

Delaware Earns Universal Triple-A Marks from Credit Rating Agencies

Wilmington, DE – Highlighting the state’s fiscally responsible approach, all three credit ratings agencies announced this week that Delaware has received a triple-A credit rating, the highest mark a government agency can achieve.

In issuing their determinations, Moody’s Investors Service, Fitch Ratings, and Standard & Poor’s Rating Services recognized the strength of Delaware’s economy and labor market, as well as the state’s fiscal practices, such as maintaining significant reserves and providing frequent revenue forecasts. Moody’s specifically noted the addition of 9,600 new jobs in the last year, including steady growth in the state’s financial sector. The agency also mentioned strong financial management “characteristics” and “policies” to support the rating decision.

Fitch echoes those findings, adding that Delaware’s recent employment growth has exceeded the nation’s. Fitch reports that “growth through August 2014 has been very positive with the state recording a 2.7 percent year-over-year employment growth rate compared to 1.8 percent for the nation.”

“The reports released by the agencies affirm our progress in strengthening Delaware’s economy, while budgeting responsibly,” said Governor Jack Markell. “Combined with job growth that has consistently outpaced the national average and the recognition of Delaware as one of the [top two states for the new economy](#), the triple-A ratings show Delaware is well-positioned for continued success. However, our work is never finished. We must continue efforts to ensure our workers have skills they need to compete for jobs and our entrepreneurs

have the support they need to start and expand their companies.”

In its analysis, Standard and Poor’s pointed to Delaware’s “relatively diverse economy,” “strong financial and budget management,” “consistently strong general fund reserves,” “moderate overall debt burden,” and “well-funded pension system.”

Delaware has now earned the top rating from all agencies for the past 14 years, including through the recent economic recession and ongoing recovery.

“Delaware has maintained its triple-A ratings through some challenging economic cycles in large measure due to our disciplined adherence to responsible fiscal practices,” said Secretary of Finance Thomas J. Cook. “Confirmation of our rating translates to the lowest cost of capital, which permits greater investment in the essential infrastructure that is essential to attracting new business and spurring job creation.”