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Reason for Reform Campaign Highlights New Data Showing the Economic Impact of Immigrants in New Jersey

Local business leaders call for immigration reform in National Day of Action with events across all 50 states

TRENTON, New Jersey — Local business leaders came together at the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce in Trenton today for a Day of Action to showcase new research on the contributions immigrants make to New Jersey’s economy and highlight the critical need for immigration reform. The event marked the launch of the *Reason for Reform* campaign, an effort taking place in all 50 states today, sponsored by the Partnership for a **New American Economy** (NAE).

Robert D. Prunetti, President & CEO of the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce, hosted the event. “Immigrants make up 22 percent of New Jersey’s workforce and have a significant impact on industries like technology, healthcare, agriculture, transportation and hospitality that are critical to our state’s economic success. In order to maintain our competitive advantage in this increasingly global economy, we must continue to welcome and cultivate new talent into our workforce. That is why the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce supports immigration reform that makes economic sense for our economy that both creates jobs and generates the highly skilled workforce needed to be competitive.”

The *Reason for Reform* campaign brings together business, civic and cultural leaders to urge Congress to take action on immigration reform. Today’s Day of Action in Trenton coincides with the release of new research, including data on the foreign-born population in New Jersey, their tax contributions, spending power and role in New Jersey’s key industries as leaders and job creators. NAE is also launching a new mobile tool today that

lets users make a video sharing their Reason for Reform. Videos will be sent directly to Congress. Check out the tool [here](#).

“As the President of the Morris County Chamber of Commerce, I represent business leaders from the technology and healthcare sectors, among others, who rely heavily upon a highly skilled workforce. Immigrants make up a significant portion of our workforce, especially in the technology industry, and our immigration system makes it too difficult for many highly skilled workers to come to the United States to contribute to our economy,” said Paul Boudreau, President of the Morris County Chamber of Commerce. “We need to encourage and foster innovation – not discourage it. It’s time for our congressional leaders to pass comprehensive immigration reform so we can continue to foster innovation and grow our economy.”

The Contributions of New Americans in New Jersey shows that immigrants make up 22 percent of the state’s population and contributed \$19.6 billion in taxes, or 23.6 percent of the total share in 2014. That same year, immigrants earned \$74.2 billion, or over 23 percent of all income earned by New Jersey residents.

Immigrants in New Jersey contribute to key industries, such as computer technology, healthcare and tourism. They make up 32 percent of all entrepreneurs in the state, and play a large role in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, a major component of U.S. economic growth. **These and other key statistics on immigrants in New Jersey can be found in the NAE report [here](#).**

“The Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce represents 80,000 Hispanic-owned businesses that contribute over \$12 billion to New Jersey’s economy. From 2000 to 2010, 571,000 Hispanic immigrants entrepreneurs started businesses that were essential to helping the country recover from the economic recession,” said Carlos Medina, Chairman of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. “Many of our members are proud immigrants who have come to the United States to make a better life for their families. It is time for our leaders in Washington to work together to create real and meaningful immigration reform so the American dream can be a reality for more hardworking immigrants.”

"The success of New Jersey's economy is critically dependent on immigrant skill and labor. Subtract out the immigrant factor, and you're apt to see economic stagnation, population loss and higher levels of unemployment," added Dr. Nicholas V. Montalto, President of Diversity Dynamics and Director of the American Immigrant Policy Portal.

NAE and the MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce organized the event. Organizations and companies that participated in the event include the Morris County Chamber of

Commerce, the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Diversity Dynamics, American Immigrant Policy Portal and the New Jersey Association of State Colleges & Universities.

The Reason for Reform campaign is launching in all 50 states today to urge Congress to take action on immigration reform. More information can be found at www.RenewOurEconomy.org.

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*About the Partnership for a **New American Economy***

*The Partnership for a **New American Economy** brings together more than 500 Republican, Democratic and Independent mayors and business leaders who support immigration reforms that will help create jobs for Americans today. The Partnership's members include mayors of more than 35 million people nationwide and business leaders of companies that generate more than \$1.5 trillion and employ more than 4 million people across all sectors of the economy, from Agriculture to Aerospace, Hospitality to High Tech and Media to Manufacturing. Partnership members understand that immigration is essential to maintaining the productive, diverse and flexible workforce that America needs to ensure prosperity over the coming generations. Learn more at www.RenewOurEconomy.org.*