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FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 23, 2022) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear updated Kentuckians on economic development, efforts to provide relief from record gas prices, Western Kentucky tornado recovery, the lowest unemployment rate in state history for second consecutive month, the I-69 Ohio River Crossing in Henderson, work to address the water shortage in the City of Marion and a new recruitment program for law enforcement. He also recognized Hannah Edelen, Miss Kentucky 2022, as this week's Team Kentucky All-Star.

**Economic Development Momentum Continues to Grow**

Today, Gov. Beshear highlighted four economic development projects from across the commonwealth, totaling over \$70 million in investment, which will create over 525 jobs.

Local leaders in Rowan County will implement \$425,000 in upgrades to the Menifee-Morgan-Rowan-County (MMRC) Regional Industrial Park with support from a \$212,500 state grant and a local match from the MMRC Regional Industrial Development Authority. The project will see the construction of a new 150,000-square-foot pad that will include extensive upgrades in site work for grade, drain and infrastructure extensions.

Today, the Governor announced Funai Lexington Technology Corp.'s planned expansion in Fayette County, which includes an investment of over \$3.8 million and will create six high-quality jobs for local residents.

Seven innovative Kentucky companies will receive nearly \$900,000 in state matching grants to support high-paying jobs and further grow the state's technology industry. The grants are part of the commonwealth's nationally recognized Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Matching Funds Program.

Augusta Distillery announced its new operation in Bracken County with a \$23 million investment that will create 14 jobs for Kentuckians. This will be the company's first full-scale operation in the commonwealth.

New Riff Distilling LLC broke ground on a more than \$10 million barrel storage warehouse in Campbell County that will create five jobs for Kentucky residents. The new 55,000-square-foot warehouse will be located on 10 acres in Silver Grove and will help meet growing customer demand at the flagship distillery in Newport.

Mayfield Consumer Products LLC, a manufacturer of candles and other home fragrance products, announced it will invest a total of \$33.3 million and employ more than 500 people full-time over the next five years as the company builds back following last December's destructive tornado outbreak.

**Gov. Beshear Activates State Price Gouging Laws to Combat High Gas Prices**

In a further effort to provide relief for Kentuckians from record high gas prices, Gov. Beshear today issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency and activated the state's price gouging laws to protect families from grossly overpriced gasoline and motor fuels.

"There are many challenges and even difficulties in our present," Gov. Beshear said. "But as we push through it, there is a big and bright tomorrow that we will get to, and we will get to it together. Part of that is about doing everything we can here in state government to help our families get through."

**Governor Announces \$3.25 Million in Relief for Grain Farmers Devastated by Tornadoes**

The Governor announced a new effort to help farmers in Western Kentucky in the aftermath of the December 2021 tornadoes. The Team West Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund will provide up to \$3.25 million through the Graves County Grain Assistance Program to help local farmers doing business with the Mayfield Grain Co. that took a direct hit from the tornadoes.

The Graves County Grain Assistance Program was established after Beshear's administration was contacted by Graves County Judge/Executive Jesse Perry and local farmers. The group was concerned about the potential loss of crop yield and sought assistance for local farmers, who are an important part of ensuring the state has an ample grain supply.

**Unemployment Update**

The Governor reported that the commonwealth's May 2022 unemployment rate hit a new historic low of 3.8%, resulting in two back-to-back months of the lowest unemployment rates in Kentucky's history. Currently, unemployment is 78,893, the lowest since May 2000.

"Today we have the fewest number of Kentuckians on unemployment in 21 years," said Gov. Beshear. "Even better, 107 Kentucky counties saw their unemployment rates drop even from last month. Kentucky's economy is surging and we're creating quality jobs for people across the commonwealth."

Kentucky's labor force is now the highest it's been since pre-pandemic at 2,064,679 and the civilian labor force participation rate is the highest it's been since May 2020, now at 58.2%. The Governor also reported the employment rate is also the highest it's been since pre-pandemic at 1,985,786.

**Gov. Beshear and Kentucky Officials Break Ground on I-69 Ohio River Crossing**

On Wednesday, the Governor joined local and state officials to break ground on the Interstate 69 Ohio River Crossing in Henderson. The Governor noted that his administration has made this project a priority.

"With another interstate over the Ohio River, the project will bring with it more jobs, improved travel and the ability to move people and goods

quickly and safely from place to place," Gov. Beshear said. "Investment in our roads and bridges is essential, and smart investments like this one pay huge dividends for our state."

**Beshear Administration Helping City of Marion Address Water Shortage**

Gov. Beshear updated Kentucky families in Marion on his administration's actions to help address the city's water shortage. On June 18, hours after receiving a request from local officials, the Governor issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency for the City of Marion.

Yesterday, he visited the city to meet with Mayor Jared Byford, City Manager Adam Ledford and other local leaders to help find solutions. They completed two site assessments at Lake George and City Lake. In the short-term, bottled water for drinking and cooking is being delivered to Marion.

"We are continuing to ask folks in the city to conserve water, because that will have the largest impact on prolonging the current water supply," Gov. Beshear said. "I want families in Marion to know that the state is behind you, and we will stay with you until this crisis is solved."

A follow-up meeting of all local and state officials has been scheduled for June 27.

**Public Safety Enhanced by Recruiting Military Heroes as Law Enforcement Officers**

Today, Gov. Beshear announced the state is making another historic investment in law enforcement by launching the Military to Law Enforcement Program. This program allows active service members within all branches of the U.S. military to be hired by local law enforcement agencies in Kentucky during their last 180 days of service. The military member will continue to receive their pay and benefits from the U.S. Military while they undergo law enforcement training at the Department of Criminal Justice Training.

**Team Kentucky All-Stars**

Gov. Beshear congratulated Hannah Edelen, a public school teacher from Northern Kentucky who was just crowned Miss Kentucky 2022, and recognized her as this week's Team Kentucky All-Star. "Hannah has an incredible story. She's the first in her family to graduate with a bachelor's degree at Northern Kentucky University. After graduating she became a 6th-grade social studies teacher for the Covington Independent School District. We are really excited for her and look forward to seeing everything she will do as Miss Kentucky," Gov. Beshear said.