

“Delegation makes pitch to Toyota”  
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By: George Hohmann  
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Aichi, Japan – Sen. Jay Rockefeller said today that he and Gov. Joe Manchin have made a presentation to Toyota, suggesting the company consider establishing a research and development facility in West Virginia. Rockefeller said if such a facility were to be established in West Virginia, an opportunity to build hybrid engines and other new products might follow.

Toyota recently announced it will establish a research center in Michigan. Asked if he believes the company might need even more research facilities, Rockefeller replied, “I think so. We’ll find out.” Rockefeller added, “I think Toyota is going to need a lot of engineers.” In fact, he said the West Virginia trade team asked Toyota what kind of engineers they need “and they listed every kind of engineer there is.” Rockefeller noted that the state has the educational resources needed to support cutting-edge research. He also pointed out that the Kanawha Valley is home to many retired Dow Chemical and Union Carbide researchers. “O think they want to be back in the game,” he said.

Manchin said the “thinking outside the box” cliché does not adequately explain the effort he and Rockefeller are making here. “We are working together as a team and we’re looking way beyond what people might think they box should contain,” he said. “We want the rest of the country to know we’re more than just a place for manufacturing.” Manchin echoed Rockefeller’s view that the state has the educational resources needed to support research. “I’m talking about WVU-Tech, West Virginia State University, Marshall, as well as West Virginia University,” he said.

Manchin

said it is because of Rockefeller the state has opportunities to talk to companies like Toyota. “The senator can open the door for me – it is up to me and the other members of the team to make sure we follow up. We’re not going to miss any opportunities.”

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