

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 16, 2019

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Washington, DC – Business Forward today announced four new working groups of business leaders and seasoned policy experts to produce specific, actionable recommendations and brief 2020 presidential candidates on infrastructure, foreign policy, the future of work, and small business policy.

“Business owners and leaders should inform every decision the next president makes,” explained Jim Doyle, Business Forward president. “Business Forward Policy Working Groups will put real-world recommendations from thousands of business leaders across the country directly into the hands of 2020 candidates and their policy teams.”

The partnerships and working groups announced today are focused on critical policy areas that affect all Americans. Each is led in partnership with expert organizations and policy leaders. Teams of business leaders will contribute to building solutions in the following areas:

**Infrastructure Policy Group:** Led by former Deputy Secretary of Transportation John D. Porcari, Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, and former Assistant Secretary of Transportation Carlos Monje, business leaders in the Infrastructure Policy Working Group will focus on how to fix America’s outdated infrastructure and ensure we are prepared for the technology of tomorrow.

“Infrastructure is a foundational investment in the future, a down payment on a better economy today and for generations to follow,” explained Mr. Porcari. “Public officials need to take a strategic approach to ensure investments achieve larger goals, like a better quality of life, environmental improvement, and equality of opportunity. We also need to ensure that new investments can adapt to today’s rapidly changing technology.”

**Foreign Policy Working Group:** Business Forward, in concert with National Security Action, is forming a Foreign Policy Working Group, which will focus on the domestic economic impact of American foreign policy. Jake Sullivan, former national security advisor for Vice President Biden and former director of policy planning at the State Department, will lead the first working group briefing focusing on America’s global leadership and the current decline in foreign investment.

“America’s foreign policy has become insufficiently attentive to the needs and aspirations of the American middle class,” explained Mr. Sullivan. “Understanding the perspective of local business leaders is important to help ensure the values that guide our foreign policy are consistent with the values and priorities that drive our domestic economic agenda.”

Future of Work Policy Group: In partnership with the Future of Work Initiative at the Aspen Institute under the leadership of Executive Director Al Fitzpayne and Massachusetts State Senator Eric Lesser, the Future of Work policy group will focus on interventions to address changes in technology, automation, and the labor market. Faculty at the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan will add to the group’s work.

Small Business Policy and Access to Capital: Michael Barr, former Assistant Secretary of Treasury and current Dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, and Marie Johns, former Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration and current Managing Member of Leftwich LLC, will lead this group focused on developing recommendations for how the next president can be a champion for small business and expand access to capital, opportunity, and entrepreneurship.

These groups are part of Business Forward’s Solutions 2020 program, an ambitious effort to help local business leaders brief presidential candidates, their campaign staff, and other policymakers likely to shape the 2020 race.

To date, Business Forward’s Solutions 2020 project has held business leader calls with four presidential candidates, Senators Cory Booker, Kamala Harris and Amy Klobuchar, and Representative John Delaney and a call with investor and philanthropist Tom Steyer.

“We’re already working with the majority of 2020 candidates and their campaign teams,” explained Ed Meier, who directed Hillary Clinton’s policy outreach efforts in 2016 and manages Business Forward’s policy working groups. “Candidates value the real-world recommendations our network of local business leaders provide – and how we equip those community leaders to make the case for reform through case studies, issues briefs, social and earned media.”

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#### ABOUT BUSINESS FORWARD

With the help of more than 60 of America’s most respected companies, Business Forward is making it easier for more than 100,000 business leaders from across America to advise Washington on how to grow our economy and expand economic opportunity. Business Forward is active in more than 125 cities and has worked with more than 650 mayors, governors, members of Congress, and senior Administration officials.