



# Capitol Network News

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## GOODYEAR CEO PRAISES LAWTON FACILITY

By Brandon Beard & Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writers

■(GIT) Calling the Goodyear tire plant in Lawton the best in the world and the "crown jewel" of the company's operation, Goodyear President and CEO Samir F. Gibara said his Oklahoma visit Wednesday was to focus on positioning the Oklahoma facility for the future.

"We have a major commitment to Oklahoma...we have every intention of keeping it that way," Gibara said in a meeting with reporters. "The tire industry is becoming a global industry — we need to be in a position to compete with them."

He praised the Legislature for its economic development efforts, saying, however, that such areas as workers' compensation reform still needed some attention. "More can be done," he said.

Reasons for the success of the Lawton facility include its "very modern" equipment and systems personnel. The ability to work together and continuous education also play a key role, he said.

"We consider it a center of excellence." He said recent construction of a Canadian facility was modeled after the Lawton site.

He said skills, knowledge and talent were three keys to the plant's success.

When asked if right-to-work was an issue with Good Year, Gibara said it was not.

Calling Goodyear the last American owned tire company with worldwide interests, Gibara asked the U.S. Congress to "level the playing field" in terms of worldwide competitiveness. "Some other worldwide competitors get assistance from their govern-

ments," he said. He cited such other companies as the Japanese owned Bridgestone and the French owned Michelin tire companies.

His message was much the same when he spoke to a joint session of lawmakers in the House chamber.

In addition to praising Lawton, the Goodyear facility there and the state legislature, Gibara stressed the point that the world's economies were now linked, rather than independent and that competition crosses city limits, state lines and national borders.

"In the global economy, competition is not just North America against Japan against Europe. It is also Lawton against Topeka against Tokyo," he said.

The participants in those competitive environments, Gibara told the legislature, is always changing.

"I think change is here to stay," Gibara said. "We need to not only be responsive to

change, we need to preempt change."

Gibara visited the capitol while on his way to Lawton, where he was scheduled to attend the Lawton Chamber of Commerce and Industry's annual banquet Wednesday night.

## GOVERNOR SIGNS SIMULCASTING BILL

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Governor Frank Keating on Wednesday praised the efforts of some state lawmakers and the state's horse racing industry for being able to fashion an agreement for racetracks to carry full-card simulcasts.

The comments came during a special ceremony in which the governor signed **SB1167**, by Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, and Sen. Lewis Long, D-Glenpool. Keating was surrounded by representatives of the horse racing industry, as well as Remington Park.

"I think this is extremely important for the horse industry of Oklahoma and certainly for the racing industry," Keating said, calling the measure a prosperity issue.

Rep. Cal Hobson, D-Lexington and a co-author of the measure, also praised the efforts of those in the horse racing industry for making the bill a reality. "This shows what the legislature and industry can do when they put their differences aside," he said.

Long added, "Thankfully, all the groups were able to reach a compromise for the entire industry and all the state's tracks."

Co-author Rep. Fred Stanley, D-Madill, too, called the measure a cooperative effort.

Under the terms of the measure, Oklahoma horse tracks can offer up to six full-card simulcasts during a racing day. Two of those cards can be offered while the track is holding its own races.

When there is no live racing, tracks can simulcast six full-card, out-of-state races for up to one-half the number of days the track holds live races.

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