

The Huntsville Times

Kay Ivey touts job recruitment plan at Phoenix vocational and manufacturing services

By **Patricia C. McCarter.**

March 18, 2010



HUNTSVILLE, AL -- Against a backdrop of employees making American flags at Phoenix vocational and manufacturing services, State Treasurer Kay Ivey discussed the job recruitment program she'd implement if elected governor.

Ivey, a Republican, commended Phoenix CEO Bryan Dodson for his agency's mission of training and providing jobs to people with physical difficulties and other challenges.

"You're changing people's lives by taking them from helplessness to hope," Ivey said in a Wednesday afternoon visit. "What you do is huge to the taxpayer, and it's huge to self-esteem. ... Everyone needs to work. Idle hands are devil's workshop, honey."

Dodson told Ivey that for every person employed through Phoenix - which receives referrals from the state Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Human Resources - taxpayers save close to \$7,000 in disability benefits. Phoenix has contracts to provide janitorial services, security reception and interment flags.

"In a way, Phoenix's mission is shared by those of us who serve in public office," Ivey said. "We also want to improve the quality of lives, in our case by working through the public sector.

"One of the most important ways a governor can do that is by helping create jobs for people who need them. And right now, with unemployment at its highest level in 26 years, the need for jobs is very great indeed."

Through her "Pathway to Prosperity" plan, Ivey said she would eliminate the "bureaucratic nightmare" some businesses face when trying to expand or establish here.

"We will match medium and small-size companies with medium and small communities, and will diversify job recruitment so we don't have all our eggs in one basket, such as a large auto plant," she said.

"We will build upon existing strengths, such as knowledge-based, high-tech and medical sectors that flourish here in North Alabama."

Dodson said other gubernatorial candidates have also been invited to tour Phoenix, "and we look forward to visiting with them, too."