



"MAKE THE CLARION CALL"

Vol. 25, April 2010

Clarion County Economic Development Corporation
21 North 6th Avenue, Clarion, PA 16214
814.226.9045
www.callclarionpa.com

I-80 Tolling Rejected by Federal Government

On April 6, 2010, the U.S. Department of Transportation rejected Pennsylvania's application to toll I-80, because federal law requires that funds generated by tolls can only be used to operate and maintain the tolled highway. **This ruling is final, and there is no appeal.**

The Clarion County Economic Development Corporation applauds the team work that has gone into fighting tolling. We thank our elected officials who took stands against this proposal. At the federal level, we thank Congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson, and his honorable predecessor, John Peterson. At the state level, we thank State Senator Mary Jo White and former State Representative Fred McIlhatten, who voted against Act 44 of 2007 and fought against tolling. We thank our current state representative, Donna Oberlander, who has continued Mr. McIlhatten's fight and who as county commissioner took a stand against tolling. We thank our current Clarion County Board of Commissioners for their support: Dave Cyphert, Donna Hartle, and Tim Reddinger.

We thank the members, boards, and staffs of the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation and the Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry. In particular, we thank John Stroup and Eric Funk for their leadership and speaking roles. We thank executive directors Brad Ehrhart and Tracy Becker for their work.

We thank our partners in The Coalition to Keep I-80 Toll Free, which is a coalition of local chambers, businesses, associations and neighbors. In particular, we thank Maria Culp, president of the coalition, for her leadership. We thank the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, the Allegheny Clarion Valley Development Corporation, Penn-Northwest Development Corporation, and the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association.

For their support, we thank Commodore Homes, Colony Homes, Penn West Homes, Car Mate Trailers, Gardenscape, Zacherl Motor Truck Sales, the Clarion Holiday Inn, and Zion Baptist Church. We thank Dr. Tracy Miller, Grove City College, for his work on the I-80 Tolling Impact Study. We thank Bob Nulph, owner of Visual Logic, Inc., for his work on an award winner series of videos calling for the repeal of Act 44. We thank Maria Kirby and Mary Jo Ford for their work on the videos.

The next step is to call on the state legislature to repeal Act 44 and to replace it with a common sense approach to funding our state's highways, bridges, and mass transit systems. A good start is to revisit the 2006 Transportation funding and reform Commission report. Act 44 was a potential job and community killer, so please stop by our offices or go to the Clarion Area Chamber's web site to sign our petition to the state legislature calling for the repeal of Act 44 of 2007.

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Stimulus Funds Available for Local Industries

The Business Employment Stability And Training (BESAT) Project provides financial assistance to offset the wages and benefits associated with employing additional or previously laid off employees, or to offset wages and benefits for eligible employees to receive training that enables them to receive a higher wage. Specifically, the project will reimburse the employer **50% of an employee's wages and benefits for up to 90 days.**

Support is available for the following:

- Hiring an eligible, unemployed person to fill a vacant, permanent, full-time position
- Recalling an eligible employee on lay-off back to work full-time in a permanent position
- Hiring an eligible, unemployed person and providing them specialized training for a vacant, permanent, full-time position
- Training related to skills necessary for an eligible employee to move into a permanent, full-time position paying a higher wage

Businesses must be among the industries identified in the targeted industry sectors of the Pennsylvania Business Retention and Expansion Program guidelines of 2008 – 2009, and must be experiencing a business hardship such as declining sales, frozen credit lines, rising business costs, or difficulty in meeting payroll, paying rent or making loan payments in order to be considered for the project. For more details on eligibility and to access the on-line application, please go to https://www.jccap.org/newer/besat_business.asp.

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FEATURED RESOURCE PARTNER

Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central and Northern Pennsylvania



Ben Franklin Technology PARTners of Central and Northern Pennsylvania provides funding and business assistance to emerging tech-based companies and small manufacturers that are developing new products or processes. The overall purpose of the program, which has been supporting innovation and entrepreneurship for more than 25 years, is to create and retain family- sustaining jobs in Pennsylvania.

Ben Franklin/CNP serves 32 counties in Pennsylvania, starting in the northwest corner of the state and running through to the central and south central regions. Cities such as Erie, State College, Harrisburg, Lancaster, and York are interspersed with largely rural areas. The Center, which has satellite offices in State College, Harrisburg, and Erie, strives to provide resources where they are needed, regardless of location. In addition to direct company funding, Ben Franklin makes investments in infrastructures that support and encourage innovation and technology development. Examples include business incubators, university-based centers of excellence, business plan contests, and specialized workforce training projects.

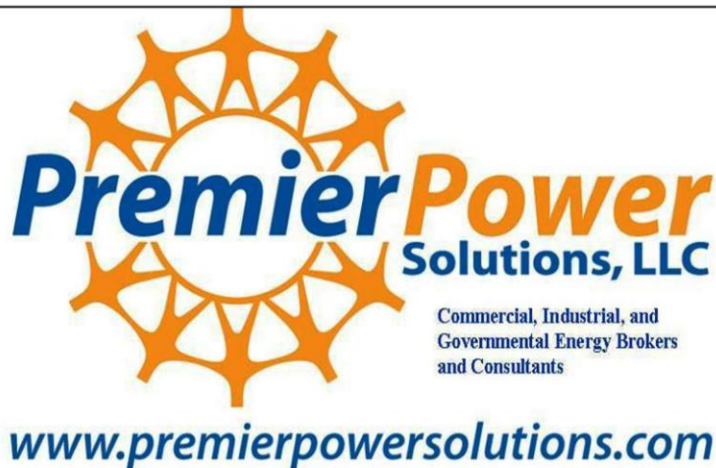
Although the differences in geography in the CNP footprint can be a challenge, it has also resulted in the creation of a portfolio comprised of companies that emerge, grow, and become successful regardless of location. For example, PEPRO, located in Venango County, holds three patents on its secure, deployable, radio enclosure designs and currently employs 12 people. Founded in 2001, the company received several Ben Franklin investments and subsequently was able to secure a very significant amount of follow-on funding. Victor Garmong, President/CEO of PEPRO, commented, "We are very grateful for the funding from Ben Franklin along with all the other services they have provided over the years. They've helped us with marketing research, project management, and even assisted in our search for a new sales representative."

As a leader in the secure deployable radio site industry, PEPRO has transformed the standard for critical communication enclosures. Utilizing the company's knowledge and experience with state-of-the-art patented-shielded enclosures and the power they require, it is a natural progression for the company to expand its product line to include power solutions. It is PEPRO'S mission to provide its customers with a more efficient and fully integrated renewable energy system for their radio communication equipment. The system under development will generate more energy for customer envisioned communication applications and will have the ability to function in the most remote and hazardous environmental conditions. Currently, there are no fully integrated systems available which offer the level of power which PEPRO proposes, nor are there units available which are able to function for extended periods of time without maintenance.

According to data compiled key Federal agencies, there are over 200,000 radio communication sites in the United States alone with approximately 30% of those operating in extreme environmental conditions. All of PEPRO'S current customers need a renewable energy system that is fully integrated and provides enough output power to meet today's expanding site applications.

Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central and Northern Pennsylvania is an initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and is funded by the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority.

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*107 Breckenridge Street, Grove City, PA 16127
724-458-5600*

Penelec / Allegheny Power Electric Rate Caps to Expire on 12/31/10

Premier Power Solutions can help you learn more about this important issue and is willing to meet with you at your place of business to discuss the following topics:

- **A complete Explanation of Electricity Deregulation and how it will impact your business?**
- **What are the different product options available in the market? What types of electricity product(s) can I buy and which one should I buy?**
- **Electricity Contract Management - What contract provisions should I be looking for in a competitive electricity contract?**
- **Should I use a broker/consultant to help me with this? If so, how much will this cost and how will it impact the price that I will pay?**

About Premier Power Solutions:

Premier Power Solutions, headquartered in western Pennsylvania and licensed by the PA Public Utilities Commission, is one of the nations 15 largest electricity consulting and brokerage firms as measured by KEMA, an independent research firm providing services to the energy industry.

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In order to get the lowest electricity rate available for customers, Premier aggregates together the energy needs of large groups of customers and then negotiates with electricity suppliers for the best price. These suppliers are willing to offer the aggregated customer group long-term (from 1 to 5 years in length) energy contracts that can result in significant savings and long-term price certainty. Premier has provided over 4.5 billion kilowatt hours of money saving energy contracts for their customers.

Premier does not charge a fee for their services directly to their customers. Instead, similar to how your insurance agent gets paid in the insurance industry, they get a fee from the competitive electricity supplier only when they can find a rate and contract length customers choose to accept. They can offer their services in this “No-Up-Front-Cost or No-Risk” manner because they find that well over 90% of customers who they present an offer to actually move forward with the recommended contract and accept the offer. Commercial, industrial, and governmental energy consumers who would like to learn more about Premier’s services can contact Lee McCracken at 724-458-5600 or Diana Keisel at 814-282-9241.

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FEATURED CLARION COUNTY AVAILABLE BUILDING

Available Warehouse, 3377 Brookville Street, Hawthorn PA, 16230



- Located on Pennsylvania Route 28 sixteen miles from Exit 78 of Interstate Route 80.
- The warehouse is 90,000 square feet and it is located on 15 acres. It is available for sale or for lease. The main building could be sub-divided. The building was built in 1974, and it is masonry block construction. The floors are 6" of concrete. There are also 2 floors of finished office space. Included in the property is a garage and maintenance facility measuring 60' x 100'. In the aerial shot of the property, the warehouse is in the center of the picture and the maintenance building is located to the left.
- The warehouse ceiling heights are from 18 feet to 16 feet. The building has 17 truck docks.
- There are heaters hung throughout the warehouse so heating the space is possible. Power is available through Allegheny Power. It has a 1600 amp service and 3 phase feed. There is a natural gas well on the property and gas is available at below market value. The local municipality provides water and sewage is on the property. Fire protection is available with a sprinkler system.
- Telecommunications provided by Windstream and/or Comcast.
- For more information please contact David Sayers at (814) 849-5789 ext. 407 or dsayers@mccauleytrucking.com.

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Newsletter Links!

Center for eBusiness and Advanced IT - <http://www.ebizitpa.org> (Click on Program Events)

Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry - <http://www.clarionpa.com/events/index.php>

The Clarion Career Link Center - <http://www.clarioncareerlink.org>

CUP Continuing Education Events/Classes - <http://www.clarion.edu/ce>

CUP SBDC Events/Classes/Workshops - www.clarion.edu/SBDC/Classes.asp

Keystone Community Education Council - <http://www.keystonecec.org/newsletter.htm>

Redbank Valley Chamber of Commerce - <http://newbethlehemarea.com/events>

The Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, Inc. - <http://www.nwirc.org>

Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission
<http://www.nwcommission.org/northwest.html>

Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Development - <http://www.nwpawib.org>

PA Department of Community and Economic Development Newsletter:
<http://www.newpa.com/default.aspx?id=266>

Penn State Cooperative Extension & Outreach - <http://www.extension.psu.edu>

PennTAP-Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program - <http://www.penntap.psu.edu>

Penn State University DuBois - Continuing Education - <http://www.ds.psu.edu/ce>