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STATE CHAMBER ANNOUNCES NEBRASKA PRESS ASSOCIATION SUPPORT OF THE “FORGING NEBRASKA’S FUTURE” INITIATIVE

April 25, 2012 (Lincoln, NE) – The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is very pleased to report that the Nebraska Press Association (NPA) has agreed to be a key partner in the Forging Nebraska’s Future initiative. Forging Nebraska’s Future (FNF) is a long-term strategic planning initiative that will use a business-like model to develop action strategies to stimulate long-term economic opportunity and increase good jobs and population in Nebraska. Quite simply, FNF wants to help assure a brighter future for Nebraska’s **NE**xt Generation.

NPA members are important supporters of their local communities as well as their local chambers of commerce and the NPA is an active member of the Nebraska Chamber. The NPA will help to assure statewide coverage and dialogue about FNF issues and priorities.

Over the coming months, FNF will facilitate a dialogue across the State about the future of Nebraska. Input will come from traditional methods like town hall meetings as well as from new methods such as on-line surveying and social media. Special effort will be made to engage the **NE**xt Generation of Nebraskans (those under age 35).

No good strategic initiative is complete without meaningful data to support its conclusions and to monitor the impact of resulting actions. In 2012, FNF will release a **NE**xt Generation Score Card for Nebraska. This Score Card will offer a quantitative snapshot tracking important issues facing our State. It will include current data as well as relevant historical data and trends.

Using this data as background, FNF will begin to solicit **NE**xt Generation action ideas collected from across the State. As part of the 100th anniversary of the State Chamber, FNF will release the “100 Best Ideas for Nebraska’s Future” at the group’s 2013 annual meeting. Those 100 Best Ideas will then be filtered and prioritized into a much shorter list of specific policy and program solutions for assuring an even stronger Nebraska. The State Chamber will actively work with other organizations throughout Nebraska in taking the needed action to put the suggested policy and program solutions into place.

Early dialogue with young Nebraskans reveals that they will seek a state that, first and foremost, offers high quality jobs, a reasonable cost of living and the opportunity to live in an engaged community. They will also almost certainly desire safe streets, abundant recreational opportunities, affordable housing, clean air, an above average education system, ample arts and culture and a community with a strong sense of pride. Future Nebraska businesses will likely be looking for locations with a strong entrepreneurial spirit, reasonable cost of doing business, highly trained and dedicated workforce, easy technological and physical access to the global marketplace and an environment that is both predictable and profitable.

As part of their commitment to FNF, the NPA will provide statewide coverage of related press announcements and will offer editorial content related to FNF activities. In addition, the NPA will help to distribute the **NE**xt Generation Score Card to their subscribers across Nebraska. Finally, NPA members will actively promote opportunities for Nebraska residents to offer their respective Best Ideas for Nebraska Future.

Additional partners and supporters are being sought for this statewide effort. To learn more go to www.forgingnebraskasfuture.com.