



**For Immediate Release
June 12, 2009**

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Businesses show support for the Ohio River Bridges Project *Advertisements focus on project's job creation benefits*

Louisville, KY - Companies employing thousands of workers throughout the Metro Louisville region launched a support campaign for the Ohio River Bridges Project today, citing the need for job growth now and in the future.

At a news conference at Eagle Steel Co.'s distribution center near the Ford Truck Plant in Jefferson County, the Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics Network of Greater Louisville unveiled a full-page advertisement to run in Sunday's edition of *The Courier-Journal* urging public support for the project and Kentucky legislation that will put construction on a fast track.

The ad, proclaiming "It's time to turn Louisville and Southern Indiana's biggest roadblock into its biggest building block," will appear the day before the Kentucky General Assembly begins a special session that will include legislation addressing Bridges Project funding.

"The Bridges Project is the economic stimulus plan for Louisville and Southern Indiana," said Kerry Stemler, a board member of the manufacturing and logistics group and president of K.M. Stemler Company Inc.

"Construction of the Bridges Project will create 56,000 jobs with a payroll of \$2 billion – and that number does not include the thousands of jobs that will be created when the project is completed and we have a safe, reliable cross-river bridge and road network, based on a recent economic analysis of the project," Stemler added.

Companies signing onto the ad in support of the project include major employers in the region: UPS, Ford Motor Company, General Electric, Brown-Forman, Cook Compression, Blendex, GUESS? Inc., Houston-Johnson Industries, Raytheon Company, Pegasus Transportation, Stride Rite Corporation and Whip Mix Corporation, among others.

Logistics is a key growth industry for Greater Louisville. More than 144,000 jobs in the region are tied to the logistics and manufacturing industries alone.

“We feel so strongly about the Bridges Project, and its importance to the regional economy, that we are taking this first step with an advertisement that will draw attention to the urgency of getting it moving,” said Jeff Uligian, co-chairman of the network, which represents 120 companies in the region. A similar ad, sponsored by a dozen regional commercial real estate firms, ran Friday in *Business First*.

“The Bridges Project’s two new Ohio River bridges and rebuild of Spaghetti Junction where I-65, I-71 and I-64 converge ensures the region remains vital and continues to prosper and growth,” added Uligian.

“Louisville and Southern Indiana are known as a major logistics hub, not just in this region but for much of the United States. We cannot afford to become a bottleneck. The cost to our economy if we do not build this project will far outweigh the cost of construction.”

Chuck Moore, president of Eagle Steel, knows first hand the difficulties facing workers and employers because of an antiquated bridge and connecting highway system. The Bridges Project was authorized in 2003 by federal and state transportation agencies and Moore said logistics-related businesses need progress now.

“In this age of just-in-time delivery, you have to have an efficient system for moving goods and people across the river. Everybody suffers because of the safety and congestion issues. We have to make sure we get the Bridges Project completed and we see major progress as soon as possible.”

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The Advanced Manufacturing & Logistics Network is a network of over 120 manufacturing and logistics companies in Greater Louisville and Southern Indiana. These companies seek to promote business and community prosperity by creating value through world-class logistics and manufacturing with a vision of having the community recognized as a center for globally competitive manufacturing and logistics.