



REFORMING HOW WE STRENGTHEN WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY

Governor Chris Gregoire recognizes that states can and must lead by helping to create jobs and attract businesses both large and small. This year, the Governor secured legislative approval to re-task the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development as the Department of Commerce. At her direction, the new department is reforming the way Washington helps to keep, grow and attract good, lasting jobs — and showing early success.



The department's charge is especially timely and vital. The worldwide recession has hit Washington workers and families hard. The Governor is committed not only to getting Washingtonians back to work, but to do it through economic development strategies that create lasting job growth — from aerospace to global health-care research, green technology and software employment.

With a mission to “grow and improve jobs in Washington,” the department developed its new organizing principles and priorities on thoughtful input from a broad spectrum of Washingtonians. It is now transforming itself to create a powerful network to successfully grow and improve jobs in Washington.

Building trusted relationships takes time, but already new economic development strategies have earned the respect and endorsement of our state's top business leaders, and evidence of success is emerging. Here are a few examples:

InSitu

This Boeing subsidiary in Bingen, Washington, is going gangbusters even in this rough economy. It is leading the world in the development and manufacture of unmanned aerial defense systems. The Department of Commerce and local partners are working closely with InSitu to support expansion not only of this company, but of hundreds of other aerospace companies in Washington state.

AREVA

The Department of Commerce worked closely with AREVA to expand the company's Richland facility. Fifty new jobs were added that further distinguished the Tri-Cities area as a global research and development hub for carbon-free power generation and innovative electricity transmission and distribution.

Governor Gregoire knows that Washington must compete daily to retain and expand businesses and jobs while also attracting new ones. Washington is a great place to do business. However, we cannot afford to rest on our strengths. Informed by data about our economic challenges and opportunities, we are increasingly better positioned to engage public and private sector partners in strategies to keep Washington globally competitive. Our businesses must be able to create more and better jobs for our citizens. And Washington must always be a place for individuals and businesses to reach their full economic potential.



To accomplish this, Washington also must sustain and promote a world-class innovation economy. This requires a foundation of strong communities with reliable public infrastructure, affordable housing and a skilled work force trained to meet the demands of today's and tomorrow's employers. Because they are linked to strengthening communities, selected housing and community development programs will remain at the department. A new Community Capacity Building Division within the department will consolidate and boost performance of these programs.

Through her new Department of Commerce, Governor Gregoire is creating and sharpening tools to make sure Washington is ready to master the challenges of the 21st century economy through good jobs and strong communities.