



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Northam Announces 20 New Jobs in Washington County

~ AFL to invest \$1.3 million in manufacturing operation ~

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced that AFL, an industry leading manufacturer of fiber optic cable, connectivity, and accessories, will invest \$1.3 million to purchase new machinery and add additional lines at its manufacturing operation in the Bristol-Washington County Industrial Park in Washington County. AFL recently acquired the Metal Castings division of Electro-Mechanical Corporation. Virginia successfully competed against South Carolina for the project, which will create 20 new jobs. Thirty-nine existing employees will be retrained on the new technology through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.

“AFL’s decision to expand and retrain its employees in Washington County is an important win for the region and Virginia,” **said Governor Northam**. “Manufacturers continue to choose the Commonwealth because of our logistical advantages, favorable operating costs, and skilled workforce. I thank AFL for reinvesting in Southwest Virginia and I am confident the company will continue to thrive in Washington County.”

AFL’s story began in 1984 with two major industries, electric utility and telecommunications, and has since added products and services that have fueled the company’s growth to provide truly integrated solutions. The company provides end-to-end solutions to the energy, service provider, enterprise and industrial markets as well as oil & gas, mining, medical and broadcast. AFL’s products include fiber optic cable and hardware, transmission and substation accessories, outside plant equipment, connectivity, test and inspection equipment, fusion splicers and training. AFL also offers a wide variety of services supporting data center, enterprise, wireless, and outside plant applications.

“AFL’s decision to expand in Washington County is a testament to Virginia’s pro-business environment and the region’s strong manufacturing workforce,” **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. “The company is a valued employer creating new, 21st-century jobs and providing retraining opportunities for its existing employees to learn new technologies and skills.”

“AFL is excited to have brought the Metal Castings business into its family and we’re proud to be operating in Virginia through an aluminum foundry already well-known for its people and its customers,” **said President and CEO of AFL Jody Gallagher**. “There, we will continue to manufacture a wide variety of products used in the generation, transmission, distribution and control of electricity. These products, along with various electrical equipment repair and maintenance services, are used by a diverse mix of energy (coal, oil and gas), electric utility and industrial customers worldwide. We have appreciated the opportunity to partner with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and Washington County to lay the foundation for AFL’s bright future at this location.”

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with Washington County to secure the project for Virginia. AFL is eligible to receive state benefits from the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program, administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, as well as Sales and Use tax exemptions on manufacturing equipment. Funding and services to support the company’s expansion will be provided through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.

“On behalf of the Washington County, VA Board of Supervisors, we welcome today’s good news for AFL’s decision to create new jobs and invest in our community,” **said Chairman of the Washington County Board of Supervisors Saul Hernandez**.

“AFL’s 20-job, \$1.3 million-dollar expansion in Washington County is a welcome addition to Southwest Virginia’s burgeoning manufacturing economy,” **said Senator Charles W. Carrico Sr.** “Our region is proving to be an ideal destination for growing manufacturing operations, thanks in large part to our economic development partners and the dynamic workforce found only here.”

“Today’s announcement is great news for Washington County,” **said Delegate Israel D. O’Quinn**. “I appreciate the capital investment and the 20 new jobs, and I’m equally as excited that thirty-nine existing employees will be retrained on the new technology through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.”

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