



(left-right) Gov. Pat McCrory; R. Chellepan, managing director for SWELECT Energy Systems and N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla.

Solar Company to Bring 155 Jobs to Halifax County

Governor Pat McCrory, N.C. Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III, and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. (EDPNC) announced June 17 the arrival of SWELECT Energy Systems LLC to Halifax County. The company intends to build a 155-person workforce over the coming five years, investing more than \$4.7 million in a manufacturing site and adjacent solar farm.

"This announcement is another example of North Carolina's competitive business climate, talented workforce and strong economic comeback, especially in manufacturing," said Governor McCrory. "SWELECT also fits in to our all-of-the-above energy strategy to contribute to our country's energy independence and create jobs in North Carolina."

The company is the U.S. unit of SWELECT Energy Systems Limited, a leading name in power electronics and renewable energy based in Mylapore, India. The publicly-held parent company, listed under the symbol SWELECTES on the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) has installed more than 1,700 solar farms since its founding in 1983. Its buyers include major corporations seeking to adopt solar energy systems into their operations.

SWELECT's choice of Halifax County highlights all the factors that have made North Carolina the Southeast's No. 1 state for manufacturing jobs," said Secretary Skvarla. "A competitive cost-structure, highly productive workers and ease of access



44 Communities Receive Marks for High Performance From the National Main Street Center

The National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation has cited 44 North Carolina communities for economic vitality and fidelity in following the best-practice standards for historic preservation and community revitalization championed by the center. Eleven new communities joined the ranks of accredited North Carolina communities as compared to last year's roster.

The eleven communities newly appearing in this year's list are: **Cherryville, Hendersonville, Lexington, Lincolnton, Rocky Mount, Rutherfordton, Sanford, Shelby, Sylva, Waxhaw, and Williamston.**

Communities receiving accreditation again this year include: **Belmont, Boone, Brevard, Burlington, Clayton, Clinton, Concord, Eden, Edenton, Elizabeth City, Elkin, Fuquay-Varina, Goldsboro, Hertford, Hickory, Kings Mountain, Lenoir, Marion, Monroe, Morganton, Mount Airy, New Bern, North Wilkesboro, Roanoke Rapids, Roxboro, Salisbury, Smithfield, Spruce Pine, Statesville, Wake Forest, Washington, Waynesville, and Wilson.**

"Vibrant downtowns are important economic engines for the North Carolina economy," said **N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla**. "This national recognition confirms the results we're seeing every day in these forward-thinking communities and is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our Main Street program participants."

to North American markets all will play a part in this company's success."

"Producing modules at the Halifax County facility allows us to help North Carolina meet its renewable energy goals and further support the U.S. market," said R. Chellepan, SWELECT's managing director. "Our partnership with North Carolina and Halifax County presents the opportunity for SWELECT to leverage 30 years of world class experience in solar manufacturing. We are delighted that our products will be 'Made in the USA.'"

The project was made possible in part by a performance-based grant of up to \$600,000 from the One North Carolina Fund. The One NC Fund provides financial assistance, through local governments, to attract business projects that will stimulate economic activity and create new jobs in the state. Companies receive no money up front and must meet job creation and investment performance standards to qualify for grant funds. One NC grants also require and are contingent on financial matches from local governments.

Joining [EDPNC](#) and [N.C. Commerce](#) in supporting SWELECT's new location are the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Halifax County](#), [Halifax County Business Horizons](#), and [Roanoke Electric Membership Corporation](#).

[Read more.](#)



N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla (right) takes a spin in an F-35 aircraft simulator during a visit to Lockheed Martin.

Skvarla Scouts Business in the Nation's Capitol

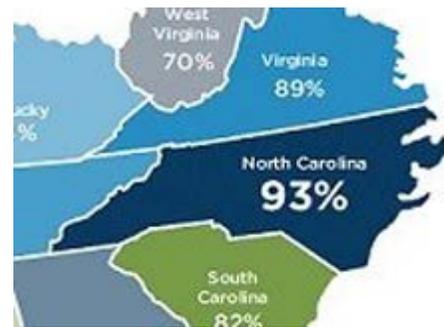
N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla traveled to Washington D.C. this week to meet with potential business prospects, including business leaders attending the [SelectUSA Summit](#) organized by the United States Department of Commerce.

The SelectUSA Investment Summit is a high-profile event dedicated to promoting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the United States. The signature event provides an opportunity to bring together companies from all over the world, economic development organizations from every corner of the nation, and other parties working to facilitate business investment in the United States. Featuring senior government officials, C-Suite business executives, and other thought leaders, this year's summit focused on the theme of innovation .

North Carolina's presence at the summit was led by the

"Each year, our Center's staff evaluates each of the state's designated Main Street organizations to identify those programs that met the National Main Street Center's ten performance standards for the previous twelve-month calendar year," said **Liz Parham, director of the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center**. "69% of all North Carolina Main Street communities achieved national accreditation in 2016 and that represents 14% more communities that have worked over the last year to incorporate basic best practices in their Main Street operations."

Since 1980, The North Carolina Main Street program has generated \$2.3 billion in private and public investment.



Excerpt from an infographic in the new state broadband report. The state's 93% broadband deployment rate is one of the highest in the region.

Governor McCrory Releases State Broadband Plan

Governor Pat McCrory is building on his commitment to increase access to affordable high-speed internet across North Carolina through a new State Broadband Plan. Released today (June 21), the plan outlines recommendations for the state to increase internet access, focusing on lowering infrastructure construction costs, preparing a 21st century workforce, increasing small business adoption, and expanding access for K-12 students at home.

"We have made significant progress to improve North Carolina's broadband infrastructure and increase access for affordable high-speed internet, especially for small businesses and in our classrooms," said **Governor McCrory**. "This plan will build on our progress and further position North Carolina as a leader in ensuring that our infrastructure meets our growing demand."

Governor McCrory has made connecting classrooms to robust Wi-Fi internet a top priority. When he entered office, just 22 percent of North Carolina classrooms had robust Wi-Fi. Today, nearly 65 percent of classrooms are connected, and the governor has committed to connecting 100 percent of

Economic Development Partnership of N.C., which hosted a booth in the event's exhibit hall.



N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla delivers opening remarks at the NC Competes for Jobs event in Shelby May 17.

NC Competes for Jobs Tour Visits Williamston on Wednesday (June 22)

Governor Pat McCrory invites local community leaders to join N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla and his economic development and workforce team for the NC Competes for Jobs Tour. The tour stops in Williamston on Wednesday, June 22.

The session will convene at 1:00 p.m. at the Sen. Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center, courtesy of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture.

The NC Competes for Jobs events offer attendees a fast-paced, information-packed session outlining solutions N.C. Commerce offers to local leaders for the work of growing their local economies.

Attendees learn more about:

- Grants and loans available for local economic development
- Available assistance to plan and build local infrastructure, water and sewer
- Finding and training local workers, using the state's NCWorks system
- Regulatory reforms to the state's business climate
- Changes in the state's tax rates
- The team at N.C. Commerce, and how to contact the right people who can help

There is still time to RSVP for the Williamston event; to do so, send an email to rsvp@nccommerce.com. For information about the final tour stop in Boone on Monday June 27, [email James Estes in the Secretary's office.](#)



HEALTHY PLACES CHANGE LIVES

classrooms by 2018. The comprehensive State Broadband Plan announced today builds on that progress in targeted areas and also looks at ways to support new health care technologies and provide the necessary tools to public safety responders to ensure North Carolinians' safety.

"This plan helps the state put in place the policies and tools needed to address the growing needs of our citizens," said **State Chief Information Officer Keith Werner**. "Through the course of writing the plan, we found two common themes: active and engaged communities and their partnerships with private sector internet service providers are the biggest factors in bridging existing digital divides."

The plan finds that new technologies, user demand, and greater reliance on internet access will require ongoing infrastructure upgrades within our state. Governments can ensure a healthier broadband ecosystem by encouraging competition through updated policies and laws. In areas where competition is lacking, policy makers must empower communities to form more equitable partnerships with service providers.

Developed by the Broadband Infrastructure Office within the North Carolina Department of Information Technology, the plan offers lawmakers and local officials specific recommendations to foster broadband deployment and adoption. A collaborative effort, the plan uses feedback gathered from more than a dozen stakeholder listening sessions, discussions with nearly 80 subject matter experts, and a survey of 3,500 local leaders.

The plan is available online at ncbroadband.gov.



Vote for USS North Carolina in USA Today Contest

Once again Wilmington has been recognized by *USA Today* for the newspaper's 10 BEST Readers' Choice 2016 Awards.

The Battleship NORTH CAROLINA has been nominated as one of the TOP 20 "Best Museum Ships" in the country and is currently ranked #1 out of 20. Voting is open

Building Cultures of Health for State Health Plan Members

As a statewide partner of the Healthy Together NC initiative, the North Carolina State Health Plan is striving to improve health outcomes for its members through partnerships, including alliances with the N.C. Division of Public Health (NCDPH), Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) and Prevention Partners, a non-profit based in Chapel Hill.

The State Health Plan works with Prevention Partners at five sites in Greene, Lenoir, and Jones counties. The partnership aims to create healthier work environments, improve quality of care, and strengthen member-provider relationships. Prevention Partners' WorkHealthy America tool is used to assess how an employer measures up in key areas such as nutrition, physical activity, tobacco, and the overall culture of wellness. In addition, both organizations guide managers through the organizational-level change process and ensure alignment with the benefits and incentives offered through the State Health Plan.

The State Health Plan is also partnering with the NC Division of Public Health (NCDPH) to develop worksite wellness programs at public schools in the same three-county region. Participating schools complete an environmental assessment and employee interest survey, establish a wellness committee, and create and implement an action plan to address health focus areas. Nine schools are currently participating in the initiative, with an additional six expected to join this fall.

A "Wellness Wins" initiative was created after observing higher than state average rates of diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and cardiovascular diseases among State Health Plan members in Greene, Lenoir, and Jones counties. It will optimize the services Plan members in this region receive from their primary care providers, and, with the help of CCNC, improve the quality of care and engagement between Plan members and providers.

"We're pleased to work with these key partners to improve health outcomes for State Health Plan members in these targeted counties," said **Mona M. Moon, Executive Administrator of the State Health Plan**. "Together, we're focused on engaging members, care providers, employers and other professionals to enhance health and wellness, one worksite at a time."

Healthy Places Change Lives is a partnership between the N.C. Department of Commerce and Prevention Partners, a nonprofit based in Chapel Hill. Prevention Partners guides schools, workplaces, hospitals and clinics to address the leading causes of preventable disease. The non-profit's Healthy Together NC initiative aims to reach at least 10 organizations in all 100 counties of the state by 2025. Learn more at ForPrevention.org/HealthyTogetherNC



now through Monday July 18th. SYNC readers may vote once a day per IP address or device - details contained in the link below.

Cast your vote online at USA Today's website.

N.C. in the News

- [NCSU to house Southeast manufacturing innovation hub](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - June 20)
- [Future interstate named I-87](#) (*Rocky Mount Telegram* - June 19)
- [Platé pleased to accept his 'team award'](#) (*Enquirer Journal* - Monroe - June 19)
- [Solar module company to locate in county](#) (*RRSpin.com* - Roanoke Rapids - June 17)
- [Duke Energy's Community College Investment Reaches \\$30M](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - June 16)
- [McCrorry, Cooper Share Economic Development Plans At Wrightsville Beach Conference](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - June 15)
- [Eastern NC Foreign Trade Zone Proposal Moves Forward](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - June 14)
- [NC Research Campus hires director to court research, economic development](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal* - June 13)
- [Companies still want to come to NC, Gov. McCrorry says](#) (*Charlotte Observer* - June 10)
- [Home Sales Up Nearly 19 Percent In May, WRAR Reports](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - June 10)
- [PTI approves 40-year lease for HAECO hangar project](#) (*Triad Business Journal* - June 2)
- [N.C. tourism continues to thrive on adventure, outdoors](#) (*Courier-Tribune* - Asheboro - May 28)

About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

The prototype of a license plate featuring North Carolina's new brand. Artist concept subject to change.

Sign Up for New State Brand License Plate

Claim your new 'Nothing Compares' license plate to display on your vehicle by visiting this special page on N.C. Commerce's website: nccommerce.com/nc-license-plate.

Show your pride on your ride in North Carolina: where everything is possible and Nothing Compares!

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