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Governor Rendell Says New Data Operations Center to Locate in Lackawanna County

HARRISBURG – Governor Edward G. Rendell announced today that Pennsylvania’s competitive business environment and skilled workforce have helped a New York City-based company select Scranton as the home of its secondary data operations center.

The Governor said SECCAS LLC, the leading provider of compliance solutions for financial firms, will create at least 10 good-paying jobs in Lackawanna County within three years.

“These jobs could have gone to New York, New Jersey or Maryland,” Governor Rendell said. “Instead, the company recognized the value Pennsylvania offers with our well-trained workforce and exceptional quality of life. Now, SECCAS will be creating new opportunities for the hardworking men and women of northeast Pennsylvania.

“This project is another great example of how our competitive business environment and strategic investments are working to grow our economy.”

As part of its \$850,000 project, SECCAS will purchase new equipment, make leasehold improvements and train its new employees.

“We are pleased to formally announce our presence in Pennsylvania and our plans to locate a data operations center in the city of Scranton,” said SECCAS president Daniel Summa. “The Governor, the Mayor of Scranton, Lackawanna County officials and Wall Street West have been wonderfully helpful during our evaluation. We look forward to growing our business and becoming an active member of the Scranton community.”

Three years ago the Governor directed a thorough analysis of all Pennsylvania industries. That study found that the business and financial services industry was one of nine segments of the economy where Pennsylvania has a competitive advantage.

In February 2006, Governor Rendell announced the U.S. Department of Labor had approved a \$15 million Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development, or WIRED, grant to educate and develop a highly qualified workforce for the financial services industry in northeastern Pennsylvania.

This critically important workforce development investment will combine with other economic development initiatives to improve the region's potential as a possible location for back-up and secondary operations serving the financial services industry.

Ben Franklin Technology Partners Northeast and the Northeast WIRED Partnership are helping to implement the grant.

Businesses and educational institutions in Berks, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and Wayne counties will be able to participate in WIRED activities. Funding will be provided over the next two years.

Governor Rendell said Pennsylvania's business environment, well educated workforce and support from the federal government through the WIRED grant will help attract more growth in the financial services industry.

"The nine counties representing the Wall Street West partnership are well positioned for future," the Governor said. "In addition to its proximity to New York City, this region has a tremendous amount to offer firms in financial services industry. We offer a fantastic living environment, our colleges and universities graduate talented students with the know-how to help companies succeed, and we are strengthening our infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses.

"Establishing back-up and secondary operations in northeast Pennsylvania makes good sense and, in the end, strengthens Wall Street's position as the financial capital of the world."

The SECCAS project was coordinated by the Governor's Action Team, or GAT, which is comprised of economic development professionals who report directly to Governor Rendell and serve as a single point-of-contact for businesses considering locating or expanding in Pennsylvania. The team works with domestic and international businesses and professional site consultants on projects possessing significant investment and job creation opportunities.

The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Scranton Office of Economic and Community Development and Penn's Northeast worked with GAT and SECCAS to help the company secure a \$270,000 funding package offer that includes a loan of up to \$250,000 through the Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund and \$20,000 in Customized Job Training funds.

In Lackawanna County, there have been 40 GAT projects successfully completed since January 2003. These projects total commitments for the creation of 3,936 new jobs and the retention of 4,734 other jobs. The commonwealth has offered more than \$47 million in state assistance for these projects, which will leverage more than \$286 million in additional investment.

Statewide since January 2003, the Governor's Action Team has successfully completed 803 projects resulting in commitments for the creation of 85,659 new jobs and the retention of more than 206,000 existing positions. The commonwealth has offered more than \$1.5 billion in assistance for these projects, which will leverage more than \$10 billion in additional investment.

SECCAS LLC is a privately held company headquartered in New York City that offers a feature-rich tool set for streamlining regulatory compliance on a managed services basis.

Serving the financial community since 2001, SECCAS is a preferred vendor of several major New York investment banks, streamlining compliance for large and small firms alike. To learn more about the company, visit www.seccas.com.

For information on the Governor's Action Team and other opportunities through DCED, visit www.newPA.com or call 1-866-GONEWPA (1-866-466-3972).

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit his Web site at: www.governor.state.pa.us.