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Clean Environment Key to Economy, Philadelphians Tell Pollster; Mayoral Candidates' Position on Environment Very Important to Residents and Business Owners

Philadelphia, PA—(May 22, 2006)—In a newly conducted poll, Philadelphia's business leaders and residents agreed that environmental damage is harming the city and that protecting the environment is vital to growing the region's economy. Participants in the poll also called the environment a crucial issue for the next mayor, and residents said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who addresses the issue. The poll was performed by Terry Madonna Opinion Research for Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture), on behalf of a broad coalition of citizens groups working together as part of the *Next Great City* initiative.

"Both business leaders and residents recognize that Philadelphia's damaged environment hurts the city's economy and that improving the natural and physical environment will yield positive economic benefits for the city," said G. Terry Madonna, who conducted the poll of 204 Philadelphia businesses and 604 residents. "Overwhelmingly, 92 percent of Philadelphians believe that environmental and infrastructure improvements are necessary to improve the area's economic competitiveness and growth."

The poll highlights the various ways Philadelphia's residents and businesses are being harmed by environmental problems. For example, 17 percent have had a family member miss work or school because of breathing related issues, and more than one in five have had a basement flood after a storm. Philadelphians also believe the city does too little to protect the air, water, parks and land; and both businesses and residents want stricter laws and better enforcement

"An astonishing 85 percent of voters reported that they are more likely to vote for a candidate for Mayor who made improving the city's environment and its sewer, water and transportation infrastructures a top priority," continued Madonna, a noted expert in Pennsylvania politics and voting behavior. "The importance of this in the Mayor's race echoes in both the business community and voters -- 48 percent of business leaders and 56 percent of voters think improving Philadelphia's environment should be the top or one of the most important issues for the next mayor."

PennFuture commissioned the poll on behalf of organizations working together as *Next Great City*, which aims to create and implement a common-sense city environmental and public health action plan to attract investment, jobs and people. The *Next Great City* initiative has the support of Philadelphia's community, faith and business organizations, and political and civic leaders.

Organizations participating in the *Next Great City* initiative include the Audubon Society, Clean Air Council, Clean Water Action, Delaware Valley Green Building Council, the Energy Coordinating Agency, Free the Schuylkill River Park, PennEnvironment, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, PenTrans, Philadelphia Parks Alliance, Sierra Club of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania.

The poll was conducted by Terry Madonna Opinion Research of Lancaster between late February and early March of 2006. The sample error for the residential survey is plus or minus 4.0 percent and the sample error for the business survey is plus or minus 6.9 percent. Final survey results were weighted to adjust for different selection probabilities and non-response. A copy of the poll is available at www.nextgreatcity.org.

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