

**HIGHLANDS STATE BANK AND NOBLE COMMUNITY BANK
ANNOUNCE A MERGER OF EQUALS**

Highlands State Bank and Noble Community Bank jointly announced that their Boards of Directors had approved a merger of equals transaction, pursuant to which the two institutions will merge to produce a stronger, more competitive community bank servicing the Sussex County, New Jersey market. Shareholders of Noble Community Bank will receive 0.7953 shares of Highlands State Bank common stock for each share of common stock of Noble Community Bank. The exchange ratio was based on the respective per share book value of each institution.

Mr. George E. Irwin, President and Chief Executive Officer of Highlands State Bank, stated: “This transaction represents an opportunity to join two community-based financial institutions with similar business philosophies in a way that strengthens both. Joining with Noble Community Bank enhances our position in the Sussex market, and helps position the combined franchise for growth.”

Mr. Jeff Parrott, Chairman of the Board of Noble Community Bank, added: “By joining our two organizations, we can accelerate our growth and achieve our milestones faster than either of us could independently. This transaction will produce value for our shareholders and better convenience for our customers.”

The bank resulting from the proposed transaction will continue to be known as Highlands State Bank, and will be based in Vernon, New Jersey. The Board of Directors of the resulting bank will consist of sixteen members, ten from the existing Board of Highlands State Bank and six from the existing Board of Noble Community Bank. Mr. George Irwin, the President and CEO of Highlands, will remain the President and CEO of the resulting bank. As of June 30, the combined institution would have had total assets of \$104,323,000, total loans of \$71,124,000 and total deposits of \$83,582,000 and offices located in Sparta and Vernon, New Jersey. The transaction is subject to various conditions, and is expected to close, subject to regulatory and shareholder approvals, in the fourth quarter of 2008.

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