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NEWS RELEASE

Governor's Weekly Radio Message Focuses on Business and Trade

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different issue or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

This week the Governor discusses her trade mission to Mexico. She is meeting with leaders of government and business in order to strengthen New Jersey's cultural and economic relationships with Mexico. Both our state's and our nation's trading relationship with Mexico has increased rapidly since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. In last year alone, Americans sold more exports to Mexico than France and the United Kingdom combined, and New Jersey's exports to Mexico increased by nearly one-third. The Garden State and Mexico already have strong ties. The Governor's mission this week is to make those ties stronger.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend.

Governor's Weekly Radio Message September 25, 1998 Business and Commerce

Right now, I'm on a trade mission to Mexico, America's neighbor and one of New Jersey's key trading partners. On this official trip, I have been joined by the heads of some of our state's leading companies.

I am meeting with leaders of both government and business, and looking at ways to strengthen both our cultural and our economic relationship with Mexico - a nation of vibrant people, a vital history, and vast potential.

In the Garden State, we have come to understand how significant trade and investment are to our nation's and our state's well-being. Indeed, my Economic Master Plan Commission identified trade as one of four key areas of our economy well-positioned for dramatic growth. I'm committed to expanding New Jersey's presence and success in international trade.

Fully one-third of U.S. economic growth in recent years has come from selling American goods and services in foreign markets. And New Jersey has been a major beneficiary of this increased trade and investment.

We are the ninth leading state in exports, with more than \$22 billion in exports last year - a 12 percent increase over the previous year. We are also the fifth leading state in foreign direct investment, which brings jobs to New Jersey families as well.

Our mission to Mexico offers an opportunity to highlight the success of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Our nation's trading relationship with Mexico since NAFTA was implemented in 1994 has been healthy, and last year alone Americans sold more exports to Mexico than we sold to France and the United Kingdom combined.

And listen to what NAFTA has meant to New Jersey. State exports to Canada and Mexico are up by 52 percent since NAFTA. New Jersey's exports to its NAFTA partners reached \$4.8 billion last year and directly supported more than 70,000 jobs in the Garden State. In Mexico alone, our state's exports increased by nearly one-third last year, and we expect to top the \$1 billion mark in 1998.

As you can see, the Garden State and Mexico have strong economic ties. My mission this week is to help our companies forge even stronger ties - relationships that expand our exports, add jobs to our workforce, and create new opportunities for growth in the future.

I also will take the opportunity to cement the bond of friendship between the people of Mexico and New Jersey. As you know, Many of the Faces in our One Family are of Mexican heritage.

The future of our state is more and more a global future. As we approach a new century, economic reality demands that we not merely gain access to markets and companies abroad; we must work hard to cultivate those markets and those relationships. I'm committed to helping our one family find its place in the truly global family of the 21st century.
