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For Immediate Release

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Council Authorizes \$845,370 in Job Creation Incentives

Three Companies Expected To Create Over 140 New Jobs

MONTPELIER, Vt. – The Vermont Economic Progress Council has approved more than \$845,000 in job creation incentives for three companies that will create over 140 new jobs over the next five years.

At its meeting Thursday the Council approved three companies – defense contractor Omni Measurement Systems, artwork reproducer Applejack Art Partners, and wood products manufacturer Vermont Timber Frames – to receive up to \$845,370 in job creation incentives under the new Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) program.

In addition to creating the new jobs, the companies will be required to make almost \$4 million in capital investments to receive the payments.

“The incentives will help ensure that these companies locate here or remain and grow here successfully,” said Karen L. Marshall, Chair of the Vermont Economic Progress Council.

“These authorizations represent a true diversity of businesses that will grow in Vermont. Our new economic incentive program is helping to attract one new company to Vermont and bring another back; and to ensure that a Vermont research and development company expands into manufacturing here.”

Omni Measurement Systems, Inc. of South Burlington was authorized for \$612,787 in economic incentives to add manufacturing jobs and invest in new machinery and equipment.

The company is currently a small research and development firm that has developed life support systems for the Department of Defense. After years of development, Omni has received approval to manufacture an extended-wear bladder relief system for the U.S. Air Force. The incentives will ensure that the manufacturing operation will be in Vermont rather than contracted out to an out-of-state firm.

"The support provided by the State of Vermont, through this program, will allow Omni to create a world class manufacturing facility employing over 90 people here in Vermont," said Mark Harvie, Omni's Founder and President.

Applejack Art Partners, a growing art reproduction company in Manchester has an opportunity to acquire a Massachusetts company that makes art prints available to art galleries and performs canvas transfers. They were authorized for \$85,539 for new job creation and machinery and equipment purchases.

Applejack could leave the acquired company in Massachusetts and avoid moving costs and disruption of services. The incentives will ensure that the acquired company and jobs are moved to Applejack's facility in Manchester.

"Applejack has a long and valued relationship with the State of Vermont and its people," said Jack Appelman, Applejack's CEO. "These incentives will allow us to continue and expand upon that relationship."

Despite its name, Vermont Timber Frames moved from Bennington to Cambridge, New York in 1999. The company, which manufactures timber frames and structural and insulated panels, has outgrown their facility in Cambridge, but New York development officials are offering incentives for the company to consider constructing or leasing additional facilities in New York.

The \$147,045 in VEGI incentives authorized will ensure that the company considers purchasing an empty, existing facility in Bennington, moving their existing employees to Bennington and adding new jobs here.

"We are very hopeful that with the help of these incentives, we will be able to return to our namesake state," said Tom Harrison, President of Vermont Timber Frames.

Under reforms passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Jim Douglas last year, the VEGI economic incentives were authorized based on job creation and capital investments that must occur before the company receives incentive installments over a period of years.

The previous program had companies earning tax credits that were applied against future tax liability.

The Council approved the applications after reviewing nine guidelines and applying a rigorous cost-benefit analysis which showed that because of the economic activity that will be generated by these projects, even after payment of the incentives, the State will realize a net increase in revenues of \$598,435.

The Council also determined that these projects would not occur or would occur in a significantly different and less desirable manner if not for the incentives being authorized.

The Vermont Economic Progress Council is an independent board consisting of nine Vermont citizens appointed by the governor that considers applications to the state's economic incentive programs.

The Council is attached to the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, whose mission is to help Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

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