



*Commonwealth of Virginia*  
*Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: September 25, 2014

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**Governor McAuliffe Announces 166 New Jobs in  
the City of Suffolk**

*~ Friant and Associates to invest \$17.4 million to establish first Virginia  
manufacturing operation~*

**RICHMOND** - Governor Terry McAuliffe announced today that Friant and Associates, a manufacturer of custom office furniture, will invest \$17.4 million to establish its first Virginia operation at the CenterPoint Intermodal Center in the City of Suffolk. Virginia successfully competed against Maryland for the project, which will create 166 new jobs.

Speaking about today's announcement, Governor McAuliffe said, "It is a great honor to welcome Friant and Associates' first Virginia manufacturing operation to the City of Suffolk and

add this established company to our corporate roster. The addition of 166 new jobs in advanced furniture manufacturing will help diversify the industrial base in Suffolk, and is another step forward in creating a New Virginia Economy with skilled workers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The unrivaled global access provided by the nearby Port of Virginia was a major factor in winning this tremendous project, and Friant and Associates will also be able to capitalize on Virginia's outstanding business climate and our world class workforce."

"As Friant and Associates expands its footprint on a national and global level, Suffolk's strategic location and access to these markets will be invaluable to the company," said Maurice Jones, Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade. "This project is a win-win, as Suffolk will also benefit from the company's significant investment and a new employer that will create 166 job opportunities."

Headquartered in Oakland, California and founded in 1990, Friant and Associates designs and manufactures innovative and customizable high-end office systems, at prices unmatched in the industry. From panel systems and casegoods to reception and conference — they furnish office space beautifully, affordably and quickly.

"With a new manufacturing point in Virginia, we can better serve our customers and partners on the East Coast," said Paul Friant, Friant and Associates' Founder and CEO. "This is an ideal location logistically with great access to the port, and we look forward to the opportunities to come as we experience this milestone in our company history with the people of Virginia."

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with the City of Suffolk, the Port of Virginia, and the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance to secure the project for Virginia. Governor McAuliffe approved a \$200,000 grant from the Governor's Opportunity Fund to assist Suffolk with the project. The company will receive benefits from the Port of Virginia Economic and Infrastructure Development Zone Grant Program. Funding and services to support the company's employee training activities will be provided through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.

"Friant and Associates is a wonderful addition to Suffolk's established and growing manufacturing and distribution sector," said Suffolk Mayor Linda T. Johnson. "Suffolk's transportation infrastructure, utility infrastructure and skilled workforce is prepared and ready to support Port of Virginia users like Friant and Associates, today and into the future. Friant and Associates' location in Suffolk is another great example of the welcoming business climate that exists for West Coast-based operations searching for logistics efficiencies on the East Coast."

"The Port of Virginia is happy to join the City of Suffolk and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership in welcoming another new company that is going to bring jobs and investment to Hampton Roads and cargo to The Port of Virginia," said John F. Reinhart, CEO and executive director of the Virginia Port Authority. "Friant and Associates' decision to develop its East Coast presence near the port will allow them to take advantage of the access to world markets that we provide and capitalize on our long history of moving manufactured furniture products."

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