



**For Immediate Release
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Moore County, NC

Local Industry Will Stay and Expand in Aberdeen

As many media continue to focus on the national economic recession and report on employee layoffs and company closings across the country, a glimmer of hope shines in Aberdeen. Through a consolidation, Kolcraft Enterprises, Inc. is not only saving 145 local jobs, but will also be adding 23 new jobs at its Aberdeen facility.

Operating in Aberdeen since 1984 and currently one of the largest manufacturers in Moore County, Kolcraft manufactures and distributes juvenile products including crib mattresses, strollers, bassinets, and walkers. In addition to the Kolcraft® brand, the company features infant products with the Sealy®, Jeep® and Contours® brand names. Kolcraft's corporate headquarters and a manufacturing facility are located in Chicago, Illinois. The company's only other manufacturing facility is located in Aberdeen. The Aberdeen operation currently employs 145 workers in the manufacture of crib mattresses.

“Like many companies, Kolcraft is analyzing its present operating costs and efficiencies”, said Jim Cunliffe, Plant Manager in Aberdeen. “In an effort to further strengthen Kolcraft's financial position and to further its lean initiatives, the company decided to consolidate its manufacturing operations into its Aberdeen facility.”

During the past month, company officials have considered all scenarios, weighed the costs associated with consolidating and assessing which manufacturing facility to close. Moore County was able to help them make the decision in favor of Aberdeen when the Board of County Commissioners at its March 2nd meeting approved \$25,000 to help offset Kolcraft's expenses from closing the Chicago plant and moving the equipment to Aberdeen.

“I'm sure I speak on behalf of our employees in Aberdeen when I express Kolcraft's appreciation to the County and the Commissioners for their assistance and support”, Cunliffe said. “The consolidation will strengthen Kolcraft's presence in Aberdeen and will position us to be able to add to our workforce during 2009.”

In an agreement with the County, Kolcraft will hire a minimum of 23 new full-time employees in manufacturing positions at the Aberdeen facility by year-end. The company must maintain employment of these new workers plus the 145 existing workers for a period of at least one (1) year. In addition, the company expects to add at least \$250,000 worth of equipment to the Aberdeen facility.

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Nick Picerno, Chairman of the Moore County Board of Commissioners, said, “The County is very pleased that Kolcraft will be staying in Aberdeen and that we are helping to save and create valuable jobs. Every job in the County is critical at this time and we are glad to be able to help.”

Through a program of the N.C. Community College System, Sandhills Community College will offer additional support by creating and providing funding for a customized training program for Kolcraft’s new employees.

“Kolcraft is one of the top 25 industrial employers in Moore County, and thankfully will continue to be for the foreseeable future”, said Ray Ogden, Executive Director of Moore County Partners in Progress. “It’s great to have some good economic news for a change. Helping a company with Kolcraft’s longevity in Moore County to remain here is a significant long-term investment in our local economy.”

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