



NEWS RELEASE

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**GOVERNOR HASLAM, COMMISSIONER ROLFE ANNOUNCE VAN HOOL NV TO
ESTABLISH FIRST US MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN MORRISTOWN**

Bus and coach manufacturer to invest more than \$47 million and create nearly 640 jobs

MORRISTOWN, Tenn. – Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe and Van Hool NV officials announced today that the Belgian company will establish its first U.S. manufacturing operation in Morristown and create nearly 640 jobs over the next five years.

Van Hool, a family-owned Belgian manufacturer of buses, coaches and industrial vehicles, plans to invest more than \$47 million to construct an approximately 500,000-square-foot facility in Morristown's East Tennessee Progress Center, a [Select Tennessee Certified Site](#).

"Van Hool's decision to establish its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Morristown and create more than 600 jobs underscores the robust pro-growth environment of job creation we've fostered in Tennessee," Haslam said. "Tennessee is a leading destination for foreign direct investment and because of global businesses like Van Hool, Tennessee will lead the nation in high quality jobs opportunities."

"Van Hool is an exceptional company and I'm pleased this third-generation, family-owned business has decided to bring more than 600 well-paying, family-wage jobs to East Tennessee," Rolfe said. "Tennessee's skilled workforce, central location and higher education programs such as the Tennessee Promise continue to attract world-class international companies like Van Hool to our state. Since 2011, foreign-owned businesses have pledged to invest more than \$12.5 billion to expand or establish operations in Tennessee, creating more than 51,500 job opportunities for Tennesseans."

At the new plant, Van Hool will manufacture public transit and commuter vehicles for U.S. transit agencies. Construction of the facility will begin later this year. Van Hool anticipates the facility will be operational in the first quarter of 2020.

"We're excited to announce the next step of the global growth plans of the Van Hool Group here in Morristown, Hamblen County, Tennessee," Van Hool CEO Filip Van



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Hool said. "The investment of more than \$47 million reaffirms the more than 30-year presence of Van Hool in the U.S. market. Since 1987, we have supplied more than 10,000 vehicles in North America. Today, we're really looking forward to building a state-of-the-art bus factory in Morristown to supply the entire North American market with high quality buses and commuter coaches for transit agencies from 2020 onwards.

"The presence of highly-regarded technical schools and well trained workers in Hamblen County, together with the support and cooperation of all local parties involved, convinced the Van Hool executive board to make the largest investment outside Belgium in Van Hool's 71-year history," Van Hool continued. "Thank you, Morristown, Hamblen County and Tennessee. We're really looking forward to working together with you on this great project both for the local community and Van Hool."

Van Hool designs and manufactures approximately 3,000 commercial vehicles and 1,400 buses and coaches annually. Van Hool's commercial vehicle department produces a comprehensive range of semitrailers, road tankers, tank and bulk containers, and container chassis.

Van Hool operates production facilities in Koningshooikt, Belgium, where it is headquartered, and Skopje, Macedonia. The company employs approximately 4,450 employees worldwide.

Local officials and the Tennessee Valley Authority praised Van Hool for its investment in Morristown.

"This is a special day for Morristown, Hamblen County and the surrounding eight-county region where Van Hool will have a major impact," Morristown Mayor Gary Chesney said. "Van Hool's selection of Morristown's East Tennessee Progress Center as the site to grow its business represents a wonderful vote of confidence in Morristown."

"This is great news for the entire Lakeway area," Hamblen County Mayor Bill Brittain said. "Van Hool will employ residents from throughout the region and will be an active part of the community. Congratulations to Van Hool for a great decision and to the state and local economic development partnership for presenting the advantages of doing business in Morristown and Hamblen County."

"Van Hool's announcement is a major milestone for Morristown and Tennessee," R. Jack Fishman, chairman of the Industrial Development Board of Morristown, said. "It will provide quality manufacturing job opportunities for hundreds of our citizens for years to come. Van Hool's investment in Morristown is highly significant and will give many areas in our local economy a chance to grow."



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"TVA and Morristown Utility Systems congratulate Van Hool on its decision to locate and create hundreds of job opportunities in Morristown," TVA Senior Vice President of Economic Development John Bradley said. "Helping to attract and retain jobs in the Valley is fundamental to TVA's mission of service and we are proud to partner with Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and Morristown Chamber of Commerce to help further that mission."

Morristown and Hamblen County are represented by Sen. Steve Southerland (R – Morristown) and Rep. Tilman Goins (R – Morristown) in the Tennessee General Assembly.

About the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's mission is to develop strategies that help make Tennessee the No. 1 location in the Southeast for high quality jobs. To grow and strengthen Team Tennessee, the department seeks to attract new corporate investment in Tennessee and works with Tennessee companies to facilitate expansion and economic growth. Find us on the web:

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