

## **APPENDIX B-9: FOCUS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This section summarizes the results of a series (29) of focus discussions with the state and business leaders from the following types of organizations:

- State government officials
- New Jersey businesses
- Economic development authorities
- Elected official associations

The questions posed to the individuals interviewed included but were not limited to:

### **IDENTIFICATION**

1. What is the name of your association/agency/department?
2. What is your name and position within the association?
3. Describe your primary responsibilities within the association.

### **COMPARISON**

1. Based on your past experiences, what do you believe are the most important issues in creating and establishing a business friendly environment in the states?
2. What do you see as the biggest challenges for states in creating and maintaining a positive business environment?
3. Name some states you see as leaders in attracting and maintaining a positive business environment? What are some key factors that contribute to this?
4. Name some states you see as challenged in attracting and maintaining a positive business environment? What are some key factors that contribute to this?

### **PUBLIC POLICY**

1. Name some public policy initiatives that your association has noticed states using to create a more business friendly environment.
2. Has your association proposed any best practice public policy initiatives to the states?
3. What other initiatives or programs has your association either created or been involved with to promote a more business friendly environment in the state?
4. Do any particular states stand out to you as leaders in effective business policy?

### **REGULATORY AFFAIRS**

1. What regulatory policies have you noticed in the states that have had a positive or negative impact on business environments?
2. How significant of an issue is litigation and tort reform in the states?
3. Do you have any proposed association best practices on state regulatory affairs?
4. Do any particular states stand out to you as leaders in effective regulatory policy?

#### **TAX POLICY**

1. Have you seen any correlation between the tax policy in states and market attractiveness for businesses?
2. Name some of the major tax incentives in the states that contributed to state successes without harming state budgets?
3. Do you have any proposed association best practices on state tax policy?
4. Do any particular states stand out to you as leaders in effective tax policy?

#### **INNOVATION**

1. What are some of the positive steps that you have seen states take to increase patents and research?
2. Based on past experiences, how do you believe states can better increase innovation?
3. Do you have any proposed association best practices on increasing innovation?
4. What states do you currently see as leaders in innovation?

#### **WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION**

1. What are some of the steps you have seen states take to increase the quality and education of their workforce?
2. What steps have you seen states take to better align the business and organized labor communities?
3. Do you have any proposed association best practices on workforce and education issues?
4. What states do you currently view as leaders in workforce and education?

#### **COST OF MARKET ENTRY**

1. What are some factors you see as obstacles for companies to establish a business presence in a state?
2. What can states do better to attract businesses?
3. What states do you currently view as leaders in attracting new businesses?

**FINAL QUESTIONS**

1. How do you view New Jersey's overall business environment as compared to other states?
2. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about state business environments?