



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRIORITIES

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

- Request \$2 million in nonrecurring funding for two years for the Summer Literacy Initiative and authorize the NC Rural Center as the fiscal agent.
- Safe, affordable, accessible and high-quality early childhood education to promote cognitive and social development for primary school readiness. Additionally, all North Carolina families need access to safe, affordable, high-quality child care options to remain active in the workforce.
- Advocate for adopting the Propel NC model to align North Carolina Community College System program funding to North Carolina's most urgent workforce needs. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Community College System.*
- Support \$10 million in recurring funding to the Short Term Workforce Development Grant Program to meet demand. *Coordinated with MyFuture NC.*
- Support \$5 million in recurring funding for community technical assistance grants for cross-sector collaborations that leverage local leadership, existing initiatives and partnerships, and innovative new approaches aimed at increasing educational attainment. *Coordinated with MyFuture NC.*
- Support legislation to advance funding models for public schools to ensure all public schools and students have the resources and instruction to be successful.
- Support the adoption of fair, effective assessments and accountability policies for primary and secondary schools receiving public funding.
- Support programs and resources that provide families access to safe, affordable high quality childcare options.
- Support the Advanced Teachers Model and teacher apprenticeship model. *Coordinated with BESTNC.*
- Support the adoption of Universal Free School Meals. *Coordinated with the NC Alliance for Health.*
- Support continuation and complete implementation of the NC Promise initiative to ensure affordable and accessible secondary education opportunities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Support legislation and funding to promote the deployment of broadband internet, as well as programming that encourages the adoption, training, and device availability for rural citizens. Federal funding already committed to broadband should be fully utilized.
- Support \$3.9 million in recurring funding to the NCARCOG to continue and build the capacity of the NCARCOG's disaster resiliency training efforts (e.g. local financial administration training, technical assistance to communities during post-disaster recovery periods, creation of disaster recovery plans, etc.) and conduct hazard mitigation planning. This will help smaller units of local governments with limited capacity to financially prepare for natural disasters and apply for emergency recovery grants. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Association of Regional Counties of Government (NCARCOG).*
- Support the timely commitment and expenditure of federal disaster recovery resources and equitable investments in both the eastern and western regions for disaster recovery and resiliency planning.
- Support solutions that enhance the sustainability and viability of aging water and wastewater systems by addressing physical infrastructure maintenance, organizational management, potential for regionalization, and financial management, as well as ongoing research and solutions to address growing concerns related to PFAS levels, other contaminants, and other water quality concerns.
- Support solutions that responsibly increase the supply of affordable housing in rural communities, including both rental properties and opportunities for home ownership.

HEALTH

- Support training, financial incentives, and workforce development programming to address Health Provider Shortage Area designations in all 78 rural counties.
- Support \$1 million in recurring funding to the NC Area Health Education Centers (NCAHEC). *Coordinated with NCAHEC.*
- Advocate for granting full practice authority to Registered Nurse Practitioners by passing the APRN Full Practice Authority Act to alleviate health provider shortages experienced by all 78 rural counties. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Nurses Association.*

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Request \$5 million in recurring funding every two years to continue the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Grants Program first established in the FY2021-2023 Budget (Ch. SL 2021-180). This program is administered by the NC Rural Center and available to certified CDFIs operating in NC and providing small business loans to NC businesses across the state.
- Support \$11 million in recurring and \$11 million in nonrecurring funding in FY2025-2026 and \$12 million in recurring and \$12 million in nonrecurring funding in FY2026-2027 to the One North Carolina Small Business Program to elevate North Carolina's small businesses' competitive edge for federal R&D grants. *Coordinated with the One North Carolina Small Business Program at the NC Department of Commerce, Office of Science, Technology, and Innovation.*
- Support \$15 million in recurring funding for Rural Transformation Grants and appropriate \$8 million in recurring funding to increase funding for the Rural Infrastructure Authority grants. *Coordinated with the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division.*
- Support the 2023 & 2024 EDPNC studies, invest in North Carolina's greatest economic need – product funding development by supporting the Selectsite Readiness and Megasite Readiness Programs. Selectsite product development initiatives are critical to rural economic development. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Economic Development Association.*
- Support \$3.95 million in recurring funding for COGs to create a financial administration program to employ 32 additional finance professionals in the 16 regions that can be deployed to assist small local governments with meeting state and national accounting and financial administration standards. This program will serve 60 to 120 local governments with priority for units with limited means and those units on the LGC's Unit Assistance List. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Association of Regional Counties of Government (NCARCOG).*
- Support modifying the eight Prosperity Zones to conform to the 16 COG regions. When necessary, state agencies can assign multiple COG regions to state staff personnel. *Coordinated with the North Carolina Association of Regional Counties of Government (NCARCOG).*
- Support \$3 million in recurring funding to establish and provide operational funding for an economic forecasting center at the Kenan Institute at UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School to function as the nonpartisan, academically rigorous source for county level now- and forecasted data for policymakers, businesses, and other stakeholders to assist in efforts that attract new industries and foster sustainable and broad based economic growth across the state. *Coordinated with UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School.*
- Support maintaining recently expanded funding for the Small Business Technology Development in the UNC system and Small Business Centers at the Community College System.

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