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Biden touts Cree as green manufacturing model

DURHAM, N.C. Vice President Joe Biden is highlighting a North Carolina company as an example of how the Obama administration aims to expand jobs that pay middle-class salaries.

On Thursday, Biden visits the Durham headquarters and factory of Cree Inc., a manufacturer of energy-efficient LED lighting products. LEDs are light-emitting diodes that use a fraction of the power of even fluorescent tubes, don't contain mercury like twisty compact fluorescent lights, and don't produce the heat that speeds spoilage in meat or produce grocery displays.

Cree has hired about 375 engineers, office staffers and production workers since last summer as demand took off.

The Obama administration says Cree is an example of expanding manufacturing jobs while adapting to a clean-energy economy.