



# Economic Development Association of North Dakota

## DRAFT 2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### MISSION

To champion the growth and diversification of North Dakota's economy through professional development, networking and advocacy.

### VISION

A North Dakota filled with vibrant communities and economic opportunities for all.

## 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Diversify and grow North Dakota's economy through investment of Legacy Fund earnings in transformative projects or programs.
2. Build North Dakota's future workforce through investments such as career and technical programs and the ND Career Builders Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program.
3. Provide funding for North Dakota's infrastructure through consistent and reliable sources.
4. Strengthen and increase community development matching grants for local implementation.
5. Extend and refine data center sales tax exemptions to further diversify the state's economy.



# 2021 LEGISLATIVE VALUES

---

## **Economic Diversification**

The long-term future of North Dakota is dependent upon planning expanded economic diversification and supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and start-up ventures that bring new wealth to the state. EDND supports investments in applied research and commercialization focused on technology development that will lead to the diversification of North Dakotas' economy. EDND has worked with the ND Department of Commerce and the Bank of North Dakota to create effective and flexible financing options, such as PACE and Flex PACE, and places a high priority on sustaining these programs. Growing the state entrepreneurial ecosystem requires financing alternatives such as enhanced venture capital programs and continued investment in programs such as those provided by regional Small Business Development Centers, Center for Technology and Business, InnovateND, ND Development Fund, Impact Dakota, ND Trade Office, and Agricultural Products Utilization Commission.

## **Workforce Availability and Development**

The ability of North Dakota businesses to maximize the potential of the state's economy will depend on their ability to attract and retain a 21st century workforce. EDND recognizes the importance of connecting businesses and education through workforce training programs such as New Jobs Training, TrainND and Operation Intern. EDND supports curriculum alignment and training capacity that correlates with the state's most critical occupational needs, as well as maintaining education affordability for in-state and out-of-state students. EDND supports affordable housing and childcare programs, which are essential for workforce development. Statewide-level marketing efforts to attract workforce are critical to keep ND communities open for business.

## **Infrastructure Development**

Smart, efficient infrastructure that gives North Dakota the capacity to grow is critically important to the health and vitality of the state. Funding options, such as the use of Legacy Fund earnings, oil and gas revenue, and the recapitalization of the BND infrastructure revolving loan fund, provide support for local infrastructure projects and growth. EDND supports a strong statewide transportation system, which is vital to economic development, and long-range planning. The expansion of natural gas to all corners of the state would provide rural communities an equal opportunity to attract and retain manufacturers. EDND also recognizes that broadband, cell phone and wireless data infrastructure is essential to technology growth in the state.

## **Community Development**

The growth potential of North Dakota communities and rural areas depends on the quality of life that exists in those communities. Healthy and vibrant communities are essential in attracting talent to live and work in communities and in revitalization, diversification, and creation of new wealth. EDND supports maintaining effective state and local components of the Renaissance Zone program and funding for local implementation of the Main Street Initiative.

## **Pro-Business Climate**

Improving the state's economic and business climate by supporting a competitive taxation and regulatory environment promotes the creation of new wealth and the diversification of North Dakota's economy. Maintaining local property tax relief and competitive corporate and personal income taxes is important for ND to compete in a global economy. EDND supports local decision making and flexibility regarding business financing and incentives.