

# Ohio leaders rally for GE jet engine project

October 15 2010

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(AP) -- Ohio's Democratic governor and U.S. House members from both parties joined a rally at GE Aviation on Thursday to support a jet fighter engine project.

The General Electric Co. unit based in Evendale just north of Cincinnati wants to continue work with Rolls-Royce on the multi-billion-dollar effort to develop an alternate engine for the Joint Strike Fighter program. GE Aviation says some 1,200 jobs in the Cincinnati area and 2,500 jobs overall nationally are tied to the F136 engine project.

Obama administration and [Pentagon](#) officials have said the project isn't necessary.

"The Joint Strike Fighter will modernize our fleet and serve this nation for decades," Gov. Ted Strickland said. "And competition is the force that will drive down the cost for developing the primary engine over time."

Strickland said maintaining the program will save taxpayers more than \$20 billion over the life of the project and improve the readiness of U.S. armed forces.

GE Aviation officials and union leaders also took part in the rally. A company statement said that almost \$3 billion has been invested in the F136 [engine](#) and \$1 billion is needed to complete its development.

"Cancel now, and \$3 billion in taxpayer money is wasted," the company

said.

[General Electric](#) is based in Fairfield, Conn.

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Citation: Ohio leaders rally for GE jet engine project (2010, October 15) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-10-ohio-leaders-rally-ge-jet.html>

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