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## ASHLAND INC. TO ADD ABOUT 15 NEW JOBS IN VIRGINIA

### **ASHLAND**

Ashland Inc., a global manufacturer and distributor of chemical specialty and performance products, announced a plan to expand its operations at its facility in Hopewell, Virginia that will bring about 15 new jobs to the area. Ashland Inc. officials said that they plan to invest \$39 million to boost the plant's production capabilities by adding new equipment and hiring additional manpower. The Kentucky-based company has been operating in Hopewell since 1912. Ashland Inc. currently employs about 200 workers in the plant.

Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling said that Ashland's expansion program will have a big impact on Hopewell's local employment rate. "I am delighted that Ashland Inc. has agreed to expand its Virginia operations. Creating jobs is the top priority of our Administration. Sometimes we do that by attracting new business and industry to our state, and sometimes we do that by helping existing businesses expand. Both are important to our overall job creation efforts. Ashland, Inc. is a great company with a longstanding presence in Virginia. We are pleased that they have chosen to make these additional investments in our Commonwealth."

The state officials are in full support of Ashland's expansion program. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership is now working with the City of Hopewell and Virginia's Gateway Region to prepare an incentive package to ensure that the project will push through. Mayor Christina Luman-Bailey expressed her excitement over the expansion plan. She said that the state will provide funding and services to assist the company with the program. "The City of Hopewell is pleased with Ashland's decision to further invest in its Hopewell facility, and we look forward to assisting the company with this project. Ashland's decision to expand its facility in Hopewell signals the strength of the facility and its place in the Ashland corporate structure as a profit center. We are extremely excited to see this level of investment in one of our long-standing industries. This investment will expand the City's tax base and provide employment opportunities for our citizens, and is a consistent with our economic development goals and efforts."

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