



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Northeast Commission**

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### **Chambers of the Northeast Set 2008 Priorities** *OLF and Stormwater Top the List for 2008*

**Edenton** – CONE, or Chambers of the Northeast, met in Roanoke Rapids recently to determine their regional work plan and legislative agenda for the year. CONE members represent more than 3,000 businesses in the Northeast Region and are supported by North Carolina's Northeast Commission.

John Bone, Chairman of CONE facilitated the meeting and states, "Our regional chambers work together throughout the year to help our businesses build a stronger economy and to bring better jobs to Northeastern North Carolina. This legislative agenda will help us make economic progress in the region as we all focus our efforts in the same direction."

The topics selected by CONE as the most important issues to address this year include:

1. **Outlying Landing Field** – Opposed to the Navy's consideration of two brand-new sites in North Carolina's Northeast Region.
2. **Stormwater Regulations** – Opposed to the proposed changes that will cause an undue burden on single family homes and small projects. Would like to see a cost-benefit analysis and environmental impact study.
3. **Golden LEAF Foundation Board** – Golden LEAF was intended to assist farm communities that lost revenue by the decrease in tobacco sales. Request board representation from residents of the Northeast Region and better rural representation.
4. **Four-Laned Roads** – Strong economic development can become a reality if Highways 17 and 158 are widened to four lanes. Request funding and priority for the completion of these projects.
5. **Employment Security Commission Offices** – Rural ESC offices are closing, and yet they are important to the infrastructure of a region where the Internet is not always accessible. Rural ESC offices must be given priority funding.
6. **Education** – Support increased funding for teacher supplements to low wealth and small schools to provide more equitable pay for teachers in low wealth counties.
7. **North Carolina's Northeast Commission** – The Commission stands out among its peers as a regional organization that pools limited resources into a successful model for expansion of the economy and diversification of jobs. Support recurring state funding.

8. **North Carolina Center for Automotive Research (NCCAR)** – Continued state funding is vital to the success of this research and testing venture.
9. **Vernon James Research and Extension Center** – The center needs staff, equipment, and lab space to support the commercialization of functional foods, bio crops, and plant biotech within the region.
10. **Regional Aviation Parks** – Support funding for Phase II development in Elizabeth City and for other promising aviation projects.

CONE's overall mission is to provide professional development and support of local chambers of commerce by communicating opportunities through networking and education in cooperation with North Carolina's Northeast Commission.

Vann Rogerson, President/CEO of North Carolina's Northeast Commission stated, "As we work to diversify the economy and expand the capacity for higher impact jobs, we must all do our part to improve the resources and infrastructure in our region. Our regional chamber representatives bring new ideas and opportunities to their member businesses, and this legislative agenda helps us move forward."

**About North Carolina's Northeast Commission:**

North Carolina's Northeast Commission is dedicated to increasing the standard of living for citizens in its sixteen-county region through tourism, industrial, and business development. The 16 counties that comprise the regional Commission are: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington. For more information about the North Carolina's Northeast Commission, contact us at [www.ncnortheast.com](http://www.ncnortheast.com).



CONE members work on the details of their legislative agenda.

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