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Courier Times

Stimulus funds have Rendell seeing green

By: **JOHN ANASTASI**
Bucks County Courier Times

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The governor took the first step toward grabbing a share of the funds for Pennsylvania's energy reduction efforts.

While visiting a Bensalem window manufacturer Monday, Gov. Ed Rendell staked Pennsylvania's claim to \$366 million in federal stimulus funding designed to grow green businesses and create jobs.

It was essentially a housekeeping item - the signing of letters acknowledging the state's role in decreasing energy consumption - but, with a pen's flourish, Rendell took the first step needed to receive the money.

Most of the green-energy related stimulus funding - about \$253 million - will fund a 2009 federal tax credit for homeowners who weatherize their homes. The credit would cover 30 percent of the cost up to \$1,500.

"There is a benefit to homeowners who make their homes more energy-efficient," said Rendell.

The Obama Administration is hoping the tax credit has a secondary benefit. By offering an incentive to weatherize, the administration believes the tax credit will generate more business for companies that make energy-efficient products. The greater demand then would allow those companies to grow and hire more people.

Rendell made the announcement at Bensalem's Accu-Weld because its windows and doors meet standards the Obama Administration has set for the tax credit.

"Investing in energy conservation and weatherization is a 'win-win-win' for America," Rendell said. "It's three wins - a win for the homeowner whose heating bills go down, a win for the nation because it drives down our energy use and reliance on fossil fuels, and it's a win for American companies like Accu-Weld+."

Accu-Weld, which employs about 140 people, sells windows and doors through a network of dealers and distributors from its manufacturing facility in the Bridgewater Industrial Park. Company President John Haddon Jr. said the stimulus money will allow Accu-Weld to hire more workers.

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"The first thing we're going to do is get everyone back to 40 hours a week," said Haddon, who explained the company had cut some employees' hours due to the economic slowdown. "Then we'll expand from that. +We've already seen business pick up."

Haddon hopes to see the company double its workforce in the next few years.

"We already had products of the quality for the president's stimulus package without having to do anything," he said.

In addition to creating jobs and helping businesses, Rendell said the nation needs to be more energy efficient.

"There is no source of energy+that will meet world demand by 2025," he said. "The only way to stay

afloat is to begin the process of being more energy efficient."

Over the din of manufacturing at the Accu-Weld plant, the governor announced a series of projects that will help businesses tap federal stimulus dollars. The five companies involved in the projects will receive a total of \$3.7 million while investing more than \$19 million of their own money.

One of the five projects will take place in Bucks County. Bridge Business Center LP, a Doylestown development company, is creating new research and laboratory space in a group of Bristol Township buildings that Rohm and Haas formerly occupied.

Rendell announced Monday the developer would receive \$1 million to install an advanced energy system in a 50,000-square-foot laboratory building. The system will enable them to recycle waste heat from their operations and use it to meet their energy needs.

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