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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 16, 2009

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Lt. Gov. Jari Askins Teams Up to Host Small Business Forum

LAWTON – Lt. Governor Jari Askins has teamed up with the Oklahoma Small Business Advocacy Committee and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to continue hosting a series of small business forums across the state this year. Askins spoke with regional small business owners on Thursday morning at a town hall meeting at Lawton’s Cameron University campus.

Around the state, forums will continue with each featuring educational seminars and presentations that will provide information on the state agency resources available to small business leaders. These meetings allow experts and industry leaders to share their knowledge and expertise with business owners throughout Oklahoma.

At the Lawton event, Arun Tilak of Cameron University’s Center for Emerging Technology and Entrepreneurial Studies (CETES) outlined the resources available at the university’s business incubator. The facility, which was renovated in 2005, provides meeting rooms, office space, and other resources to local technology-based companies.

Two other sessions followed: one lead by Cindi Andersen of the Small Business Administration, and another by Steven Hendrickson of Boeing, who serves as the Chairman Governor’s Council on Workforce and Economic Development. Andersen gave an overview of the America’s Recovery Capital (ARC) Loans now available, and Hendrickson discussed the Governor’s Council and its impact on small businesses statewide.

Askins interacted with area businessmen and women at the meeting’s luncheon. During this open forum Askins aimed to connect small business owners directly to state government. “It is critical that we hear these business owners’ questions and concerns, and that our state government finds ways to address them,” Askins said. “This meeting allowed our entrepreneurs to identify their biggest hurdles and problems so we can work together to find a solution.”

Upcoming business forum registration may be completed at the Oklahoma Business Moving Forward website at: www.okcommerce.gov/OKBizMovingForward . The next event will be held at the Northeastern Oklahoma A&M campus in Miami on August 6th.