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Progressive Policy Groups to Join Forces

Raleigh--Two of North Carolina's leading sources for progressive public policy, the North Carolina Justice Center and North Carolina Policy Watch, announced today that they are joining forces.

"Our two organizations share the same guiding objective – to bring about social, political and economic justice in North Carolina," said Justice Center Executive Director Melinda Lawrence.

Under the terms of the agreement, NC Policy Watch, which is currently a project of the Raleigh-based A.J. Fletcher Foundation, will become a freestanding, special project of the Justice Center. The Fletcher Foundation will continue to provide support for Policy Watch with a four-year grant to the Justice Center.

"These are critical and contentious times in North Carolina, and the state needs strong, uncompromising voices," said Chris Fitzsimon, Director of NC Policy Watch. "By combining our efforts, we'll be able to have a bigger impact than ever before on the issues that matter most – whether it's fair and sustainable tax policy, healthcare, education, or affordable housing."

Barbara Goodmon, President of the Fletcher Foundation, stressed that each group will retain its independent identity. "Both the Justice Center and Policy Watch are respected and influential voices," said Goodmon. "We need both of them to continue to advance strong, public solutions that make North Carolina a better place for everyone – especially the most vulnerable. Our hope and expectation is that this combination will make the progressive movement more effective than ever."

The Justice Center (www.ncjustice.org) is North Carolina's leading private, nonprofit anti-poverty organization. Founded in 1996 through the merger of two former Legal Services organizations and staffed by a diverse array of professionals, the Justice Center pursues its ambitious mission through four main strategies: litigation, research and analysis, public policy advocacy and grassroots action.

Policy Watch (www.ncpolicywatch.com) is a three-year old think tank that seeks to improve the quality of life in North Carolina by presenting progressive public policy solutions to the state's most pressing problems. The project also provides support for numerous grantees of the A.J. Fletcher Foundation. It is best known for publishing and broadcasting hundreds of commentaries and policy analyses each year on a wide array of issues affecting state policy.