solar energy sector are growing exponentially.

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“Tennessee’s standing as an expansion center for the solar industry has grown dramatically over the past two years,” said Kisber. “Our state’s focus on building a business climate which allows the solar industry to thrive here is the result of strong collaboration between industry and the economic development community and this Symposium is an outgrowth of that partnership.”

TEP, a public-private partnership of more than 20 organizations, will host the inaugural Solar Symposium. TEP Chairman Mike Evans of the Clarksville/Montgomery County Economic Development Council deemed it a model going forward.

“As the premier economic development organization in the state, TEP exists to work with, and in support of, the governor and the administration’s initiatives, and we’re proud to be able to bring the economic development community in our state together in this way,” Evans said. “It is a tremendous educational and networking event.”

As the fastest-growing industry for new investment, solar energy has quickly become a target industry for Tennessee’s economic development efforts. Solar panel component manufacturers such as Hemlock Semiconductor and Wacker Chemie will invest more than \$3 billion in Tennessee, initially employing 1,000 workers with the potential for at least 1,000 more. JP Morgan predicts that the United States will surpass Germany as the largest market for solar power in the world by 2011.

With a ready workforce, dedicated industrial megasites and central location, many solar and clean energy companies already call Tennessee home, including solar panel suppliers such as Sharp in Memphis; Shoals Technologies Group in Gallatin; AGC Flat Glass in Kingsport; wind tower manufacturer SIAG Aerisyn, L.C.C. in Chattanooga; and the leading supplier to the world’s clean energy manufacturers Alstom Power.

In addition to the governor, Symposium topics and speakers include:

- **International Solar Industry Overview** by Tom Nicholas, regional director, Central United States Solar Electric Power Association.
- **Solar Research and Development** panel moderated by Tom Rogers, director of Industrial and Economic Development Partnerships at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). Panelists are Dr. Chad Duty, Solar Technology Program Manager at ORNL and Dr. Kelly J. Tiller, president and CEO of Genera Energy, LLC.
- **Tennessee: A Bright Future for the Solar Industry** panel discussion moderated by ECD Commissioner Matt Kisber. Panelists are Gary Homan, vice president and director of sales and marketing for Hemlock Semiconductor; Dr. Rolf Hirsenkorn, vice president of Production for Wacker Polysilicon; Ed Wegener,

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North American Solar Business Unit manager for AGC Flat Glass; and Harry Hessen, senior director of Marketing and Product Planning for Sharp Manufacturing Corporation of America.

About the Tennessee Economic Partnership

Tennessee Economic Partnership is a public-private program created in 1990 by the state's leading economic development professionals and corporate executives to organize marketing opportunities that attract new jobs to the state.

Through strategically planned networking events, TEP generates leads and business relationships with key prospects and consultants. In partnership with the State of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the state's business and economic development community, TEP works to increase private capital investment and create higher incomes for all Tennesseans. For more information, visit www.tennep.com.

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