October 29, 2007

Dear Community Leader:

One of the most pressing challenges America faces today is reducing our reliance on foreign energy sources. It is critical we become more energy independent to increase our competitiveness in the global marketplace. Appalachian Ohio has a full range of energy resources and potential to become economically competitive and a leader in emerging energy technologies by increasing economic development efforts in areas of alternative energy.

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) works with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life. The value of the ARC to our region is nothing short of tremendous, and I will continue to strengthen and champion the ARC as it is a vital resource to the economic development and growth of the region. I am currently working on legislation to reauthorize the ARC and will do everything I can to see it passed through Congress.

As many of you know, I have called for a “Second Declaration of Independence” to make us less reliant on foreign sources of energy. It is critical that we become more energy independent to remain competitive in the global marketplace and to protect our national security. It is clear that we must get serious about partnerships and strategies that maximize federal energy funding, and I think Ohio can play an integral role in securing America’s energy future.

Today, the reality is that those states and regions that can best contribute to our energy needs will experience the greatest economic progress. And, with Appalachia’s long history and strong leadership in the energy industry, there are tremendous opportunities for the region to help solve our nation’s energy problems and enjoy the economic benefits.

I am happy to co-sponsor today’s Appalachian Ohio Energy Economic Development Summit. I hope you will take the opportunity to build partnerships with those working in your region to explore a range of energy related economic development opportunities and to identify strategic prospects for energy development in your community.

Sincerely,

George V. Voinovich
United States Senator