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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
April 29, 2015

## Governor Rauner Proclaims April 29 as Innovation Day in Illinois
### *Technology Leaders Across Illinois Come Together to Support Regional Prosperity through Innovation*

SPRINGFIELD – Joined by industry, research, and civic leaders from across Illinois, Governor Bruce Rauner today proclaimed April 29 as "Innovation Day" in Illinois during a leadership breakfast at the Governor's Mansion. The theme of this year's event is Regional Prosperity through Innovation, emphasizing ways innovative technologies drive new products, companies, and jobs in key Illinois industries, including advanced manufacturing, information technology, clean tech, healthcare, and agribusiness.

The event was organized by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Science & Technology Coalition (ISTC), and co-hosted by Clean Energy Trust (CET), Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA), and Illinois Technology Association (ITA). The program included a breakfast with presentations from regional economic development leaders from Urbana-Champaign, Rockford, Chicago, and the Quad Cities, followed by policy roundtable discussions in the areas of technology incubation, STEM workforce development, industry partnerships, and clusters.

"We want Illinois to be first in the nation for innovation, and the leadership of the new Innovate Illinois Advisory Council and the collaboration among organizations represented here today will be critical to getting us there," Governor Rauner said after announcing the members of Innovate Illinois. "We are looking forward to forming new partnerships that harness Illinois' world-class research institutions, entrepreneurship community, and skilled talent base to drive business competitiveness forward."

Innovate Illinois Advisory Council co-chairs Laura Frerichs, Director of the University of Illinois Research Park, and Mark Glennon, Managing Director of Ninth Street Advisors, will join fellow innovation community leaders in highlighting innovation and economic development initiatives around the state. Input gained through Innovation Day roundtables that will convene experts in technology incubation, industry-driven partnerships, technology cluster strategies, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workforce development will be used to inform the Rauner administration's innovation strategy.

"Innovation is happening all around Illinois, from Rockford to Carbondale, and Champaign to the Quad Cities," ISTC president and CEO Mark Harris said. "We appreciate Governor Rauner's support of technology driven economic development, and look forward to continuing to grow public-private partnerships like the Corporate-Startup Challenge that bring together industry, academia and entrepreneurship from across the state."

"Illinois can be an international leader in clean energy technology," said CET CEO Amy Francetic, building off the Governor's remarks at CET's 5th annual Clean Energy Challenge, which awarded $1 million to clean tech startups. "We believe that Illinois' great entrepreneurs and universities are already driving us to that goal."

"Technology informs every part of the state's economy, and innovations like the Internet of Things will be critical to remaining at the cutting edge," said Fred Hoch, CEO of ITA, which recently formed an Internet of Things Council. "Innovation Day is an important forum to be able to discuss new and important technologies with our peers from across the state."

The innovation community has been a highlight of the state's economy, feeding off recent wins including the $120 million Joint Center for Energy Storage Research at Argonne National Laboratory focused on next-generation battery technology, and the $320 million Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (DMDII) opening on Goose Island next month.

"With the opening of DMDII only weeks away, Illinois is poised to truly be the leader in the '3rd Industrial Revolution' that is changing the way things are made in America," said Greg Baise, president and CEO of IMA. "IMA is a strong supporter of partnerships like DMDII and the Manufacturing STEM Learning Exchange that enable businesses large and small in Illinois to access the talent and technologies they need to compete."

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The Illinois Science & Technology Coalition (ISTC) is a member-driven, non-profit organization that cultivates and attracts research and technology-based investment, talent and job growth in the state. Through strategic public-private partnerships, advocacy efforts and project management, ISTC connects government, academia and industry to leverage the state's world class research and development assets to drive innovation and economic growth. For more information visit www.istcoalition.org

Clean Energy Trust (CET) fuels clean energy innovation in the Midwest. A Chicago-based nonprofit, CET works at the intersection of startup funding, technology commercialization, and policy advocacy to accelerate the pace of clean energy innovation throughout the region. For more information, visit www.cleanenergytrust.org

As the nation's oldest sector association, the Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA) has represented the interests of all manufacturers in the state since 1893. IMA's mission is to strengthen the economic, social, environmental and governmental conditions solely for manufacturing and allied enterprises in Illinois to enlarge the business base and increase employment opportunities. For more information visit www.ima-net.org

The Illinois Technology Association (ITA) is a business services organization dedicated to growth-stage technology companies in Illinois and Greater Chicago. For 10 years, ITA's mission has focused on maximizing the growth potential of its member companies and increasing the overall success rate of the local tech industry. Learn more at www.illinoistech.org #GrowWithITA