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## Mandel: Oil and gas vital to growth

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CADIZ - Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel made a stop in Cadiz on Tuesday to get a close look at the ever-growing MarkWest cryogenic facility and gain some perspective on the impact of oil and gas interests in the state.

Mandel was briefed by company leaders and toured the site on Industrial Park Road during one of several visits he made in the region. The complex intends to provide a large-scale midstream system throughout Harrison, Guernsey, Belmont, Noble and Monroe counties that will serve major Utica Shale producers, such as Gulfport Energy and Antero Resources. According to MarkWest, the Cadiz



NH Photo/AMY GAREIS

Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel met with Tom Noble, plant manager at the MarkWest Energy facility in Cadiz, during a visit to the area on Tuesday. Mandel was also joined by village native Bob Smith, pictured at right, who currently chairs the investment committee for the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. The site includes multiple gas processing plants and a de-ethanization facility to recover purity ethane for delivery into the ATEX pipeline. The heavier natural gas liquids (NGLs) would then flow via a separate pipeline to a

fractionator near Hopedale for further separation into propane, butane and other valuable products. In addition, a condensate plant is in the works on an estimated 22 acres along U.S. 22 outside Cadiz. Officials said the facilities would represent "the largest fractionation and marketing complex in the Utica Shale" with an expected completion date in this year.

Mandel was joined on the tour by village native Robert C. Smith, a current Cleveland resident whom Mandel appointed as an investment expert to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System last year. Smith, who has also been involved with state economic development activities, noted there was no place like home.

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"When the treasurer asked me to join him and visit my hometown, I thought there was no place I'd rather be," Smith said. "I have family here. This is home and it's been wonderful just to see the impact this has had. I remember when this land was farmed. This is just giving the community a sense of hope, and that hope was gone for a lot of years. To see my family has choices for jobs instead of wondering whether they can get a job," MarkWest said.

The treasurer also visited Steubenville to talk with port authority leaders about facilitating growth in the oil and gas sector and investing in state roads, as well as Zanesville to address similar issues.

"As we know, there is a lot of wear and tear on the roads from activity in oil and gas, so it's important that both the state and community are thinking forward and outside the box of how we can focus resources on infrastructure and strong roads," Mandel explained.

"I'm spending a good portion of my day discussing how oil and gas is impacting the economy and the state. When you look at areas like Steubenville, Cadiz and Zanesville, these are areas

that are right at the tip of the spear as far as oil and gas activity in Ohio."

He said the energy boom was significant both to rural areas and the state as a whole. "The most exciting component of oil and gas opportunities is the new jobs," Mandel said. "There are thousands of new jobs in this area because of oil and gas exploration and I think a lot of the work being done on the production side and service side is so important for economic growth and job creation in this state."

He continued that MarkWest was one of the companies that has tried hardest to hire locally, which he said was important to keep Ohioans working, and the company should be applauded for making that its focus.

Mandel has visited Harrison County in the past but said it was the first time he got to view such a facility.

"I call oil-and-gas drilling for our state a win-win-win. It's new jobs; it's lower energy prices for families to heat their homes and manufacturing companies that are powering their factories. The third win is national security," he said.

"For me, as a Marine veteran who did a couple tours in Iraq, it's exciting that Harrison County, Ohio, can contribute to America's national security. I believe we

are most safe here in America when we are producing energy here in America, rather than depending on radical Islamic regimes in the Middle East."

He said MarkWest was a leader as far as job growth in the county and the eastern part of the state.

"I believe as state leaders we should be showcasing those companies that are creating jobs here, and we should be doing everything we can to bring...recognition to the men and women who are working in the oil and gas industry. I see oil and gas as the greatest new potential for job creation and economic growth in our state, and what is happening in this part of the state is impacting families and businesses in other parts of the state, and that's exciting."

Mandel said the local area has long faced economic hardship but now it is on the cusp of great prosperity.

"For a long time, this area has suffered from high unemployment and poverty and it's exciting me that for the first time in generations, there are families that are seeing new jobs and new wealth, and that new wealth has reverberated throughout the economy because as people have money in their pocket, they go out to dinner and help restaurants, they are buying clothes and helping stores and they are

investing in the community."

He added that vocational and technical schools are also working with companies by learning what skill set students need to prepare for the workforce for generations to come. But the biggest impact is in the numbers, with Ohio skyrocketing to a national Top 10 list based on its fiscal condition.

"I think the revenue being generated in oil and gas will help the state's budget. When I came into the treasurer's office, Ohio was ranked 43rd in the nation as far as fiscal condition."

"As of our new ranking about a month ago, we are now ranked seventh in the nation. We've had significant improvement in our state financial condition, and one of the main reasons is because of the economic growth in the energy industry."

Mandel said there were three keys to maintaining growth in the state.

"I believe if Ohio's going to be strong, we need to be strong in three main areas: manufacturing, agriculture and energy. We've got to make things, we've got to farm and we've got to produce the energy that powers our homes and our factories. If we are doing those three things in Ohio in an aggressive and responsible way, then we are going to be strong as a state."