

More on visit by lieutenant governor

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The simplified design had 12 moving parts instead of the 80 or so in some of the larger wind turbines, Blanton noted.

Judge was taken on a tour of the blade plant and the other areas of the plant where work on the prototype turbine are being done.

A new robotic system that will help with some of the operations in the plant has been purchased, it was noted.

During her stop, Judge talked about the key priorities of the Culver/Judge administration.

Since the legislative session began last month, the legislature has already passed bills that enacted "Race to the Top," which allowed the state to apply for increased federal funds, required schools to spend down their cash reserves to avoid property tax increases on hard-working Iowans and early retirement legislation which will help shrink the size of government and save taxpayer dollars.

Over the course of the legislative session, Governor Culver and Lt. Governor Judge have been and will be traveling across the state talking with Iowans about how we can improve the economy, give Iowans new opportunities and move the state forward, Judge said.

Judge noted that she has been working for many years to help make Iowa the nation's leader in biofuels and renewable energy.

"It's very exciting to see the kind of development in the wind generation area that is being developed here," she noted.

Since 2008 the state has dealt with a natural disaster that is now ranked as one of the top 10 in the country and been caught up in the world wide recession.

"Our response can be to sit on our hands and moan and groan or to work hard toward common solutions," she said. "We want to emerge from the current recession stronger and poised to have a bright future."

Judge said that the I-Jobs Initiative where the state bonded \$830 million for infrastructure projects was part of the administration's response to the current challenges.

"The bonding is no different than when a community wants to build a school and sells bonds to pay for it," she said. "We were able to sell the bonds at a favorable interest rate so we could jumpstart the economy with projects immediately."

She noted that Ringgold county is set for receive \$217,000 of the total for roads, bridges and conservation efforts.

She said the bonds would be paid back with gambling revenues as the plan exists today and would not raise taxes.

Judge is supporting the Iowa Power Fund, which she hopes will be funded for \$25 million again in its fourth year, as part of a research

and development effort for renewable energy development.

"If we don't continue to do research and development in Iowa, it will be done somewhere else," she said.

To ensure that workers have the skills needed to fill jobs in the new economy, she said the administration wants to fully fund community college job training programs.

"Iowa workers are some of the greatest workers in the world, but with the rapid pace in which industry is evolving, we need new skills to move to new jobs," she said.

She also spoke about education funding, noting that the governor's budget calls for two percent allow-

able growth for the K-12 system as well as moving forward with state funded preschool programs across Iowa.

She noted that the 10 percent across the board budget cuts the state took last year to try to balance the budget were difficult on schools.

She noted that with the short legislative session this year, people need to visit with the legislature about their priorities and where they think the state should go.

"We are working to continue to have Iowa be a progressive state where people want to live and work," she said.