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FOR RELEASE:
IMMEDIATE, Tuesday
January 15, 2002

GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES REVISIONS TO ONONDAGA EMPIRE ZONE
Revised Boundary will Help Create and Retain Thousands of Jobs in Onondaga County

Governor George E. Pataki today announced the approval of revisions to the existing boundaries of the Onondaga County Empire Zone. The revised boundaries will allow for the inclusion of 11 additional companies, clear the way for more than \$127 million in new investment, and support the retention of approximately 2,210 jobs and the creation of 1,555 new jobs.

"These smart revisions to the Onondaga County Empire Zone will help create and retain thousands of jobs and provide a tremendous boost for the local economy," Governor Pataki said. "By making these adjustments to the existing Empire Zone, we can stimulate new private sector investment and increase the competitiveness of our local firms. A crucial goal in light of the national economic downturn."

The Empire Zone program was significantly enhanced last year to provide businesses that create new jobs in the zones with added incentives that make doing business essentially "tax-free." These benefits include a credit for property taxes paid, a sales-tax exemption on the purchase of property or services used by the business, and a tax credit for business taxes paid.

Among the employers that will benefit from the revisions are: Solvay Paperboard, which plans to invest over \$50 million and create 84 new jobs; ICM Corporation, which plans to invest over \$4 million and create 344 new jobs; Syracuse Plastics, which plans to invest over \$4 million and create 55 new jobs; Welch Allyn, which plans to invest \$15 million and create 60 new jobs; and Hand Held Products, which plans on investing over \$9 million and create 60 new jobs.

Senator John DeFrancisco said, "These revisions to the existing Empire Zone boundaries in Onondaga County make great sense, and the Governor is to be applauded for announcing his approval of them. The new high-wage industrial jobs that will be created will, in time, contribute greatly to the central New York economy."

Senator Nancy Lorraine Hoffmann said, "I applaud Governor Pataki's action to help stimulate the central New York economy by working with local government and economic development agencies to help create more jobs."

Assemblywoman Joan Christensen said, "Empire Zone projects are an essential part of rebuilding the upstate economy. These projects create jobs and inspire innovation. I am confident that the investments in new jobs and technology made by the companies benefiting from these revisions will help pave the way to a full economic recovery in our area."

Assemblyman Hal Brown said, "These improvements to the Onondaga County Empire Zone are positive ones for our community, for area job growth and for our economic vitality. I congratulate the Governor for his continuing commitment to business development opportunities in Upstate."

Onondaga County Executive Nicholas J. Pirro said, "The Governor's latest initiative to revise our Empire Zone will be a stimulus for more jobs and provide the opportunity for local successful

businesses and corporations like Solvay Paperboard, Welch Allyn, Hand Held Products, ICM Corporation, and Syracuse Plastics to expand their commitment to the citizens of Onondaga County."

Charles A. Gargano, Chairman of Empire State Development, which administers the Empire Zones program, said, "By changing the boundaries of the Onondaga County Empire Zone, we can help stimulate the local economy by laying the foundation for additional investment, development, and economic growth. This will directly contribute to the creation and retention of hundreds of jobs for local residents."

Currently, there are 62 Empire Zones across the State. While each zone is limited to 2 square miles, boundaries can be revised to reflect a change in circumstances, such as business expansions or new business development opportunities. Since its enactment last year, the Empire Zone program has been extremely successful, sparking new investment across the state.

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