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**Biodiesel eyed along Corridor V**

***Domestic economy, energy security among biodiesel benefits***

**(Madison, AL)** – Corridor V, the Appalachian Development Highway for taking motorists from outside of Memphis to Chattanooga through Huntsville, Madison, and North Alabama, is being targeted for increasing infrastructure and utilization of biodiesel.

The Alabama Clean Fuels Coalition, through funding from the Soybean Check Off program, developed a series of informative workshops aimed to provide information on the alternative fuel to local leaders, fleet operators, and fuel station owners and operators, along with the general public. The second, held today in Madison, followed one in Scottsboro yesterday and precedes the final one Wednesday in Jasper, which is targeting Corridor X, the future Interstate 22.

Today's workshop provided an overview of biodiesel, confronted some common myths about the fuel, and addressed fuel quality. Other presentations covered "real world" fleet experiences, sources of B20 biodiesel, and the grants and incentives available for the biofuel.

"Development along Corridor V provides an opportunity for investments in transportation programs and fueling stations along the route," said Mark Bentley, Executive Director of the Alabama Clean Fuels Coalitions. "It is critical that potential investors, fleet operators, and local communities understand that integrating alternative fuels such as biodiesel into their infrastructure from the beginning stages requires less cost and offers potentially greater rewards. In addition, biodiesel can be integrated into existing operations with relative ease."

Biodiesel has seen a spike in consumption over the past several years in the midst of high-priced oil markets. The recent cost similarities coupled with major improvements in biodiesel quality have made the fuel competitive with traditional diesel. Adding in other significant benefits over standard diesel fuel, such as bolstering local economies, increasing energy independence, and a cleaner environment, along with recent increases in quality have made the fuel quite an attractive alternative.

"The need for energy independence grows with each day, and Alabama farmers can play a fundamental role in our movement from foreign oil. From day one, I have worked with our agricultural community to ensure that our farmers can continue to contribute to the economic development and

greening of our state and our region," Congressman Parker Griffith (AL-5) said in a released statement.

The most commonly utilized biodiesel, B20, consists of 20% soy biodiesel, produced from domestically grown soybeans, and 80% petroleum-based diesel.

"Using soybean oil to produce soy biodiesel provides another valuable market for soybean farmers in Alabama. Soy biodiesel is not only good for the environment, it also cleans, lubricates and can extend the life of your diesel engine," said Steve Guy with ALFA Farmers Federation.

Recently, Alabama farmers yielded only around 200,000 acres of soybeans annually, dramatically lower than the 2.5 million acres a year produced in years past. Thus, an increased use of soy biodiesel could potentially boost local farm incomes, which has been reflected in an 84% increase in soy plantings among Alabama farmers, according to statistics released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2008.

To help promote the workshops, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs released a statement stating that, "ADECA fully supports the informative biodiesel workshops being conducted by the Alabama Clean Fuels Coalition. The ADECA Energy Division is pleased to partner with ACFC to provide incentives for public school use and retail availability of B20 biodiesel in the state."

Studies from the Environmental Protection Agency have shown that B20 biodiesel reduces emissions of all hydrocarbon pollutants by 20% and carbon monoxide and particulate matter by 12% compared to regular diesel.

More importantly, particulate matter has been identified as a trigger for asthma, which the American Lung Association identifies as the single largest chronic illness affecting children. An estimated 6.5 million children in the U.S. currently suffer from the condition. This fact, along with the other benefits of biodiesel, has led many school districts across the state to switch their buses from traditional diesel to B20.

Attendees at today's workshop included public officials, business leaders, fleet operators and managers, as well as interested individuals from the general public.

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*The Alabama Clean Fuels Coalition, a non-profit membership based organization, is the state's principal coordinating point for alternative fuels. The promotion of clean, renewable, domestic energy sources helps reduce our dependence on foreign oil, improves local air quality, and increases economic development opportunities in our local communities. For more information, please visit our website at [www.alabamacleanfuels.org](http://www.alabamacleanfuels.org) or call us directly at 205-402-2755.*