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**Skilled Iowa Initiative Launched to Assist Employers and Workers,
Stimulate Business Growth**

Program seen as valuable tool to attract businesses, new jobs

June 11, 2012 (Des Moines, Iowa) Governor Terry Branstad today announced the new Skilled Iowa Initiative, a program that provides assurances to employers and potential employers that local workforces have the skills and abilities to fill job openings. The initiative will promote the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) testing to potential job seekers, encourage businesses to hire certified workers when applicable, and provide resources to those looking to improve their skills.

Key supporters of the initiative joined Governor Branstad for the announcement, including Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds, Iowa Workforce Development Director Teresa Wahlert, Bill Knapp and MidAmerican Energy Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Maureen Sammon.

“The Skilled Iowa Initiative is a critical step in improving the quality of the workforce in Iowa,” said Governor Branstad. “It is important Iowa’s government, private industry and our educational system work together to find innovative solutions.”

“This program is the right move for our state,” said Director Wahlert. “Skilled Iowa provides a universal system of assessing workers’ skills and abilities for employers, as well as promoting workers’ development and improvement.”

The program will allow employers to determine baseline skills for potential employees. The program uses a universal testing system that rates the skills and abilities of those in Iowa’s workforce, awarding an NCRC upon completion of the program. The NCRC allows workers to more accurately display their skills to current and potential employers. More details are available at the website: www.skillediowa.org.

“The National Career Readiness Certificate is an effective measure of foundational skills and will help businesses confidently hire workers who are right for the job,” said Lt. Governor Reynolds. “It will help employers evaluate an individual worker’s abilities, allowing for a more accurate matching of skill sets with those required by the job.”

“MidAmerican is pleased that the state is taking this step to improve Iowa’s economic growth and business development,” said MidAmerican’s Maureen Sammon. “As a company that hires employees with very specific skill sets, we understand and appreciate the value that will be achieved by the state’s support for and promotion of the testing.”

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