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Rep. Taylor Secures Funding For New Energy Exhibit at NC Arboretum

WASHINGTON, DC – Western North Carolina Representative Charles Taylor announced today that he has secured funding to underwrite the development of an energy technology education curriculum at the North Carolina Arboretum. The \$100,000 planning grant from the US Department of Energy will help develop a program that initially targets high school and college students. One important component of the project is the design of an interactive museum exhibit that explores the links among climate, plants and landscape, weather and environment, energy use and energy conservation technology efforts.

“This project fits in perfectly with my efforts to bring high-technology education, training, and ultimately jobs to Western North Carolina,” said Congressman Taylor. “The curriculum will be developed in conjunction with such national and regional organizations as the Education and Research Consortium of the Western Carolinas, the US Department of Energy, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the National Climatic Data Center, the US Forest Service, UNC-Asheville and other university and community colleges. The North Carolina Arboretum seems like the perfect place to develop and ultimately exhibit this technology.”

The exhibit and related education programs will explore how energy use is directly tied to weather patterns and our climate and how the use of more efficient energy technology and landscape strategies can help conserve both energy and our natural resources. The exhibit is planned to open to the public in 2006 in the NC Arboretum’s new Gateway Center for educational exhibits and visitor orientation. This facility will be the second high performance building to be located on Arboretum property.

“This project brings together several key initiatives for the mountain region,” Arboretum Executive Director George Briggs said. “We are grateful to Congressman Taylor and the Department of Energy for ensuring the funding of this project.”

The North Carolina Arboretum, a 426-acre public garden located on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Asheville, NC, is an affiliate campus of the University of North Carolina system. Its mission incorporates education, research, conservation, economic development and garden demonstrations as related to landscape architecture and plant sciences.