

GILES CHICHESTER MEP

for the South West and Gibraltar

Longridge,

West Hill,

Ottery St. Mary

Devon EX11 1UX

Tel: +44(0) 1404 851106

Fax: +44(0) 1404 850752

Email: Giles@gileschichestermep.org.uk

www.gileschichestermep.org.uk

PRESS RELEASE

21 May 2009

SOUTH WEST MANUFACTURERS TELL MEP CHICHESTER THEY NEED MORE EU SUPPORT

Manufacturers across the South West are hoping that South West Conservative MEP, Giles Chichester, can enlist greater EU support for industry across the Region.

South West business leaders were invited to meet MEP Chichester at the Bristol Headquarters of the Engineers Employers Federation (EEF), which represents manufacturers. They took the opportunity to lobby the MEP about wage subsidies and the need for business friendly regulations.

Clive Turner, EEF External Affairs Adviser for the South West, said

“It was an ideal opportunity for our members to hear about Giles Chichester’s work on the EU Industry, Research and Energy Committee, particularly in relation to the opportunities opening up in low carbon technologies.

The EEF members in turn were able to highlight the need for a level playing field when it came to wage subsidies existing in other EU Member States. Similar subsidies in Britain would help many companies in the South West to maintain the skills that will be so important when recovery begins.”

Skill shortages were of particular concern for a number of EEF members who were finding it difficult to replace an ageing workforce with suitably qualified younger people. There were also worries that changes in European health and safety and emissions trading directives were adding unnecessary burden to manufacturers.

Acknowledging the current difficulties facing regional businesses, MEP Chichester said that while many private companies were being innovative in handling the recession, the UK national government needed to do more.

MEP Chichester commented

“There is certainly a debate underway about how best to support manufacturing, because it remains a vital part of our regional and national economies. The south west does face some structural issues, such as skills shortages and the need for infrastructure investment, but at the same time there are some significant opportunities opening up for local companies in growth areas such as energy and green technologies.”

ENDS

Contact: Clive Turner, EEF External Affairs, Engineers House, Clifton Down, Bristol BS8 3NB
Tel: 0117 906 4800 (M) 07795 416601

For further information contact Press Officer, Tom Maughan
(Tel: 01803 865175 Email: tommaughan@southdevon.org)

Conservatives in the European Parliament