

News Journal

Estimated printed pages: 2

February 13, 2001

Section: Business

Page: 7B

16 members added to economic council

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Gov. Ruth Ann Minner has appointed 16 additional members to the first-ever Delaware Strategic Economic Council, a spokesman said Monday.

Only one position remains to be filled.

The 23 business, academic and state leaders will advise the governor on ways to keep Delaware's established companies while attracting new firms and industries to the state.

"Delaware is well known as the center for incorporation and as a strong financial hub," Minner said in a statement. "But it is time to look toward the next logical evolution for Delaware businesses."

The recent slowdown in the U.S. economy has affected Delaware, with layoffs in the auto industry and missed earnings expectations in the chemical sector.

"Looking ahead is always critical," said newly elected council member David J. Freschman, president and chief executive officer of Delaware Innovation Fund.

Minner said she wants to target growth industries, such as life sciences and information technology, where there are opportunities to attract new companies and create new jobs.

"Without question, technology and technology-related efforts are clearly going to grow," said Judy Cherry, new appointee and director of Info Systems Inc. in Wilmington.

Stacey J. Mobley, DuPont senior vice president and council chairman, said the group will explore strategies to strengthen Delaware's economy.

"What we want to do is look at those specific actions we can recommend to [Gov. Minner] that would be instrumental in increasing economic development," Mobley said.

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