



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kerri Richardson
502.564.2611
502.330.6633

Terry Sebastian
502.564.2611
502.229.6130

Mandy Lambert
502.564.4886

**Gov. Beshear Announces German-owned Automotive Supplier,
Webasto Sunroof Systems, to Add 65 Jobs in Lexington**

\$10 million expansion project stems from Gov. Beshear's recent economic development trip to Germany

FRANKFORT Ky. (Nov. 14, 2012) – Governor Steve Beshear today announced Webasto Sunroof Systems Inc. plans to expand manufacturing operations in Lexington, creating 65 new, full-time jobs and investing \$10 million in the Commonwealth. Gov. Beshear met to discuss the potential project with Webasto officials this summer during an economic development trip to Germany.

“It’s outstanding to see Webasto bring 65 new jobs and a \$10 million investment to Lexington,” said Gov. Beshear. “Through its rich history, Webasto has faced adversity, persevered through difficult economic times, and emerged successful and stronger. This is an exciting time for the company, and a period when Kentucky’s automotive industry is moving forward and helping drive the economy in the right direction.”

Gov. Beshear’s Germany visit came one year after the Commonwealth established an office in Hamburg, Germany, with the goal of boosting economic leads in Europe for companies such as Webasto. In all, Kentucky is home to 181 European companies, including 65 from Germany. Total employment of European-owned companies exceeds 26,000 across the state.

Webasto's Kentucky facility, on Innovation Drive in Lexington, currently has nearly 650 employees. The company plans to invest in a growth and modernization program that it believes will bring Lexington's sunroof production facility to world class standards.

"We appreciate the cooperation shown by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and look forward to increasing our presence in Lexington," said Dr. Holger Engelmann, deputy chairman of the Management Board, Webasto SE, and responsible for the roof division of Webasto. "With our investment in the plant, we will increase the capacity and upgrade the existing equipment. We started our production in Lexington in 2003, and today this plant is our largest production site for sun and panorama roofs in the United States."

Webasto has been developing and manufacturing products for the automotive industry, such as sunroofs and temperature management systems, for more than 75 years. With more than 10,000 employees worldwide, the company has grown into one of the world's largest 100 suppliers for the automotive industry.

"Webasto has been a respected community partner for many years," said Sen. Kathy Stein, of Lexington. "Lexington and the Commonwealth of Kentucky welcome Webasto's plans to expand its manufacturing operations in Lexington, and anticipate continued success for Webasto's operations, both in our city and our state."

"Webasto has played a major role in Fayette County's economy for some time now, and this latest announcement only builds on its already strong reputation," said Rep. Jesse Crenshaw, of Lexington. "I'm certainly pleased to see the company take this step to expand. It's a good sign that the economy is continuing to improve, and it further ensures that Webasto will be here for many more years to come."

Kentucky is home to more than 440 automotive-related industries that employ nearly 70,000 people. Kentucky ranks third highest in auto industry-related employment as a percent of total state employment among the top motor vehicle producing states in the United States.

"Auto suppliers and manufacturers – advanced manufacturers – have formed a cluster here in Kentucky," said Lexington Mayor Jim Gray. "Their proximity and relationships and the state's educational and physical infrastructure have created a true global hub for automotive manufacturing. Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and I have formed a partnership to build on that strength, to create a gravitational pull to the Lexington-Louisville region that will compel new automotive employers to move here, and encourage growth in companies, like Webasto, that are already here."

"We are pleased that Webasto Roof Systems has chosen Lexington to expand its operations," said Bob Quick, CCE, President & CEO of Commerce Lexington Inc. "Manufacturing has long been an important part of Lexington's economy. We're delighted in the confidence that Webasto has shown in Lexington and our workforce to further expand the manufacturing base and to invest further in our city."

To encourage the investment and job growth in Lexington, the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority preliminarily approved Webasto for tax incentives up to \$1.2 million through the Kentucky Business Investment program. The performance-based incentive allows a company to keep a portion of its investment over the term of the agreement through corporate income tax credits and wage assessments by meeting job and investment targets.

For more information on Webasto, visit www.webasto.com.

Information on Kentucky's economic development efforts and programs is available at www.ThinkKentucky.com. Fans of the Cabinet for Economic Development can also join the discussion on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/ThinkKentucky or follow on Twitter at www.Twitter.com/ThinkKentucky.

A detailed community profile for Lexington (Fayette County) can be viewed at <http://thinkkentucky.com/EDIS/cmnty/index.aspx?cw=054>.

###

Follow Governor Beshear on Twitter [@Govstevebeshear](https://twitter.com/Govstevebeshear), read the Governor's personal notes on his blog at <http://governor.ky.gov/blog>, and view his video commentaries at <http://www.youtube.com/governorbeshear>.