GOVERNOR WOLF, GOVERNOR CUOMO, GOVERNOR MURPHY, GOVERNOR LAMONT, GOVERNOR CARNEY, GOVERNOR RAIMONDO, GOVERNOR BAKER ANNOUNCE MULTI-STATE COUNCIL TO GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK AND RESTORE THE ECONOMY

April 13, 2020

Economy, Press Release

Council Will Include One Health Expert, One Economic Development Expert and Respective Chiefs of Staff from Each State

Council Will Develop a Fully Integrated Regional Framework to Gradually Lift the States' Stay at Home Orders While Minimizing the Risk of Increased Spread of the Virus

New Effort Builds on the States' Ongoing Regional Approach to Combatting COVID-19

Recognizing that their states have one integrated regional economy, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf, New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont, Delaware Governor John Carney, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, and Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker today announced the creation of a multi-state council to restore the economy and get people back to work. This announcement builds on the states' ongoing regional approach to combatting the COVID-19 pandemic.

The coordinating group – comprised of one health expert, one economic development expert and the respective Chief of Staff from each state – will work together to develop a fully integrated regional framework to gradually lift the states' stay at home orders while minimizing the risk of increased spread of the virus.

The council will create this framework using every tool available to accomplish the goal of easing social isolation without triggering renewed spread – including testing, contact tracing, treatment and social distancing – and will rely on the best available scientific, statistical, social and economic information to manage and evaluate those tools.

Governor Tom Wolf said, "Our highest priority remains protecting the health and safety of Pennsylvanians. While my administration continues to take critical steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, I also recognize that we must look ahead and take a measured, careful approach to prepare for the future while ensuring that we don't undo all of our efforts. Pennsylvania will work collaboratively with our partners both in state and in surrounding states to develop a comprehensive strategy that first focuses on health but also addresses the need to gradually restore our economy."

Governor Cuomo said, "We have been collaborating closely with our neighboring states to combat this pandemic through a uniform approach to social distancing and density reduction and it has been working well. Now it is time to start opening the valve slowly and carefully while watching the infection rate meter so we don't trigger a second wave of new infections. This is not a light switch that we can just flick on and everything goes back to normal – we have to come up with a smart, consistent strategy to restart the systems we shut down and get people back to work, and to the extent possible we want to do that through a regional approach because we are a regional economy. New York is partnering with these four states to create a multi-state council that will come up with a framework based on science and data to gradually ease the stay at home restrictions and get our economy back up and running."

Governor Phil Murphy said, “No one has given more thought or is more eager to restart our economy than I am, but if we don’t get the sequencing right, we put more lives at risk,” New Jersey. Then, and only then, do we position ourselves to fully ignite our economy and get the residents of our state back to work while minimizing the danger of this disease. A coordinated, regional approach, informed by a multi-state council of experts, will help us avoid a major setback with potentially disastrous consequences. I look forward to the day when the facts on the ground allow us to ease our restrictions and move our regional economy forward.”

Governor Ned Lamont said, “One thing that’s undeniable is that this virus does not stop at the border of any county, state, or country, but the impact is the same when it comes to our respective economies and healthcare systems. Working as a regional coalition to make the right decisions will lead to the best public health results for all of our residents. We must solve these problems together.”

Governor John Carney said, “We still have a situation in Delaware that is getting worse. Infections of COVID-19 and hospitalizations are rising. Delawareans should stay home. Don’t go out in public unnecessarily. Don’t visit Delaware unless you need to see a doctor, or care for a family member. You’ll only increase everyone’s risk. At the same time, we need to look forward. We need a consistent approach for moving our states out of this crisis, when that day comes. I’m grateful for the partnership of my fellow Governors in the region. They are all working around-the-clock to prevent surges in COVID-19 cases, protect hospital capacity for the most critically-ill patients, and save lives. We’ll get through this by working together.”

Governor Gina Raimondo said, “States are taking the lead as we fight to slow the spread of coronavirus and save lives. I’m proud of the steps we’ve taken, and I’m constantly thinking about what it will take to safely reopen our economy. But we know that this virus does not recognize borders, and it’s clear we need a strong, coordinated regional approach to avoid a second wave of this disease. I’m grateful to my fellow governors for their leadership during this crisis and I’m confident that this new partnership will support our efforts to get Rhode Islanders — and all Americans — back to work safely.”

Governor Charlie Baker said, “The Baker-Polito Administration looks forward to participating in discussions with neighboring states and experts regarding the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Massachusetts also remains focused on efforts to expand testing, ensure hospital capacity and provide the necessary PPE to those on the front lines to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.”

View this information in Spanish.