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NEWS RELEASE

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Statement of Gov. Christie Whitman Regarding Ellis Island Decision

Gov. Christie Whitman issued the following statement in response to today's U.S. Supreme Court decision declaring that Ellis Island belongs largely to New Jersey:

"We are obviously very, very pleased with the decision. It means that New Jersey will be recognized for its historical role in welcoming immigrants to America. This is a tradition that continues today, well after the close of Ellis Island. Over 150 different languages are spoken in New Jersey. We are a diverse state where ethnic traditions are strong.

"I will soon be establishing a special commission to make recommendations about the future of Ellis Island. The commission will include members from various walks of life and disciplines who will develop a plan that respects Ellis Island's unique and important place in the history of New Jersey and the nation.

"Today's decision puts to rest any and all disagreements about Ellis Island. It settles nearly 160 years of dispute between our states. It establishes, once more, New Jersey's proper place in American history."