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Missouri Enterprise to Help Division of Workforce Development Implement Early Warning Network for Business Retention

Jefferson City, Missouri, November 1, 2006 – The State of Missouri Division of Workforce Development has selected Missouri Enterprise to be part of an innovative new business retention program aimed at identifying at-risk companies, assessing the reasons for their at-risk status and bringing state and local community resources together to help avert business closings and layoffs, according to Missouri Enterprise President Mary Dean.

Under the recently awarded \$250,000 “*Statewide Early Warning Network Pre-feasibility Study*,” contract, Missouri Enterprise area business managers will coordinate with existing Workforce Investment Boards and Business Retention Committees/Coordinators in three Workforce Investment Act regions.

These regions are the Southwest Missouri, Northwest Missouri and the Kansas City Metro Area and their respective Workforce Investment Boards are the Southwest Missouri Workforce Investment Board, the Northwest Missouri Investment Board and the Full Employment Council for the KC Region.

The Early Warning Network, patterned after one pioneered by the Steel Valley Authority in Pennsylvania, has demonstrated success in identifying and turning around “at-risk” businesses. Similar positive results are expected here in Missouri, Dean said.

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Missouri Enterprise will serve on each of the three local Business Retention teams which are led by the Business Retention Coordinators. Together, members of the local Teams will identify at-risk companies to target.

In addition to the assessment, Missouri Enterprise will use its other resources, such as business and technical training and access to industry “best practices,” to help at-risk companies develop and implement strategies for effectively competing and for creating local economic growth rather than suffering closure and the resulting job losses.

Missouri Enterprise Project Manager Ken Reynolds will supervise the contract and coordination with the area Workforce Investment Boards and the Division of Workforce Development. He will direct area business managers Terry Broccard in the Southwest area; Dick Wegner in the Northwest and Metro KC areas; and John Lamond in the Northwest area.

If your business is in the Northwest, Southwest or KC Metro Workforce Investment Act region and you would like more information on the program, contact Ken Reynolds at 800-956-2682 or your local Business Retention Coordinator Lee Langerock at (816)364-4103.