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The Sterling Group, L.P. Announces Acquisition of BTEC Turbines LP

Houston, Texas — September 29, 2006 — The Sterling Group, L.P. ("Sterling"), a Houston-based private equity firm and The Stephens Group, LLC of Little Rock, Arkansas ("Stephens", and together, the "Investors"), today announced that they have finalized the acquisition of a majority stake in BTEC Turbines LP ("BTEC"). The acquisition was financed with equity and debt capital provided equally by the Investors.

Headquartered in a 200,000 square foot facility on the Houston Ship Channel, BTEC specializes in the refurbishment, repair and packaging of large gas turbines as well as turnkey power plant design, construction, commissioning and support ("EPC"). BTEC was founded in 1997 by current CEO and significant shareholder Mike Boyce with whom Sterling and Stephens are partnering. BTEC has worked on numerous projects since its inception, including fast track EPC projects rebuilding the power infrastructure in Iraq. BTEC is currently involved in a number of packaging and turnkey projects, including development of a 160 megawatt gas-fired power generation plant in Peru for BPZ Energy, Inc., a publicly traded oil and gas exploration and production corporation based in the United States.

Simultaneous with the acquisition of their ownership interests in BTEC, Sterling and Stephens financed BTEC's purchase of an inventory of gas-fired turbines and balance of plant equipment through the acquisition of two currently non-operating gas-fired power plants. The first of these plants contains 8 large, recent vintage gas turbines. The second plant contains 6 large, older units which were refurbished. BTEC will use the acquired turbines and the balance of plant equipment for its power plant EPC projects.

About The Sterling Group, L.P.

The Sterling Group (www.sterling-group.com) is a private equity investment firm founded in 1982 that targets controlling interests in basic manufacturing, industrial services and distribution companies. Typical enterprise values of these companies range from \$100 million to \$500 million. Sterling has sponsored the buyout of 33 portfolio companies and numerous add-on acquisitions for a total transaction value greater than \$8 billion. Currently, Sterling has \$600 million of committed capital under management. Current portfolio companies include Roofing Supply Group, CST Industries, Panolam Industries, North American Construction Group and Propex Fabrics.

About The Stephens Group, LLC

The Stephens Group, LLC, is a private, family-owned firm that invests its capital in private and public companies with exceptional management teams and high returns on invested capital in growing industries. The principals of The Stephens Group have over 70 years of history in successfully investing in both minority and control positions across multiple industries. The Stephens Group, through its affiliates, has large positions in gas exploration and production, media, communications, consumer, manufacturing and other industries. The Stephens Group typically provides equity capital of \$5 million to \$75 million dollars per transaction and looks to invest \$100-\$200 million per year.

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