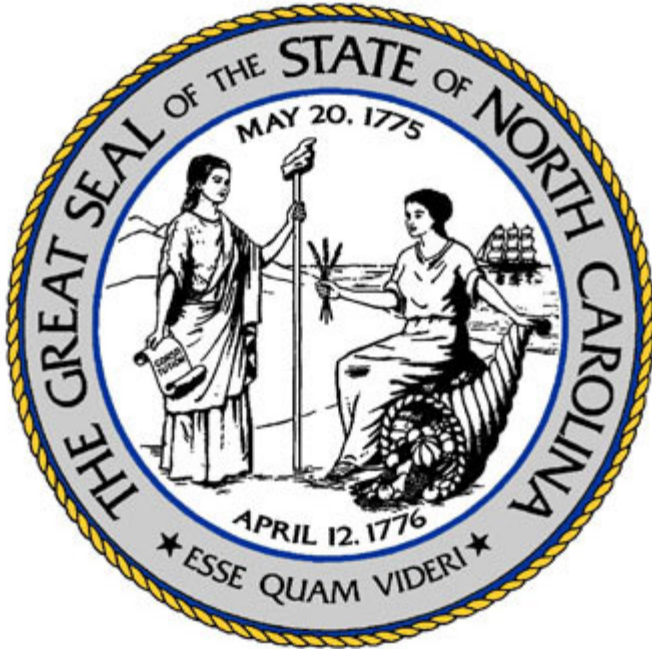


syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



Perdue budget focuses on jobs, education

Gov. Bev Perdue on April 20 released her FY 10-11 budget adjustments, reflecting a state facing continued fiscal challenges. The proposed budget prepares North Carolina to take off as the economy improves by recommending strategic investments in four priority areas:

- 1. creating jobs
- 2. ensuring every student graduates high school prepared for success
- 3. setting government straight
- 4. building safer and healthier communities

For the N.C. Dept. of Commerce, the new budget expands funds for several programs, including small business assistance, tourism marketing, energy research and green jobs. The budget also adds \$1 million to support the state's small business tourism economy by increasing investment in marketing and advertising of North Carolina as a national tourism destination. It also adds \$1,000,000 to increase the visibility and awareness of North Carolina as a business destination through targeted marketing, and to promote North Carolina products both nationally and internationally.

Funds were eliminated for several programs, including the Oregon Inlet Maintenance Program, and tourism promotion grants.



Dr. Rita Joyner

Energy Office engineer to lead N.C. Weatherization Program

Dr. Rita Joyner, most recently a special assistant in Commerce's N.C. Energy Office, has been named section chief of the state's Weatherization Assistance Program, Ward Lenz, director of the N.C. Energy Office announced today.

Joyner, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from N.C. A&T State University, has previously served as section chief in the N.C. Energy Office, supervising a staff of engineers and energy efficiency specialists and overseeing a \$14 million budget. She holds a doctorate from the UNC School of Education and has served as legislative liaison to the state Board of Education.

The state's weatherization program received a \$132 million boost in funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and is implementing a goal of increasing the number of weatherized homes in the state from 250 a month to 750. The program's mission is to improve energy efficiency and household safety, and to educate the public about maintaining energy efficiency. Services are provided in all 100 counties through 28 community-based agencies around the state.

The program's focus is on the elderly, the disabled, families with children, high-energy

To learn more, go to page 198 of the [Budget Recommendations FY-10-11 document](#).

[Read the governor's press release and watch the budget press conference.](#)

[See the Jobs and Economic Recovery Fact Sheet](#)



(Left-right) Gov. Bev Perdue and former Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening at Kickoff for "The Governors' Institute for Community Design"

Perdue brings 'The Governors' Institute on Community Design' to N.C.

On April 19, Gov. Bev Perdue brought The Governors' Institute on Community Design to North Carolina. The institute advises governors and state leaders as they seek to guide growth and development in their states. She assembled her cabinet agencies, statewide non-profits and regional planning organizations to participate in an intensive workshop focused on the future of North Carolina. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce was represented by Assistant Sec. for Community Development Joe Crocker and Libby Smith of the Policy, Research & Strategic Planning Division.



The High Point Market is the largest furnishings industry trade show in the world, bringing more than 85,000 people to High Point every six months.

users and the energy needed to keep North Carolina citizens warm in the winter, cool in the summer and safe all year long. Weatherization assistance is available for single family homes, apartments, condominiums, and mobile homes, based on household income – about \$44,000 annually for a family of four. [Read more.](#)



William Chu from the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Hong Kong office gives a presentation on exporting to China during the Go Global Road Show.

Go Global Road Show highlights international trade

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's International Trade Division held another successful Go Global Road Show April 11-15. This annual event brings in staff from North Carolina's overseas trade offices and takes them across the state to meet with companies interested in export. Stops this year included Wilmington, Kinston, Raleigh, Charlotte and High Point.

More than 163 business appointments were conducted during the weeklong event. Companies came along to meet one on one with N.C.'s foreign trade representatives from Mexico, Canada, Europe, China and Japan. These meetings are a critical part of helping small and medium-size businesses develop relationships with our foreign offices in order to increase export sales. Working together with the N.C. Export team, attendees reviewed current opportunities, discussed international marketing plans and strategy, and planned upcoming trade shows and trips to each country.

At each location, luncheon seminars were held on conducting business in a particular country. More than 170 businesses took part in these important training sessions. Each trade representative provided attendees with an up-to-date review of market trends and discussed specific opportunities for exports to their market.

The Go Global Road Show is also an opportunity for North Carolina's overseas staff to talk face-to-face with companies and teach

High Point Market awarded International Buyer Program designation

The U.S. Dept. of Commerce has designated the 2011 High Point Market as a U.S. Commercial Service International Buyer Program (IBP) event. This will be the fourth time the High Point Market has been honored with the IBP designation.

According to Brian Casey, president and chief executive officer of the High Point Market Authority, the IBP program is designed to connect U.S. companies with foreign customers, and to raise global awareness of a designated event.

"[The Market] is the only home furnishings trade event to receive the designation and recognizes the importance of our Market to the home furnishings industry here in the U.S. and the role that we play in the expansion of exports," said Casey. "The IBP designation also underscores the global nature of our Market and its influence on the world economy."

Casey also cited the Market's work with the N.C. Dept. of Commerce.

"We have also worked closely with International Trade Director Jean Davis and the team at the N.C. Dept. of Commerce on a variety of programs that support North Carolina-based home furnishings companies' entry into worldwide markets."

[High Point Market awarded International Buyer Program designation for 2011](#) (Furniture World Magazine, April 15)

[Perdue touts furniture industry's future](#) (High Point Enterprise, April 20)



N.C. House Majority Leader Hugh Holliman, Lexington Mayor John Walsler and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll at the United Furniture announcement

Furniture maker to bring 150 jobs to Davidson County

Gov. Bev Perdue on April 16 announced that United Furniture Industries N.C. LLC, a national manufacturer of residential upholstered furniture, will expand in North Carolina by opening a new facility in Davidson County. The company plans to create 150 jobs and invest more than \$3.3 million during the next three years in Lexington. The announcement was made

them about new developments in performance textiles, nanotechnology, aerospace, advanced manufacturing, furniture design and other vital industry sectors.

Albaad to bring 95 jobs to Rockingham County

Gov. Bev Perdue on April 14 announced that Albaad USA Inc., an international supplier of wet wipes for varied uses, will expand its plant in Rockingham County. The company will invest more than \$9 million and create 95 jobs in Reidsville. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$350,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Dallas Hardenbrook was the developer on this project.

"We continue working hard to create jobs throughout North Carolina," Perdue said. "International companies like this one are attracted by our state's skilled workforce, top-rated business policies and unparalleled quality of life."

Albaad USA is a wholly owned subsidiary of Albaad Corporate, which is headquartered in Israel and operates facilities in Israel, Germany and Reidsville. The company manufactures wet wipes for a variety of uses, including personal, home and automotive care. [Read more.](#)

Mountaire Farms to bring 51 jobs to Robeson County

Gov. Bev Perdue on April 15 announced that Mountaire Farms Inc., an international supplier of processed chicken and chicken products, will expand in Robeson County. The company will invest \$17.9 million and create 51 jobs in the next three years. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$150,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Marti Butler was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs is my top priority. Helping successful companies to grow jobs and make critical investment in our communities is vital," said Perdue. "Our state's top-rate business climate and skilled workers are attracting businesses looking for the perfect location to expand and succeed." [Read more.](#)

Stats show Southeast economy improving

The Southeast's economy showed signs of improvement during March and April, according to the Federal Reserve's Beige Book, which was released April 14.

Indicators included improved business by

possible in part by a \$125,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Melissa Smith was the developer on this project.

"Furniture manufacturing is a North Carolina heritage industry, which continues to evolve and adapt to meet the challenges of a global marketplace," said Perdue. "Our top business climate, skilled workforce and superb quality of life are proving attractive to companies looking for the perfect location to grow their operations."

United Furniture Industries N.C. is a wholly owned subsidiary of United Furniture Industries Inc., headquartered in Okolona, Miss. The company produces affordable living room furniture, including sofas, chairs, recliners, sleepers and other items. United Furniture currently has five locations, including three in Mississippi and two in North Carolina. The N.C. facilities, located in Archdale and High Point, together employ about 400 people.

N.C. cities make Forbes list

The Raleigh metropolitan area is the third-best place for business and careers, according to rankings published April 14 by Forbes.com. The ranking cited the area's low cost of doing business, job growth and projected economic growth as some of the reasons for Raleigh's success. Also scoring in the top 25 metro areas were Charlotte (17th), Asheville (21st) and Durham (23rd). In addition, Greenville ranked 23rd in the best smaller metros category. Forbes found the "cost of doing business," an index based on cost of labor, energy, taxes and office space, in Raleigh to be among the lowest in the nation. In March, Forbes named Raleigh "America's Most Wired City." The study took into account higher education opportunities, economic and population growth, income and employment rates in ranking metro areas nationwide.

[The Best Places for Business and Careers](#) (Forbes, April 2010)

Enrollment continues to climb in '12 in 6' program

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Workforce Development continues to track the progress of Gov. Bev Perdue's [JobsNOW "12 in 6"](#) initiative. The community colleges have been asked to provide monthly reports regarding the number of students enrolled, courses offered and the number of jobs created and maintained. The numbers through March 31 show that 10,808 students are enrolled in the program (up from 9,625 as of Feb. 28), and 1,524 courses have been offered (up from 1,317 as of Feb. 28).

NCDOT breaks ground on TransPark rail spur

N.C. Dept. of Transportation Sec. Gene Conti on April 6 was joined by other state and local officials to break ground for a new rail spur at the Global TransPark (GTP) in Kinston. The new rail link will allow trains to park and load very large shipments without disrupting the ongoing flow of business on the tracks. It is expected to help generate greater business opportunities at GTP.

"Today we celebrate another milestone in development of the Global TransPark," said Conti. "This rail spur demonstrates

merchants, an increase in vehicle sales and slight improvement of new and existing home sales. However, unemployment remained high in February and March.

[Southeast economy improved in March and April](#) (April 15, 2010)

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry (B&I) that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - April 19, 2010

New projects assigned:	136
Projects announced:	31
Jobs created:	4,815
Capital invested:	\$488.8M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	364
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	7,499

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Lexington gets furniture plant](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, April 19)
- [Piedmont to serve a new Wilmington power plant](#) (The Charlotte Observer, April 19)
- [N.C. must take global trade view](#) (The Charlotte Observer, April 19)
- [Earth Day rebates offered on Energy Star appliances](#) (New Bern Sun Journal, April 19)
- [Energy sector momentum picking up speed](#) (The Charlotte Post, April 19)
- [American Express looks at Triad](#) (The News & Record - Greensboro, April 19)
- [Small Asheville businesses hold on to economic hope](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, April 15)

how we can best use our transportation infrastructure to make North Carolina more economically competitive, which will bring even more business and jobs to the state."

The nearly six-mile long rail line will help connect GTP to the state port at Morehead City. It also connects with the North Carolina Railroad and Norfolk Southern Railway—opening up GTP to access to the national rail network. [Read more.](#)

Tech group says IT jobs on the rise

North Carolina's tech sector is making a comeback, with Internet technology jobs rising by 28 percent from February to March, according to officials with the N.C. Technology Association, which met April 14 in Charlotte.

Conference participants also heard from Randy Thomas, vice president of Premier Inc., about why the health care consulting and technology firm decided to move its headquarters to Charlotte, and from Scott Millar, president of the Catawba County Economic Development Corp., about that organization's efforts to land the Apple data center.

[Tech sector jobs on the rise in N.C.](#) (The Charlotte Observer, April 15)

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Building Location:
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:
4301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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