

News Release - For Immediate Release

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ARIZONA EMPLOYERS FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM (AZEIR) STATEMENT ON RECALL OF RUSSELL PEARCE

On Tuesday November 8th, voters in Arizona Legislative District 18 changed their state senator. In a special recall election over 12,000 Republican, Independent and Democratic voters chose Republican Jerry Lewis to replace Russell Pearce. While many see this election as a referendum on immigration policy alone, in reality it was also a referendum on style, substance and the failure to address other critical issues important to our state.

We believe the voters for whom immigration was an important issue recognized the differences between Pearce and Lewis and voted accordingly. Many viewed Sen. Pearce's "enforcement only" approach as incomplete and economically damaging to our state. They recognized Lewis' practical and balanced perspective and his call for a permanent federal solution as the only effective way to secure the border, while providing access to essential labor and addressing the questions of how to deal with those who are already here.

As Arizona's oldest business organization focused on finding sensible immigration solutions, AZEIR welcomes Lewis' fresh and much-needed change in approach to solving this critically important problem.

Whether the results of Tuesday's election will reverberate around the country remains to be seen. We hope it does. We hope business leaders and elected officials in other states will see that talking about sensible immigration solutions is safe. We hope political parties and candidates realize elections can be won with this approach. The voters of LD18 said they want a solution to the problem, not the continuation of failed and ineffective immigration strategies, and they made their preferences known at the ballot box.

Regardless of the outcome of Tuesday's election, AZEIR is dedicated to working with elected officials and Congressional delegations to find the best possible solution to this multi-faceted issue. We look forward to working with Senator-elect Lewis and the other members of our state legislature to achieve sensible and practical immigration laws and policies.

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