

Team Ford & Gilliard
Economic Development Priority: Boeing Construction Phase
By Malik Campbell

The team of State Senator Robert Ford (D) and State Representative Wendell Gilliard have been working with the officials at Boeing to insure that the African- American community is not left out in the cold when it comes to economic opportunities resulting from this boon for the Charleston region. The construction of the Dreamliner facility will cost \$872 million. Once the facility is developed it will generate over 8000 jobs both directly and indirectly according to a report on Boeing's economic impact compiled by Miley & Associates of Columbia.

"We don't want to wait until all the money has been allocated and spent. We want minority companies in on the ground floor," said Representative Wendell Gilliard.

One result of the efforts has been the development of a program that develops the skills of local minority and women contractors. The program was conducted by the construction firm building the Boeing Plant, Turner Construction. 27 companies graduated from the program. The six-week course included the essentials of managing a business, how to do a business plan with Boeing, developing a business plan, how to estimate and bid larger jobs and more.

"If you had a business in the construction industry and there was a large project you would want your business to be a part of it. Our goal is to bring everyone together and make it a win for everybody," said Turner Construction CEO Peter Davoren.

Some participants agree. "It gives small businesses like mine the opportunity to grow," said graduate Joey Jefferson.

"This is just the first step. Of course, the next step is to get these graduates contracts. There is \$800 million being spent, and so we want significant contracts- in the millions- not thousands." Says Senator Ford and Representative Gilliard.

According to Turner construction, 80 percent of contractors working on the Boeing site are from South Carolina while 28 percent of those contractors are minority and women owned businesses.

"We want to ensure that those numbers reflect the people we represent. Boeing is in our backyard because of public incentives, and it would be a shame if the communities surrounding the plant are not a part of its development and growth," said Senator Robert Ford.

Team Ford & Gilliard has made it their priority to focus on economic development issues this general session. Our communities will triumph only through job creation, business development, and self- sustainable development. The task is ours. Stay tuned for more information concerning Team Ford & Gilliard.

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Youth Development
By Malik Campbell

Team Ford & Gilliard have made a commitment to make economic development and youth development a priority for this legislative session of the General Assembly. Recently, Team Ford & Gilliard have been instrumental in developing a partnership between local community based youth educational programs and the Children's Cancer Foundation. This partnership has resulted in the purchase and distribution of 25 new computers to the following five community based programs: Charles Webb Center, Florence Crittenton Homes, Jenkins Orphanage, The Pink House, and the Charleston Development Academy Charter School.

For Information on this partnership call Representative Wendell Gilliard at 843-209-3123 or Senator Robert Ford at 843-813-1777.