



North Carolina's Eastern Region
3802 Highway 58 North
Kinston, NC 28504
Phone: 800-474-8499
Fax: 252-523-9017
Contact: John D. Chaffee, President and CEO

PRESS RELEASE

CCNCER Unveils Legislative Agenda

Kinston, NC, January 22, 2011 – The Chambers of Commerce of North Carolina's Eastern Region (CCNCER) unveiled its 2011 legislative agenda at a reception on February 14th at Lenoir Community College.

CCNCER began work on the legislative agenda in August of last year and met monthly to formulate the agenda. The process included bringing in experts from various fields to present information on topics identified for possible inclusion in the agenda. As a result of this process, this year's agenda focuses on issues that have regional impact and that are critical to the sustained economic growth of the region such as transportation, infrastructure, burdensome small business legislation, retroactive environmental regulation, coastal insurance rates and K-16 education and public health.

CCNCER is a coalition of Chamber Executives and business leaders from the thirteen counties that comprise NCER. The purpose of CCNCER is to foster a spirit of regionalism, to advocate on behalf of the region's businesses, and to innovatively support and leverage business and community opportunities among the chambers in the region.

The chambers that participated in formulating the 2009 legislative agenda include: Beulaville Area Chambers of Commerce, Carteret County Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Chamber

of Commerce, Greenville-Pitt Chamber of Commerce, Havelock Chamber of Commerce, Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce, Kinston-Lenoir Chamber of Commerce, New Bern Area Chamber of Commerce, Pamlico County Chamber of Commerce, Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce, Tarboro-Edgecombe Chamber of Commerce, Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, and Wilson Chamber of Commerce. Combined, these chambers represent over 7,225 businesses and nearly 200,000 employees. Involvement in CCNCER is open to all chambers of commerce in the Eastern Region.

“The 2011-2012 legislative agenda is the result of a unique collaborative effort by 13 participating chambers of commerce. The coming together enables the CCNCER to be more effective by speaking with one voice and projecting a clear and concise message to the Eastern Region’s legislative delegation,” said Ed Wilson, Chair of the CCNCER and President, retired, Wayne Community College.

In addition to developing, presenting, and advocates on behalf of the legislative agenda, CCNCER will also track the success of those items identified in the agenda. Following the unveiling of the agenda, CCNCER members will follow-up with the elected delegation in Raleigh.

North Carolina’s Eastern Region is a 13-county development commission established by the North Carolina General Assembly to promote economic growth in Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson, Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne, Greene, Duplin, Jones, Onslow, Pamlico, Craven, and Carteret Counties. The region encompasses 7,000 square miles and approximately 1 million residents.

For more information on CCNCER, contact Len Kulik, NCER Senior Vice President, at Kulik@nceast.org or (252) 522-2400.



FY 2011/2012 Legislative Agenda

The Chambers of Commerce of Beulaville ▪ Carteret County ▪ Greene County ▪ Greenville-Pitt County
▪ Havelock ▪ Jacksonville-Onslow County ▪ Kinston-Lenoir County ▪ New Bern ▪ Rocky Mount
▪ Tarboro-Edgecombe County ▪ Pamlico County ▪ Wayne County ▪ Wilson

Unanimously Request the Eastern Region's Legislative Delegation

Enact Legislation That:

- Opposes changes to the current NCDOT Equity Formula and supports acceleration of schedules and funding for Hwy 70 & Hwy 17 upgrade projects
 - The current NC Department of Transportation Equity Formula requires the equitable distribution of State Transportation Improvement Program funds among the regions.
 - Unbalanced Changes to the Equity Formula and lack of funding for long-standing improvement projects will adversely impact the long-term economic development of Eastern North Carolina.
- Exempts active duty military personnel and their dependents from new regulations/laws regarding the granting of vehicle registrations and titles to individuals with expired driver's licenses
 - Under new regulations/laws, possession of a North Carolina driver's license is not required for state residents to register and title a vehicle. A state ID is sufficient. However, active duty military personnel and their dependants with expired driver licenses cannot register or title a vehicle until their out of state license is renewed or a North Carolina driver's license or NC ID card is obtained.
 - As a result of this particular challenge, North Carolina loses business and sales tax revenue as purchases of vehicles are made out of state to avoid the current licensing requirements. In promoting North Carolina as the "Nation's Most Military Friendly State," a military ID should be sufficient to register and title a vehicle.
- Eliminates the requirement for new pre-payment thresholds and for the pre-payment of sales tax
 - Effective 1, October 2010, the pre-payment of sales tax collected by businesses increased from \$10,000 of sales tax per month to \$15,000 per month. This threshold is slated to increase again to \$20,000 of sales tax per month on October 1, 2011.
 - Only the payment of sales tax collected should be required. Prepayment of sales tax places an unreasonable and unrealistic financial burden on small-and medium-sized businesses struggling to survive in a down economy.
- Grandfathers lots sold prior to recent regulations requiring 50 foot buffer restrictions
 - Developers of residential subdivisions are required to design each project in accordance with a family of federal, state and local regulations. Developers often rely on financing for these developments based on the estimated market value of the completed project. As lots are sold to individual buyers, the purchasers often finance their acquisition with borrowed funds.
 - The retroactive application of the Buffer Rules will greatly impact the designed use of the property, significantly reduce the market value of the lots, and financially damage the current owner and developer who has unsold inventory. This has the potential to increase default rates for lending institutions that financed the developer and/or lot purchaser.

Continued on Reverse Side

- Extends the homeowners' insurance "risk pool" to include all 100 counties in the state, not just the 23 coastal counties
 - Despite historical data, insurance rates for homeowners in coastal counties have increased dramatically, while rates for interior counties have decreased. This data clearly establishes that 6 out of the 15 costliest hurricanes to hit the United States (based on property damage figures) made landfall in central and western North Carolina. Only 2 of the 15 hurricanes caused damage to Eastern North Carolina. Source: Insurance Information Institute
 - Establishes an Insurance Commission, similar to the Utilities Commission, that: makes decisions based on actuarial data over modeling, creates state-wide rate equity for HO-3 coverage, encourages public input and participation on the commission and requires public hearings on rate hike requests.

Supports:

- NC Community College System's request for \$52 million in new Enrollment/Equipment - Growth funding and no cuts above the estimated 10 %/\$107 million proposed reduction requested by Governor Perdue
 - The 2011/12 fiscal year will be the most difficult budget in the System's history and comes at a time when demands on the colleges are at an all-time high.
 - A trained and competitive workforce is necessary to combat the extended recession, attract new industry and support existing business. The nationally ranked Community College Customized Training Program is arguably one the best incentives in the state's economic development toolbox.
- Current levels of funding for More at Four and Smart Start programs
 - A recent study of multi-year results by UNC's Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute established that "former More at Four students scored higher on state standardized math and reading tests given at end of third grade than did poor children who did not enroll in the program." Chairman Bill Harrison stated, "It's pretty clear the advantage of having preschool experience, particularly for those youngsters who are disadvantaged."
- East Carolina University's School of Dental Medicine's request for \$3.5 million
 - The ECU School of Dental Medicine is developing a national model for dental education that will recruit students from rural, underserved communities, provide students with an innovative curriculum needed to work in those areas and create 8 to 10 dental /oral health delivery centers in dentally underserved communities across the state.
 - The School of Dental Medicine at ECU requires \$3.5 million of recurring operating funds in order to open the school and begin implementing its service mission in the state.

For more information contact:
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