



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Myron Orfield, Terry Madonna top program for Building One Pennsylvania July 16

Lancaster, July 7, 2010 – Myron Orfield, a national expert on regional equity, land use and municipal governance, will be the featured speaker at Building One Pennsylvania July 16 in Lancaster. Orfield is a law professor at the University of Minnesota and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. He is familiar with the challenges of communities in Central Pennsylvania, spoken to or worked with groups in York and Lancaster counties.

Orfield will be part of a full day of speakers and panel discussions all intended to highlight the challenges of Pennsylvania's older communities. A coalition made up of organizations from across the state is trying to reframe the discussion of municipal policy. The core issues have primarily to do with reinvesting in first-ring suburbs and the downtowns of boroughs and cities, which are facing common problems: aging infrastructure, struggling schools, rising taxes, a lack of regional cooperation.

The problems in these communities show how the traditional way of running state and local government in Pennsylvania has begun to break down. There's not enough money to fund education and schools, pay for transportation and roads, and operate our courts and prisons, all while trying to balance state and local budgets. The coalition has organized the summit so that state leaders hear what communities across the state are saying on these issues and that they begin talking about finding new ways to do things.

For too long, in the rush to build more new housing developments and more new shopping centers, usually requiring new roads and new water and sewer lines, these older communities have been left behind. The groups we're working with want the state to take a step back and have a serious, thoughtful discussion on how to best allocate our tax dollars in a way that makes all of Pennsylvania a better place to live and do business.

Other speakers scheduled to appear include Terry Madonna, director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin & Marshall College; and David Troutt, professor of law and justice at Rutgers University in New Jersey. YorkCounts Director James DeBord will provide the introduction for the event, talking about YorkCounts' role in mobilizing action on these problems at the county level.

“YorkCounts has operated for years on the assumption that we here in York County can push for

change independent of whatever is happening in Harrisburg,” DeBord said. “But we’ve come to realize that there are some problems that have to be addressed at the state level, too. That’s why we’re part of Building One PA.”

Organizations involved in convening Building One Pennsylvania include 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, Good Schools Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Council of Churches, Southeastern Pennsylvania First Suburbs Project and YorkCounts.

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IF YOU GO

What: Building One Pennsylvania, a statewide summit on regional opportunity

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. July 16

Where: Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, 750 E. King St., Lancaster

How much: Registration is \$15 and includes lunch.

To register: Go to www.yorkcounts.org, and click on the Building One Pennsylvania link under “Upcoming Events.”

For more information: Contact Good Schools Pennsylvania by phone at 866-720-4086 or by e-mail at buildingonepa@gmail.com. Contact Dan Fink at YorkCounts at 717-650-1460 or at dfink@yorkcounts.org. Search for Building One Pennsylvania on Facebook, where’s there’s also a link to register online.

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YorkCounts is a community-based coalition working to assess, sustain and enhance York County's quality of life – building alliances, introducing partners, spotlighting issues and facilitating conversations on education, economic development, health and safety and diversity. Partners include Better York, the United Way of York County, WellSpan Health, York College of Pennsylvania, the York County Commissioners, the York County Community Foundation and the York County Economic Development Corp. Learn more at yorkcounts.org.

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