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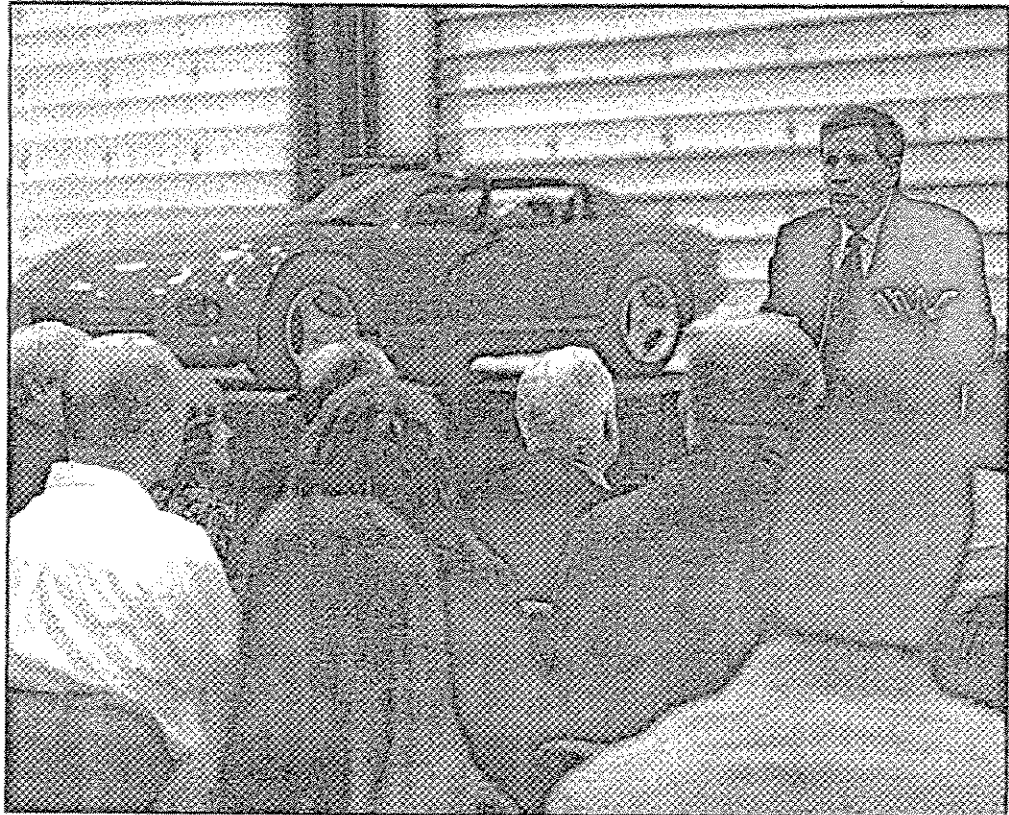
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Gov. John Kasich speaks to a crowd at Mustang Dynamometer in Twinsburg April 28. The governor chose the automotive technology business as the backdrop for his proposal to cut the base rate of workers compensation by 4 percent.

Kasich in Twinsburg: Small businesses can benefit from workers' comp cut

by EMILY CANNING-DEAN | REPORTER

Twinsburg — Ohio Gov. John Kasich chose a local automotive technology business April 28 as the backdrop for his proposal to cut the base rate of workers compensation by 4 percent.

The president of Mustang Dynamometer on Pinnacle Parkway said he fully supports the cut, which will save Mustang about \$10,000 per year.

"This is fantastic ... It means more money that can be invested into the company," said Dean Ganzhorn, president of Mustang Dynamometer.

Kasich announced to a crowd of about 200 his proposal for the rate reduction and touted other tenets of his jobs budget during his 45-minute long visit. He was to visit another business, Noshok, in Berea later that day.

"Mustang Dynamometer is a company with interesting technology ... [it's] a small business that will really benefit from this reduction," Kasich said.

Mustang has been in Twinsburg since 1986 and manufactures automotive testing equipment such as chassis and engine dynamometers. The 60,000 square-foot facility employs 60.

Bureau of Workers' Compensation administrator Steve Buehrer, who accompanied Kasich, said the rate reduction — which still must be approved by the Board of Directors at

the BWC — is possible because the bureau has been receiving a good return on investments, and because the number of claims submitted to the bureau has decreased in the last few years.

If the board of directors approve the proposal, the lower base rate would take effect July 1.

Several officials present applauded Kasich's proposal.

"We now have a governor who understands that it is business that grows jobs," said State Rep. Lynn Slaby.

"I don't think people who don't own a business realize what employers pay for workers' comp," said Doug Johnson, executive director of the Twinsburg Chamber of Commerce. "This will be a benefit to many of our small businesses."

"I think the governor gave a very positive message," said Twinsburg Council President Gary Sorace. "I don't envy his position. But this proposal is great news for small businesses."

But not everyone greeted Kasich's arrival in Twinsburg warmly. A group of about 10 members from the Service Employees International Union Local 1199 out of Cleveland stood outside of Mustang Dynamometer wearing black cloaks and carrying sickles, chanting "Gov. Kasich is a job killer."

"I want to tell him that he will end up eliminating jobs and his funding cuts will eliminate public educa-

tion," said Samara Knight, a member of SEIU.

But Kasich said he believes that cutting costs for Ohio businesses will mean more jobs for the state in the future.

"Businesses across the state get frustrated because they feel no one is listening," Kasich said. "We need to use common sense and make it easier to open and operate a business in this state. We want to be competitive with other states."

Kasich said local government basic aid needs to be reduced to avoid raising taxes, while shaving \$8 billion from the state's budget. He said he believes local governments will persevere, especially with the control Senate Bill 5 gives these agencies to curb health care and pension costs.

"Workers should have the right negotiate wages and the right to negotiate working conditions," Kasich said. "But the managers have to be able to control the cost of health care. The average private sector worker pays 23 percent of health care costs. The average government worker pays 9 percent. I don't think that is good for the middle class."

Kasich said he is confident Ohio will be "great again."

"Right now the whole country is watching Ohio," he said. "If we can fix Ohio, the folks in Washington could learn how to fix America."

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