

2021 North Country Alliance Education and Outreach Agenda

Updated September 1, 2021

*New York is a diverse state.
A “one-size-fits-all” approach is not the best mechanism
to affect positive job growth.*

RURAL BROADBAND

Funding for infrastructure, especially rural broadband and cellular service is critical. We strongly encourage State and Federal investment in infrastructure, especially for rural broadband and cellular service. There are still great swaths of rural areas that do not have access to high speed, quality broadband, or cellular service. The services are not comparable to those provided in metropolitan or urban areas. The North Country, like other rural areas, has seen an influx of people leaving the metro/urban areas to work remotely, however this is only possible if high speed, quality broadband is available. Telecommuting is fast becoming the new norm, and now more than ever, we need quality broadband and cellular service in our rural communities.



The **NCA strongly opposes** excessive fees, other charges or mandates, passed on to broadband providers that negatively affect deployment of fiber or equipment to rural areas. These added costs hinder further development in rural areas, and negatively affect the availability of services to these communities. Ultimately, this hinders economic growth in rural communities in the North Country.

FUNDING THE BUDGET GAP

The NCA strongly opposes increases in state taxes to fund the budget gap. Broad taxes, including income, continue to be detrimental to business and workforce growth in New York State. In order to emerge from the recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we will need to foster resilient businesses and a diverse workforce unburdened by additional state taxes. They will need these cash resources to invest in staffing and capital to recover.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

The NCA strongly supports a regional approach to economic development. Robust, empowered and integrated local development agencies and corporations are the frontline partners for ensuring the successful execution of state and local community initiatives. Any efforts to erode their powers and effectiveness would be detrimental to economic development in the North Country.

INVESTMENT IN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The NCA strongly supports state and federal investment for rural infrastructure projects in Upstate on par with investments in Downstate. With federal funds soon to be available for infrastructure projects to include roads, water, sewer, airports, and broadband, the NCA strongly advocates for parity in funding to Upstate rural communities as such funding provided to Downstate. These funds are critical in growing our communities and economies in the 21st Century.



WORKFORCE, CHILDCARE & HOUSING

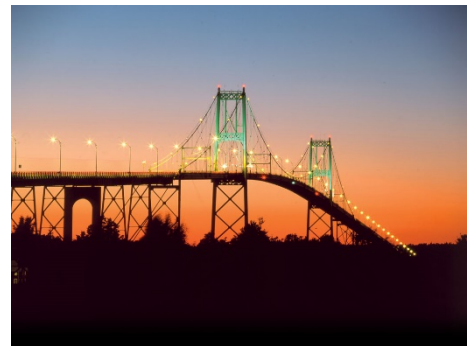
The NCA supports funding and policies that promote the development of our workforce, including investment in childcare facilities and quality, affordable housing options to support our working families. Our ability to adapt to new technologies and in-demand occupations hinges on the ability of our educational institutions, technical schools, and trade programs to provide these programs and services. In addition, there is a dire need for quality childcare in rural communities to support working families. Quality, affordable childcare allows those that want to be in the workforce to be able to enter or re-enter the workforce, which is critical during this time of low unemployment in Upstate NY. The lack of affordable housing is beginning to have a crippling effect on the economy across the North Country but especially in the Adirondacks.

PRISON CLOSURES

The NCA opposes the further closing of prisons in the North Country. It is difficult to repurpose these facilities, and the economic impact on these communities of closures is disproportionately severe. Any additional facility closures should take place in areas of the State with higher property values, costs, and more robust commercial activity and redevelopment potential.

CROSS BORDER CONNECTION

The NCA is committed to strengthening what has been called "the most special and integrated economic and social relationship on earth." The North Country region is well-positioned to welcome Canadian businesses that need a U.S. presence and Canadian travelers. Our region's ties to Canada run deep and we support policies that facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across the border. This includes state advocacy for immediate planning and progress related to the entry of Canadians at our northern border in reciprocity with Canadian action, as well as heightened engagement by the state with Canada to value and build the New York-Canada relationship.



NorthCountryAlliance.org

Contact: Jeremy Evans, NCA Education and Outreach Committee
jeremy@adirondackfrontier.com :: 518-651-2949

Photos: Georgie Silvarofe/USA Today Network NY, and Development Authority of the North Country, TI Tourism Council