

~~ Recognized as Top Ten Utility Economic Development Group by Site Selection ~~

Maria Haley Named to Head Arkansas Department of Economic Development

Governor Mike Beebe recently named Maria Haley as the new Executive Director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development.

Haley has worked in international business development since 1979 and speaks four languages. She began with a 13-year tenure at the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, during which time the number of Arkansas' export businesses doubled and foreign investments tripled in Arkansas.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton nominated Haley as a member of the board of the Export-Import Bank of the United States where she served five years.

Since 2001, Haley has been Senior Director for Kissinger McLarty Associates, specializing in Asia-related projects. She also served as an advisor and consultant to the Philippine Government of President Gloria Arroyo.

Forbes Magazine Touts Little Rock

We think Little Rock is a great place to start a new business or build a successful career, but don't just take our word for it.

In its annual ranking of the Top 200 metro areas for business and careers, *Forbes* magazine ranked the Little Rock MSA as the 22nd best location. A number of factors were considered in determining the rankings, including business costs, crime rates, income growth, living costs, and job growth.

We're Lowering Taxes!

Buoyed by record budget surpluses, the Arkansas General Assembly and Governor Mike Beebe have worked to pass key legislation that will lessen the tax burden on manufacturers and individual Arkansans.

Act 185 will reduce the state sales tax on electricity and natural gas for manufacturers (NAICS 31-33) from a current rate of 6.0% to 4.5% in July of 2007 and to 4.0% in July of 2008.

Act 110 provides sales tax relief for all Arkansans by providing a 50% cut in the state sales tax on groceries from six cents to three cents, effective July 1, 2007.

Both of these bills were priorities for Governor Beebe as he embarks on his first term in office. Other initiatives, including a "Closing Fund" for economic development, are still under consideration as the General Assembly continues its legislative work.

Time to Move to El Dorado

Murphy Oil Corporation recently announced the "El Dorado Promise," a tuition scholarship program that is available to all students who graduate from El Dorado High School, reside in the district, and have been a student in the El Dorado Public school system since the ninth grade. Looking to make a move?

Call Danny Games or Russell Harris at 888.301.5861 for project management assistance in Arkansas.

Please call 1-888-301-5861 to report name and/or fax number changes.