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NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: April 14, 1998

GOVERNOR URGES SUPPORT FOR SUPER-MAJORITY REQUIREMENT FOR RAISING TAXES

Gov. Christie Whitman today urged support for super-majority legislation both at the federal and state levels, stating that the super-majority requirement is a tool to keep taxes from burdening citizens and blighting job creation.

"We need a super-majority in Congress, and we need it at the state level," Gov. Whitman said. "We must make raising taxes more difficult. Our citizens deserve it; our economy demands it."

"A super-majority doesn't mandate a tax cut," the Governor said. "And it doesn't prohibit tax increases. It just asks for a broader consensus when Congress or the legislature wants to take more money out of our citizens' pockets."

"Super-majority is the law in 13 states," she said. "I want to make it law in New Jersey. And I speak for a lot of New Jerseyans who wish it already was the law. If a super-majority had been in place in 1990, we never would have suffered such a huge tax increase or lost as many New Jersey jobs."

"By the same token, President Clinton's federal tax hike five years ago would not have passed if we had a super-majority requirement in Congress," Gov. Whitman said.

The Governor spoke at a press conference held with Members of Congress, state legislators and representatives of various citizens and business groups to urge support for a Constitutional amendment requiring a super-majority vote in Congress to pass any federal tax increase.

"Thanks to excessive taxes, April 15th is a day small businesses dread," said **Cecilia Adams, Director for Congressional Affairs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce**. "That's why the Chamber has launched a national grassroots effort in support of the amendment to force Congress and the President to think twice before they raise taxes." Adams said that in addition to New Jersey, the Chamber is participating in similar tax limitation events around the country.

"I am pleased to lend the support of my organization to Gov. Whitman's efforts in New Jersey and to the constitutional amendment to that will protect the American people from the burden of higher taxes. This legislation will put an end to tax increases that are supported by only a bare majority in Congress, and clearly not supported by, or in the best interest of, the American taxpayer. This amendment will require the Congress and the President to focus on eliminating federal spending and reigning in federal budget growth, instead of raising taxes and breaking the backs of the American taxpayers," said **Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform**

The U. S. House of Representatives is scheduled to vote next week on a resolution proposing a Constitutional amendment requiring a two-thirds majority vote in the House to adopt a tax increase. If approved by both the House and the Senate, the

legislation would then require ratification by three-fourths of the states' legislatures to become an amendment to the constitution.

U. S. Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas), who sponsored the federal resolution, attended the Governor's press conference. Other supporters of the super-majority measure at the conference included U. S. Rep. Robert Franks (R-Union); U. S. Rep. Mike Pappas (R-Rocky Hill) and U. S. Rep. John Fox (R-Pa.). State legislators in attendance included Sen. Walter J. Kavanaugh (R- Morris/Somerset) and Assembly Members Guy R. Gregg (R- Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris); Joel M. Weingarten (R- Essex/Union) and E. Scott Garrett (R-Sussex/Hunterdon and Morris), and representatives of various citizens and business groups.

The following groups have supported the Governor's proposal and attended today's press conference: N. J. Citizens for Tax Reform, Hands Across New Jersey, Coalition for Lower Taxes, Operation: Common Sense!, United Taxpayers of New Jersey, Citizens for a Sound Economy, U. S. Chamber of Commerce, National Federation of Independent Business, New Jersey Business & Industry Association, Chemical Industry Council.

Attached are comments from Members of Congress about the need for a super-majority provision.

Congressional Support for Super-Majority Requirement on Taxes

"I am honored to join Gov. Whitman and my fellow Representatives for this event. Congress needs to follow the example of thirteen states that already have tax limitation and the states, like New Jersey, that are currently taking up the fight. We need to protect American taxpayers from continual, unnecessary tax climbs." -- **Congressman Joe Barton (6th District, Texas), sponsor of the Barton Tax Limitation Amendment, federal super-majority legislation**

"Thanks to the leadership and courage of Gov. Whitman, we in New Jersey have been fortunate enough to roll back the bad tax policy of previous administrations in Trenton. In Washington, however, we haven't had the same intensity with regard to fiscal restraint. That's why the `super-majority' bill that Congressman Barton has proposed is so important to every American and why I supported this bill from its inception in the U.S. House." -- **Congressman Jim Saxton (3rd District, New Jersey)**

"I would like to applaud Governor Whitman for recognizing that requiring a two-thirds super-majority to raise any tax would force greater discipline on State Legislatures and make the possibility of tax increases much less likely. As a cosponsor of the federal Tax Limitation Amendment, I believe it would force the government to do what every American family must -- live within its means. In fact, states that have implemented tax limitation report that it has produced a tremendous positive impact on their local economies. In those states, taxes and spending have increased more slowly, economies have expanded faster and employment has grown more quickly. That type of success is hard to oppose." - **Congressman Vito Fossella (13th District, New York)**

"I am pleased to join Gov. Whitman, state legislators, and my Congressional colleagues in bringing focus on the need to increase the threshold to raise taxes in our state and federal governments. I am a co-sponsor of a proposed amendment which would require a 2/3 vote in both the chambers of Congress to raise taxes. This measure of course would not preclude the possibility of raising taxes in case of war or other emergency. It would make our elected officials stop and think if any such emergency exists and warrants a raise of taxes, which is what the American people demand." - **Congressman Benjamin A. Gilman (20th District, New York)**

"Taxpayers work very hard at making every penny in their paychecks count. This is a straightforward amendment that has the backing of these very same wage

earners who have told Congress to think twice before raising taxes. This amendment will cur excessive tax increases by requiring a super-majority to pass such measures." - **Congressman Jack Quinn (30th District, New York)**

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