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## In Case You Missed It: Driving N.J.'s Marketability

Monday, June 7, 2010 • Tags: [Jobs and the Economy](#)

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NJBIZ  
Monday, June 7, 2010 12:00 AM

The search is on for an executive to lead New Jersey's newest business-promoting nonprofit, which is part of Gov. Chris Christie's plan to attract and retain businesses to the state.

The board of directors of Choose New Jersey held its first board meeting June 1, at which Verizon New Jersey CEO Dennis M. Bone was confirmed as the interim board chairman.

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"When we benchmark New Jersey against other states, we find New Jersey is not in the game," Bone said, though Christie's level of commitment to the cause has raised business leaders' confidence in the state.

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Choose New Jersey will coordinate its activities with Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno's office and the Economic Development Authority. The three organizations will be under the umbrella of the New Jersey Partnership for Action, a coordinating effort led by Guadagno.

As part of these new efforts, Guadagno said her office would absorb the EDA business recruitment and retention efforts, and staff members, that were part of the state Commerce Commission before it was abolished in 2008.

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Guadagno said the organization would be funded solely by participants. Each of the companies represented on the Choose New Jersey board has committed to providing \$450,000 over the next three years.

Christie said the businesses in Choose New Jersey would be able to successfully communicate to those in other states the advantages of New Jersey.

"They already chose New Jersey," Christie said. "They've already invested in our state."

This point was echoed by Bernard M. Flynn, New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Corp. president and CEO, who hosted the press conference announcing the new board members at the corporation's Ewing headquarters.

"It's great to talk to real live CEOs who have succeeded here," Flynn said.

Ralph Izzo, chairman and CEO of Public Service Enterprise Group, said it is important to communicate the state's advantages, including its access to markets and its work force.

"Now we have a governor who realizes those important assets can be communicated, and not impaired through counterproductive policies," Izzo said.

EDA Chairman Alfred C. Koeppe said the new organization and Guadagno's efforts would allow the EDA to strengthen its core mission of business financing.

"It frees us from responsibilities that aren't in our skill set," Koeppe said.

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