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## Governor Christie and Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Join Business Leaders to Launch Choose New Jersey

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**Trenton, NJ** - Governor Chris Christie and Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno will join a group of New Jersey's leaders to announce the launch of Choose New Jersey, a new non-profit corporation designed to market, promote and facilitate business attraction, expansion and retention in the State. Embracing Governor Christie's call to action and solidifying the administration's three-pronged approach to revitalizing the economy, Choose New Jersey is an independent, privately funded and managed organization created to aggressively promote New Jersey as a place in which to invest and do business.

Choose New Jersey will advocate the state's core strengths - strategic access to local and global financial markets, a highly trained workforce and a comprehensive distribution network of world-class sea and airports, state-of-the-art energy and communications infrastructure and elite research universities. Chaired by Dennis M. Bone, President of Verizon New Jersey, Choose New Jersey will also market incentive programs to attract and retain job creators and provide policy recommendations to make New Jersey a home for growth. This public-private partnership effectively maximizes the resources available to make New Jersey a competitive place to do business without increasing the burden on taxpayers. At their first meeting, the board of Choose New Jersey will constitute their organizational structure. They will also launch the search for a permanent CEO to lead Choose New Jersey. Working with various stakeholders, the CEO search will focus on finding an expert in economic growth and business development.

"Getting New Jerseyans back to work is our number one priority," said Governor Christie. "We need to give people, businesses and innovators a reason to Choose New Jersey if we're going to create meaningful, well-paying jobs and turn around our economy."

"I'd like to thank Dennis Bone for taking on this important task and have full faith in his and the board's ability to be great ambassadors for the Garden State," concluded Christie.

Choose New Jersey is an integral component of the Christie-Guadagno economic agenda to attract job creators back to the State and rebuild our economy. Under the umbrella of the New Jersey Partnership for Action, Choose New Jersey will complement the incentive programs administered by the state's Economic Development Authority (EDA) and a team of liaisons to aid businesses in dealing with government agencies. The EDA will continue to act as the State's "bank for business" by providing support to the Partnership for Action with the State's financing and incentive resources to leverage New Jersey's strategic advantages. Reporting directly to Lt. Governor Guadagno, the team of business liaison representatives will bring a customer service approach to coordination and navigation across state and local government agencies for businesses looking to remain, expand or locate in New Jersey.

"Together, we are working everyday to make New Jersey a home for growth," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "Cutting the red tape and providing incentives to attract business are critical components of our economic recovery. Just as important is our ability to get that message out, and that's where Choose New Jersey comes in to play. Working collaboratively with New Jersey's business and community leaders, we can create jobs and grow our economy."

"Under Governor Christie's and Lt. Governor Guadagno's leadership, this administration is dedicated to changing how government does business so that New Jersey can again grow and prosper," said Dennis Bone, President of Verizon New Jersey and Interim Chairman of Choose New Jersey. "Through Choose New Jersey, we believe there is a role for business to play and a significant opportunity to have a positive impact on the State's economy as well as the overall quality of life in New Jersey. We are proud to do our part to support these critical efforts."

Choose New Jersey's Board of Directors is comprised of some of the most highly regarded leaders in their respective fields. The initial governing board includes sixteen top level business executives, as well as one of the State's most respected civic leaders and the head of one of the fastest growing and most diverse labor unions in the nation. Directors have made a three-year commitment in support of Choose New Jersey and will serve as ambassadors to business and industry, furthering its attraction and retention initiatives and enhancing the state's competitiveness in the national and global marketplace. Its members are: Dennis M. Bone, President, Verizon New Jersey; Joe Colalillo, President, Wakefern Food Corporation; Don Correll, CEO and President, American Water; Robert H. Doherty, State President, Bank of America Merrill Lynch; Laurence M. Downes, Chairman and CEO, New Jersey Resources; Bernard Flynn, President and CEO, NJM Insurance Group; Edward Graham, President and CEO, South Jersey Industries; Reverend M. William Howard, Pastor, Bethany Baptist Church; Robert J. Iacullo, President and COO, United Water; Bob Hugin, Celgene President and COO (representing the Healthcare Institute of New Jersey); Ralph Izzo, Chairman and CEO, Public Service Electric and Gas; Vincent Maione, President, Atlantic City Electric; William J. Marino, Chairman and CEO, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey; Raymond M. Pocino, Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager, Laborers International Union of North America; Kevin Rigby, Vice President Public Affairs, Novartis; and John R. Strangefeld, Jr., Chairman and CEO, Prudential Financial, Inc.

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