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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 29, 2024

**The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) announces that it will lead a delegation of its members to Washington, DC to participate in a Reception/Forum with the United States Chamber of Commerce (USCC), Executive Leadership Council (ELC), and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Trenton, NJ, August 29, 2024. The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) announces that it will lead a delegation of its members to Washington, DC to participate in a Reception/Forum with the United States Chamber of Commerce (USCC), Executive Leadership Council (ELC), and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

“The AACCNJ is pleased to lead an invitation only, delegation to join me at a “Member Showcase” event in Washington, D.C., said John E. Harmon, Sr., Founder, President & CEO. “US Chamber President & CEO, Suzanne Clark and I have been collaborating with the members of her senior staff for some time on this joint event on behalf of AACCNJ members, this is a significant event for our members,” said Harmon.

Below is the program for the Chamber reception/forum, which will be held in The Great Hall during the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Annual Legislative Conference. The theme for the event is “*Free Enterprise: Renewing Growth and Expanding Opportunity*.” The goal is to amplify the importance of free enterprise in expanding growth and economic opportunity and highlight the importance of America’s Black-owned business, celebrate the successes of member companies.

AACCNJ members were selected to participate in this opportunity to showcase their business; it also affords the AACCNJ a platform to present the diverse industry representation and the capacity of our members to those in attendance. There will be one on one engagements and tables reserved to display information for participating organizations, and networking opportunities before and after the mainstage conversation.

#### **Event Details:**

The reception/forum will be held on Friday, September 13 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm in The Great Hall. The event will include a mainstage conversation, and tabletop exhibits highlighting 20-25 Black-owned businesses from New Jersey.

The audience will be comprised of approximately 400 persons to include CBC Leaders, African American C-Suite Executives, Heads of Government Affairs Offices, Chief Diversity Officers, Vice Presidents of Procurement, Trade Association Executives, and other stakeholders.

## **Program Agenda:**

### **RECEPTION**

4:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### **REMARKS & INTRODUCTIONS**

4:30 p.m. - 4:35 p.m.

Rick C. Wade, Senior Vice President, Strategic Alliances & Outreach, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

### **KEYNOTE FIRESIDE CHAT**

4:35 p.m. – 4:55 p.m.

*“Free Enterprise: Renewing Growth and Expanding Opportunity”*

- The Honorable Steven Horsford, Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus
- Michael Hyter, President & Chief Executive Officer, Executive Leadership Council
- John E. Harmon, Sr., Founder, President & CEO, African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey
- Moderated by Suzanne Clark, President & Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Chamber of Commerce or Neil Bradley, Executive Vice President, Chief Policy Officer, and Head of Strategic Advocacy

### **CLOSING REMARKS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

4:55 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Carmen West, Vice President, Equality of Opportunity Initiative, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

### **RECEPTION**

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### **Background:**

In January 2024, the CBC sent a “Corporate Accountability Letter” to Fortune 500 companies asking them to reaffirm their commitments to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and share updates on their 2020 commitments; provide a progress report on the promises made; and advise on ways companies and the CBC can collaborate legislatively to close the racial wealth gap. In addition, the CBC proposed to continue its evaluation of Corporate America through an equity scorecard and hearings to assess progress. To provide member value, the U.S. Chamber met with CBC Chairman Steven Horsford and others, convened member companies to help address their concerns, and comprised a survey to capture how they would respond. CBC Chairman Steven Horsford will soon release the survey findings, which are expected to be positive. The CBC Foundation’s 53rd Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), sponsored by Amazon, will take place September 11-15, 2024, in Washington, D.C. The ALC is a unique platform where thought leaders, legislators, influencers, and concerned citizens converge to discuss and address critical issues, forge partnerships, and promote the political, economic, and social advancement of Black communities. Last year’s conference attracted 12,000 participants.

### **Partners:**

#### ***U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC)***

The U.S. Chamber is the world’s largest business organization. Its members range from the large businesses and chambers of commerce across the country that support communities, to the leading industry associations and global corporations that innovate and solve for the world’s challenges, to the emerging and fast-growing industries that are shaping the future. The Chamber is an ally and champion for businesses on Capitol Hill, in the courts, in the state houses, and in the markets around the world.

#### ***Executive Leadership Council (ELC)***

The Executive Leadership Council (<https://www.elcinfo.com/about/>) is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1986 that opens channels of opportunity for the development of Black executives to positively impact business and communities. Under the leadership of President & CEO Mike Hyter, ELC’s CEO Advisory Council includes Rosalind Brewer; Thasunda Brown-Duckett, President & CEO of TIAA; Frank Clyburn, CEO and Board Director of International Flavors & Fragrances; Marvin Ellison, Chairman, President and CEO of Lowe’s Companies, Inc.; and David Rawlinson II, President & CEO of Qurate Retail, Inc. To be eligible for membership in the preeminent membership organization,

candidates must qualify as one of the following: 1) Senior-level black executive, defined as CEO, C-suite executives, and those reporting to C-suite executives (i.e., within two positions of the enterprise-wide CEO) at a Fortune 1000/Global 500 corporation or company with equivalent annual revenues; 2) Senior-level black executive, as defined above, at a professional services firm equivalent to a Fortune 1000/Global 500 corporation; 3) Black executives serving on the Board of Directors of a Fortune 1000/Global 500 corporation or equivalent; or 4) Black entrepreneur of a top-tier company with minimum annual revenue of \$200 million.

### ***About the Congressional Black Caucus***

Since its establishment in 1971, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has been committed to using the full Constitutional power, statutory authority, and financial resources of the federal government to ensure that African Americans and other marginalized communities in the United States have the opportunity to achieve the American Dream. The Caucus is Chaired by Congressman Steven Horsford. As part of this commitment, the CBC has fought for the past 50 years to empower these citizens and address their legislative concerns by pursuing a policy agenda that includes but is not limited to the following:

- reforming the criminal justice system and eliminating barriers to reentry;
- combatting voter suppression;
- expanding access to world-class education from pre-k through post-secondary level;
- expanding access to quality, affordable health care and eliminating racial health disparities;
- expanding access to 21st century technologies, including broadband;
- strengthening protections for workers and expanding access to full, fairly-compensated employment;
- expanding access to capital, contracts, and counseling for minority-owned businesses; and
- promoting U.S. foreign policy initiatives in Africa and other countries that are consistent with the fundamental right of human dignity.

For the 118th Congress, the CBC has a historic 60 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, representing more than 120 million Americans, 25.3 percent of the total U.S. population, and more than 20 million African-Americans, 41 percent of the total U.S. African-American population. In addition, the CBC represents almost a fourth of the House Democratic Caucus.

### ***African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ)***

The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) is dedicated to economically empowering and sustaining African American communities and businesses through entrepreneurship and capitalistic initiatives throughout the state of New Jersey and through its partnership with the National Black Chamber of Commerce, Inc. AACCNJ joins the top 3% of all chambers in the U.S. that are accredited, is the only accredited chamber in New Jersey, and is the only accredited African American chamber in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Federation.

The AACCNJ performs an essential role in the economic viability of New Jersey. While providing a platform for New Jersey's African American business leaders, to speak with a collective voice, the AACCNJ advocates and promotes economic diversity fostering a climate of business growth through major initiatives centering on education and public policy. The Chamber serves as a proactive advocacy group with a 501(c) 3 tax exemption, which is shared by the National Black Chamber of Commerce.