



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 4, 2013

CONTACT: Alex Sommer, 201-835-4025 / alexs@renewoureconomy.org

Local New Jersey Chambers of Commerce Partner with Community Organizations to Push for Immigration Reform

A Modern Immigration System Will Add Billions to New Jersey Economy and Will Attract and Retain the World's Top Innovators and Entrepreneurs

Morristown, NJ – Several local Chambers of Commerce, community organizations, New Jersey business owners and faith leaders came together today to highlight the need to pass broad-based immigration reform. The conference call served as a forum to discuss the importance of immigration for New Jersey's competitiveness and why the U.S. House of Representatives must seek to pass a bipartisan bill that will allow current and future immigrants to contribute to the country's high-skilled and low-skilled sectors.

Currently, immigrants total over 21% of the state's population. Reforming the country's immigration system will generate over a billion dollars and thousands of jobs across New Jersey. For instance, New Jersey's universities educate scores of foreign students in hi-tech fields, only to have the outdated immigration system send these graduates back overseas where they will compete against the country where they were trained. As such, expanding the number of high-skilled (H-1B) visas will have positive economic effects. Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) estimates that expansion of the H-1B program would result in more than 12,100 jobs and add more than \$1.2 billion to Gross State Product by 2014.

"As Congress continues to debate ways to address immigration reform, our leaders must remember that many hard-working legal immigrants have already contributed so much to our nation's economy and culture," said Esperanza Porris-Field, President & CEO of the Morris County Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce. "We have the ability to build upon this success in New Jersey, but only if our immigration system becomes more efficient so that current and future immigrants can start businesses and create jobs right here in Morris County and throughout the state."

"Immigration reform can propel our economy forward creating more jobs and tax revenue," said Paul Boudreau, President of the Morris County Chamber of Commerce. "We now have the best opportunity in years to fix our broken immigrations system."

"Our Chamber supports comprehensive immigration reform because of the economic impact it would have on our businesses," said Robert D. Prunetti, President & CEO of the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce. "Our state is a leader in many STEM industries, such as

pharmaceuticals, technology, and finance, which rely on the talents of immigrants. New Jersey also employs thousands of construction, lawn and garden, restaurant, and seasonal workers. These industries depend on immigrant workers.”

In New Jersey, legalizing the 75,000 so-called DREAMers in the state would have an estimated \$7.2 billion induced economic impact and also create almost 26,800 new jobs by 2030. These benefits would arise by incentivizing these young people to earn a higher education degree and by allowing them to work legally. The DREAM Act would result in higher earnings and increased spending on products ranging from cars to houses to computers.

"Evangelicals all over the country have been praying and advocating for common sense and humane immigration reform that both ensures security and provides an earned path to citizenship," said Reverend Gabriel Salguero, President of The National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC) and Pastor of The Lamb's Church. "Not only does it make economic sense, but it is the moral thing to do. As evangelical pastors we know inaction is not an option."

“Most small business owners in New Jersey recognize the important role immigrants play in our economy - as workers, customers and business owners alike,” said Corinne Horowitz of the New Jersey Main Street Alliance. “Today’s discussion exemplifies the broad-based support throughout the state for immediate reform so that New Jersey’s economy will grow now and also for the long-term.”

"If I didn't have immigrants on which to rely, I wouldn't be in business," said J. Kelly Conklin, President of Foley-Waite Associates Inc. "These are good people who show up every day, do their job, and want to be citizens. This is a problem with a rational solution."

Organizations and companies that participated in the discussion include the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Morris County Chamber of Commerce, Morris County Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce, United Hispanic Chambers of Commerce of New Jersey, the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce, the New Jersey Main Street Alliance, Partnership for a New American Economy, and The National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC).

About the Partnership for a New American Economy

The Partnership for a New American Economy brings together more than 500 Republican, Democratic and Independent mayors and business leaders who support immigration reforms that will help create jobs for Americans today. The Partnership's members include mayors of more than 35 million people nationwide and business leaders of companies that generate more than \$1.5 trillion and employ more than 4 million people across all sectors of the economy, from Agriculture to Aerospace, Hospitality to High Tech and Media to Manufacturing. Partnership members understand that immigration is essential to maintaining the productive, diverse and flexible workforce that America needs to ensure prosperity over the coming generations. Learn more at www.RenewOurEconomy.org.

###