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CONTACT:

Marcus Rayner

(609) 392-6557

mrayner@njlra.org

New Jersey Lawsuit Reform Alliance Sees Disturbing Trend in State's Civil Justice System

Trenton (April, 2008) – The New Jersey Lawsuit Reform Alliance (NJLRA), a statewide, bipartisan group committed to improving New Jersey's civil justice system, released the following statement regarding the Institute for Legal Reform's (ILR) 2008 State Liability Systems Ranking Study. New Jersey slipped nine spots in the annual ILR rankings and now hovers near the bottom of state legal climates at 35th of the 50 states.

“ILR's latest ranking study confirms what NJLRA has been hearing from employers large and small across our state: that our civil justice system is headed in the wrong direction. It's no secret that a bad legal climate is bad for business and bad for consumers.

“Predictability of judges, non-economic damages and the overall treatment of tort and contract litigation were areas where New Jersey fared the worst in the study, barely receiving a passing grade by the study's respondents. These are some of the very reasons why NJLRA was created by concerned employers in New Jersey. These are also some of the key issues that we are encouraging Trenton's lawmakers and our courts to address through legal reform measures.

“The ILR study is just the latest proof point to raise alarm about New Jersey's civil justice system. Last month, the Pacific Research Institute's U.S. Tort Liability Index found that our state had nearly the worst tort system in the nation, ranking New Jersey 49th. Earlier this month, *Forbes* magazine called Atlantic County one of the worst places to get sued in the nation. NJLRA's own survey of employers, conducted late last year, found that the deteriorating legal climate is a serious concern that has led some employers to consider leaving the state.

Employers, lawmakers and citizens across the state should be concerned about this disturbing trend. We are all feeling the effects of a flagging economy, but we must not ignore the fact that a fair and predictable legal system is critical for attracting and retaining employers and building the tax base of New Jersey.”

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The New Jersey Lawsuit Reform Alliance (NJLRA) is a statewide, bipartisan group of businesses, individuals and organizations committed to improving the State's civil justice system by advocating for legal reforms in the legislature and in the courts. NJLRA believes a balanced civil justice system is critical to ensuring fair and open courts, maintaining and attracting jobs and fostering economic growth in New Jersey. NJLRA is the only organization in New Jersey dedicated exclusively to civil justice reform.