

**For Immediate Release**  
November 1, 2012

## **New Program will Create Thousands of Jobs in Ohio**

**COLUMBUS** – Today, the Ohio Development Services Agency announced the launch of a program designed to find new uses for abandoned sites. The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund was enacted in HB 18, signed by Governor Kasich on May 4, 2012, and will provide grants to assist businesses in creating new jobs in vacant and underutilized commercial buildings and business parks.

The program seeks to encourage companies to locate in vacant commercial facilities, reusing existing buildings and infrastructure. For-profit employers are eligible to receive \$500 in grant funds for every new full-time position created in the vacant facility and lasting one year.

“The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund will help the state address the issue of vacant properties, while leveraging private investment and the creation of up to 4,000 new jobs for Ohio’s communities,” said Christiane Schmenk, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency.

The program requires that employers must occupy a building or business park that has been at least 75 percent vacant for at least 12 months and increase company employment at the facility. The new employees must increase the employer’s base payroll at the time the vacant facility is occupied and earn a wage greater than or equal to Ohio’s minimum wage. Employers must hire at least 50 employees or bring half of its current Ohio employees to the facility.

Grant funds can be used for acquisition, construction, enlargement, improvement, or equipment of the facility. The funds are reimbursed after the new employees have been employed for one year, allowing a company to make further investment in the new business location.

Prior to occupying the vacant facility, the first step for employers is to submit a pre-certification request form to the Ohio Development Services Agency’s Office of Redevelopment. The Office will review the request and certify vacancy and base employment. Following approval of the pre-certification, employers can occupy the facility and increase employment at the business site. Once the new employees have been employed for one year, the employer can submit a grant application to verify the job creation and receive grant funds for eligible expenses.

The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund has been allocated \$2 million from funds already budgeted for the Ohio Development Services Agency and is currently authorized through August 2015. Program materials are available at: [http://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs\\_ovff.htm](http://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_ovff.htm). Pre-Certification Requests will be accepted beginning November 26, 2012.

*The **Office of Redevelopment**, located within the Ohio Development Service Agency’s Community Services Division, assists communities with place-based redevelopment which creates wealth from personal, business, and community successes. The Office works to identify the resources and financing necessary to enhance the economic viability of local communities.*

*The **Ohio Development Services Agency** works with partners across business, government, academia, and the nonprofit sector to build strong communities that support job creation. Development provides financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio, ensuring a vibrant economic future for all Ohioans. Visit [www.development.ohio.gov](http://www.development.ohio.gov). Also, follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/OhioDevelopment](http://www.facebook.com/OhioDevelopment) and Twitter [www.twitter.com/OhioDevelopment](http://www.twitter.com/OhioDevelopment).*

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