

**Economic Development Board Inaugural Meeting
Sept. 10, 2009**

- **~10 minute remarks**
 - **Inaugural meeting of this administration's Economic Development Board**
-

Welcome and recognize:

- Mayor Joines, board chairman
- Sec. (Keith) Crisco and Deputy Sec. (Dale) Carroll
- Secs. (Ken) Lay and (Elaine) Marshall
- Dr. Scott Ralls
- All of the legislators here
- And everyone with us today

The work we're starting today could not come at a more important time for NC.

Like many states in America, NC has been deeply impacted by this global recession. We've faced steep job losses in every county — leading to high unemployment across the state and the largest budget shortfall in our state's history.

NC had one of the worst state budget shortfalls in the country this year: \$4.7 billion.

Despite the blow we've been dealt by the global recession, we are poised for recovery because NC has some of the best economic development pieces in America.

But those pieces are split up into many silos. **My goal is to break down the walls of those silos and make the pieces fit together in a single, powerful and well-coordinated economic development machine.**

You are my first Economic Development Board — I hand-picked many of you. My charge to you is to come up with a plan that:

- integrates and maximizes all of NC's economic development tools
- and helps position NC to grow a robust global 21st century economy.

This plan will be the blueprint for my administration's legislative and economic agenda.

In particular, there are several critical challenges I want you to look at.

As our economy continues to globalize and becomes more and more competitive — we in NC must figure out what we need to do to become the most competitive and attractive state in America and in the world for business.

To reach that goal, we must:

1. ensure we have the infrastructure and incentives at the state and local levels to spur growth within our state — and attract business from outside the state or even country

2. We must streamline and maximize our economic development efforts to ensure we get the maximum value with no duplication
3. We must come up with the best way for NC to market itself to the nation and world
4. We must lay the foundation for key emerging industries to flourish in our state: Green, Defense, Aerospace, Advanced materials, and High-value manufacturing.
5. And we must make sure that regardless of how our economy changes in the next year, five, ten, twenty years — NC is positioned for innovation, adaptation and economic success.

For the past seven out of eight years, NC has been ranked as having the top business climate in the country, and we must build on that success.

Now let me speak specifically to NC's economic majority — small businesses.

Small businesses are vital to our state's economy, and you and I must come up with more ways to create, recruit and grow small business jobs in NC.

We must:

1. ensure we have a tax structure that allows small businesses to flourish,
2. We must provide hands-on assistance to help small businesses get started and help those that are struggling to succeed.
3. We should explore recruiting promising new small businesses to grow, succeed and stay in NC
4. And we must work at the community level through programs such as Main Street Solutions to help home grown businesses succeed locally.

A key part of growing small businesses — and really growing jobs all across NC — is harnessing NC’s spirit of innovation.

Innovation really is critical to our vision for NC’s economic future. That’s why I intend to create an Innovation Council that draws together science, technology and other experts to make policy recommendations for how we can build our innovation economy.

I charge you to become deeply involved in that effort as well.

NC must also find ways to attract more venture capital funding — and to smooth the path for good ideas to go from the lab to the marketplace.

Our goal — mine and yours — is to attract entrepreneurs from across the globe as we brand NC as the “State of Innovation.”

But let me remind you: **Those goals — for recruitment, small business, innovation to build a robust 21st century economy— aren’t possible without a strong education system.**

We must promise our kids more than an education —
we should promise them a career.

To do that, we need to:

1. ensure all our kids everywhere in NC get an education
that lets them work in careers anywhere in the world
2. make technology an integral part of learning
3. focus on low-performing schools and increase
graduation rates
4. and promote a seamless, affordable education system
— from a student's first day in school to their final
graduation.

If we want NC to compete in the global economy we must ensure our students — our future workers — have the education and skills they need to get any job anywhere in the world, and to bring those jobs to NC.

Your diverse experiences and skills give you the unique ability to tackle the great challenges we face. I know you are the right group to come up with a plan to:

- **make NC's economic development pieces work together**
- **help NC become the best place in the world to do business**

- **to create, recruit and grow small business jobs**
- **and to brand NC as the “state of innovation”**

I expect an outline of that plan by Jan. 31 of next year.

And I expect you to give your all to this group. I will give mine.

This work is so important to NC — to me — that I have asked my deputy chief of staff — Don Hobart, who is a jobs and economy expert — to serve you in any way you need, 24-7 from now until Jan. 31.

Then Don will work with you on an aggressive legislative agenda for the 2010 session.

NC has always been a state of visionaries.

In the 1950s, NC was the 2nd poorest state in America.

Now we are the #1 business climate, #3 in biotech, and have a highly skilled workforce.

We must continue to build on that progress and keep moving NC forward.

And I remain optimistic that in the end, as the economy recovers, **NC will come out on top — positioned for global competitiveness for years to come.**