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Furniture manufacturer to expand in NC, create 302 jobs

STAFF REPORTS

Gov. Bev Perdue today announced that Ethan Allen Operations Inc., a manufacturer of high-quality upholstered furniture for residential and commercial customers, will expand in Maiden. The company will create 302 jobs and invest \$2.79 million during the next three years.

“North Carolina continues to support high-value national operations creating new jobs for our people despite current economic challenges,” Perdue said. “Our state remains attractive to established companies, which know the value of our top business climate, skilled workforce and tremendous quality of life.”

Ethan Allen Operations is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ethan Allen Interiors Inc. with headquarters in Connecticut. The company is a leading manufacturer and retailer of quality home furnishings and operates eight manufacturing facilities in the U.S., including two sawmills and one manufacturing facility in Mexico. The company’s two Maiden plants manufacture custom-made, handcrafted upholstered furniture.

The company is leaving a leased facility in California and consolidating those operations to its Maiden facilities, which currently employ 540 workers. The move will replace 143 jobs lost in previous layoffs and will add 159 new jobs for a total of 302 jobs.

The announcement was made possible in part by a \$109,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. Although individual wages will vary by job type, the jobs will pay an annual average wage of \$39,946, higher than the Catawba County average wage of \$34,216.

“We are pleased that we are able to expand our upholstery operations in Maiden, N.C., where our highly skilled workers have produced handcrafted custom-made upholstery since 1949,” said Farooq Kathwari, chairman and CEO of Ethan Allen. “It is also gratifying to be able to work in partnership with the North Carolina state and local governments to help both our business and the local Maiden community.”

The One NC Fund provides financial assistance, through local governments, to attract business projects that will stimulate economic activity and create new jobs in the state. Companies receive upfront money and must meet job creation and investment performance standards to qualify for grant funds. These grants also require and are contingent on local matches.

Through use of the One NC Fund, more than 35,000 jobs and \$6.5 billion in investment have been created since 2001. Other project partners include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community Colleges, Catawba County, Catawba County Economic Development Corp., Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board and the Town of Maiden.

North Carolina continues to have a top ranked business climate. Through Governor Perdue’s JobsNOW initiative, the state will work aggressively to create jobs, train and retrain our workforce, and lay the foundation for a strong and sustainable economic future.

For more information about Ethan Allen Interiors Inc., including employment opportunities, visit www.ethanallen.com.