

Harms to Represent Industrial Commission

BISMARCK – The Industrial Commission announced today that Bob Harms will be joining the lignite research, development and marketing program representing the Commission. The Commission has a long-standing partnership with the state's lignite industry in addressing research and development issues and also administers the state's R&D program, including the Lignite Vision 21 program.

“North Dakota is committed to developing new clean coal-based power generation in order to increase jobs and economic growth,” said Gov. John Hoeven. “Bob's knowledge, legal skills and leadership will help preserve existing operations and advance future projects.”

Harms has served as Counsel to Hoeven for the past two and a half years and prior to that, served as the Counsel to former Governor Ed Schafer for eight years. He has served as policy advisor on natural resource and energy issues. He will be leaving the Governor's office in mid-July to begin his new position and return to the private sector. In his new position Harms will also be appointed as a special assistant attorney general to work on various environmental and transmission issues.

“Over the last several years, Harms has worked closely with members of my staff,” said Attorney General Stenehjem. “I appreciate his dedication and diplomacy in helping resolve complex, technical issues associated with increased lignite development.”

Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson stressed the importance of the lignite industry, which provides some of the best paying jobs in the State. “We need to stay focused on solving our transmission constraints and meeting our environmental challenges to move our energy and wind industries forward. Harms is dedicated to North Dakota, and its people, so I am pleased he will be working with the Industrial Commission in this effort.”

“We welcome him to our state / industry partnership and welcome his participation in this program,” said John Dwyer, President of the Lignite Energy Council. The Lignite Energy Council assists with management of the R&D program for the Industrial Commission of North Dakota.

“I am looking forward to assisting the state in growing the energy industry and in developing solutions to the environmental and transmission issues facing the energy industry,” said Harms. “It's an opportunity that I am committed to. I look forward to helping create new, rewarding jobs for the people of North Dakota.”

The Lignite Research Program is overseen by the North Dakota Industrial Commission, consisting of Gov. John Hoeven, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, and Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson. The program is a cooperative state/industry effort concentrating on near-term, practical projects to enhance development of the state's abundant lignite resources.