

# FNGVC: Champion Brands Breaks Ground On Jacksonville CNG Station

Number of Natural Gas Fueling Stations in Florida Doubles

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., July 30, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Today, Champion Brands, a Florida beer distributor, broke ground on its public-private CNG station with partner Trillium CNG. Champion CEO Earl Benton turned to natural gas to avoid frequent and costly fluctuations in the price of diesel: "If there is war in the Middle East or a hurricane, we will not be impacted as dramatically," said Benton.

Benton also likes the environmental benefits of the cleaner burning fuel. He previously installed new energy efficient LED lights in his warehouse and hopes to someday install solar panels on the roof. Eric Criss, Chairman of the *Florida Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition (FNGVC)*, congratulated Champion Brands on the groundbreaking: "Companies like Champion Brands are leading the drive toward American energy independence and cleaner air. Jacksonville is fortunate to count Champion among its outstanding corporate citizens."

Florida recently implemented legislation, sponsored by Representative Lake Ray and Senator Wilton Simpson and signed into law by Governor Rick Scott, to encourage public and private fleet investment in natural gas vehicles. The law offers grants administered by the Office of Energy at the Florida Department of Agriculture. After public hearings, Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam released new regulations and successfully implemented the program statewide.

According to the Florida Natural Gas Association, the number of CNG stations in Florida has doubled as a result—from approximately 30 stations to 60—as companies like Champion Brands received help in defraying the cost of new CNG powered vehicles.

The natural gas vehicle program does not subsidize CNG fueling stations. Those are constructed at the expense of each individual entity or entities. Nevertheless, in many cases, as with Champion Brands, the station will be available for public use. The public appears in favor of the program, with one survey finding 72% of Floridians supported it.

*The FNGVC consists of a diverse group of Florida employers including beer distributors such as Champion Brands, waste-hauling companies such as Waste Management, and package delivery companies such as United Parcel Service (UPS). For a complete list of members click [here](#).*

SOURCE Florida Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition