

Andorran firm to locate U.S. headquarters in Mass.

By GLEN JOHNSON

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BOSTON (AP) - Gov. Deval Patrick announced Wednesday a European-based dental implant maker will set up its U.S. headquarters and build a manufacturing plant in Massachusetts, creating 140 jobs over the next three years.

The Andorra-based SOADCO/KLOCKNER will first locate its headquarters in Boston and follow up with a manufacturing plant, Patrick said in a statement released from San Diego, where he is leading a state delegation to an international biotechnology conference.

"Massachusetts has a long and distinguished tradition of ingenuity, innovation and entrepreneurship dating back to the American Revolution that makes it an ideal location for conducting business," said the company's Global Corporate Director Eduardo Vivas.

He said Massachusetts offers businesses a competitive advantage that is difficult to find elsewhere, saying the state has consistently ranked number one for innovation assets, college performance and the fact that it has the most high-technology companies per capita.

Patrick described the company's decision to set up operations in Massachusetts as a product of his administration's efforts to spur the growth of a high-tech economy and create more jobs.

"This is a great win for the commonwealth and our team will continue to work with companies to bring their businesses here," Patrick said.

Andorra is located in the Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain.

The governor, Senate President Therese Murray and House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi have been promoting the state's new \$1 billion, 10-year life sciences bill to lure companies. Patrick signed the measure Monday before leaving town.

Although Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley announced plans for a similar \$1.1 billion initiative on Tuesday, DiMasi said the Massachusetts law has been the talk of the BIO convention.

"We're the topic of conversation here. Everybody I've bumped into is really praising us," DiMasi told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

He said the state's effort to lure manufacturers to Massachusetts, and retain those already here, has benefited from the united front.

"It really makes a difference, it's amazing. When the three of us meet people or speak at the same event, people are very impressed because it's a total commitment by the Legislature and the executive branch," DiMasi said.

The speaker also sloughed off the competition from Maryland.

"We've got it signed, sealed and delivered already, so we're up and running and Maryland will have to play catch up," DiMasi said.

Pointing to the cluster of research, medical and educational institutions in Massachusetts, DiMasi said: "I think we're much better situated for biotech and life sciences companies to come to Massachusetts because of the other assets we have."

Separately, Patrick met with the CEO of Callaway in an effort to convince the Carlsbad, Calif.-based golf manufacturer to bring jobs to Massachusetts.