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Ohio Chamber of Commerce and Ohio Environmental Council join forces to urge YES vote on Issues 1 and 2

Unique alliance calls May 4 election a great opportunity to invest in jobs *and* a cleaner environment for Ohio

(Columbus, OH)— A unique alliance of economic and environmental interests has emerged to support a pair of ballot issues on Ohio’s May 4 ballot that they agree are good for the economy *and* the environment.

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Environmental Council—two powerhouses that sometimes are on opposite sides of public policy debates—announced today that they are joining forces to urge Ohio voters to vote YES on Issues 1 and 2.

“When organizations as diverse as ours come together on an issue, you can bank on its importance to all Ohioans. That’s why we are, together, urging Ohioans to vote YES on Issues 1 and 2,” said Andrew Doehrel, President and CEO of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

The two groups have launched a joint letter to the editor to newspapers and blogs around the state and are informing their respective members and partners that the two groups have teamed up in support of an uncommon pair of measures the groups believe are both pro-business and pro-environment.

Issue 1 proposes a \$700 million renewal in state bonds for Ohio’s Third Frontier program, a public-private partnership that fosters innovation, invention and investment by Ohio-based high-tech industries. Since its start in 2005, the Third Frontier has helped develop more than 637 companies, expand existing companies, and create more than 55,000 new jobs.

The OCC and the OEC believe Issue 1's passage will speed the transition from Ohio laboratories to world marketplaces for new technologies, including fuel cells, photovoltaics, energy efficiency and other forms of advanced energy.

Issue 2 proposes to move the site of Columbus' future casino from downtown to the site of a former auto parts factory. Even though Issue 2 affects only the Columbus casino, a statewide vote is necessary to authorize the move.

The groups tout that by passing Issue 2, Ohioans can assure the rapid clean up and reuse of the former factory site, a 123-acre brownfield that sits idle on the city's struggling west side. They also suggest that redeveloping this vacant site sooner rather than later can help spur other clean up and development in the surrounding area, a heavily trafficked urban area.

"Our two organizations represent diverse interests. But we strongly agree that Issues 1 and 2 represent a unique opportunity to invest in jobs, a more vibrant economy *and* a cleaner environment," said Keith Dimoff, Executive Director for the Ohio Environmental Council.

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The Ohio Chamber of Commerce (www.ohiochamber.com) has remained the most successful business advocacy group in the state because of its diverse membership and ability to understand the changing needs of Ohio through the years. The Ohio Chamber continues to be on the cutting edge of advocacy, grassroots and member services: fully prepared to carry on its important work for another century.

The mission of the Ohio Environmental Council (www.theOEC.org) is to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. The OEC is Ohio's leading advocate for fresh air, clean water, and sustainable land use. The OEC has a 40-year history of innovation, pragmatism, and success. Using legislative initiatives, legal action, scientific principles, and statewide partnerships, the OEC secures a healthier environment for Ohio's families and communities.