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**Virginia Recognized Among 'Five Best States to Start a Business'
– Governor Kaine highlights national ranking by U.S. News & World Report
for Virginia's "favorable and innovative climate" for entrepreneurs –**

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today highlighted Virginia's ranking among the "Five Best States to Start a Business." The recognition by U.S. News & World Report this week comes on the heels of the Commonwealth's sixth number one ranking for its pro-business environment.

"The latest accolades accorded the Commonwealth demonstrate that Virginia remains a power player among business-friendly states," said Governor Kaine. "As we work to get our economy back on track, it's great to be recognized for continuing to attract innovative businesses to Virginia."

"Virginia makes a great effort to assist in the establishment of small businesses with programs that streamline the startup process and connect entrepreneurs with resources," said Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade, Patrick Gottschalk. "Our business one stop electronic business formation system is continually growing in popularity with Virginia's entrepreneurs."

From U.S. News & World Report: "Virginia- This state is not just "purple" in its voting patterns. Like blue states such as Massachusetts, It mixes the highly educated workforce and technological sophistication. And like red states such as Texas, Virginia is known for its low taxes. This state boasts the highest number of information technology jobs in non-IT industries as a total share of jobs, which indicates that Virginia's businesses are more technologically advanced than businesses in other states."

Virginia has been recognized as the most business-friendly state six times under the leadership of Governor Kaine. Last month, Pollina Corporate Real Estate Inc., a top U.S. corporate site relocation expert, ranked Virginia first in its annual study of pro-business states, marking the third time for the third time overall. During Governor Kaine's administration, Virginia has also been recognized as the most business-friendly state in America (Forbes.com 2006-2008), one of the best states for business (CNBC 2007 and 2008), the top-performing state government in America (*Governing Magazine* 2008) and the state where "a child is most likely to have a successful life (*Education Week* 2007)."

To compile their report, U.S. News & World Report examined two leading studies that measure a state's ability to promote entrepreneurship: the 2008 New State Economy Index from the Kauffman Foundation and the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, and 2008's Small Business Survival Index from the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council.

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