



**Andy Hayes, President**  
**Northern Lakes Economic Alliance**

“A public private economic development partnership serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan and Emmet Counties in NW Lower Michigan”

Testimony Points:

1. Keep “State Economic Development” agency (MEDC)
  - a. No lag time between administrations – causes confusion, etc
  - b. Keep MEDC staff in the field
    - i. Account Managers
    - ii. Community Assistance Teams (CAT)
    - iii. These people really help rural areas connect to the right resource in Lansing and conversely they help “package” projects to those not familiar with Northern Michigan
2. Michigan is shifting to “New Economy”
  - a. Support entrepreneurship/new business creation
    - i. Most incentives are geared to “old economy” and manufacturing
  - b. Make state R&D monies available for small companies
    - i. \$10,000 - \$100,000
  - c. MEGA grants – tweak 150% of minimum wage requirement
    - i. Currently – requires jobs to be 150% of minimum wage immediately
    - ii. Change to allow a phase in period, 150% within 3-5 years
3. Broadband
  - a. Approx 50% of our four county region not served by high speed internet
  - b. Very expensive when factoring in the small size of our companies
    - i. Company employing 55 people pays over \$50,000/year
  - c. This will help all aspects of life
    - i. Business
    - ii. Education
    - iii. Medicine and service
    - iv. Quality of life
  - d. Establish State Broadband Initiative
    - i. Complete Broadband coverage by 2015
    - ii. Coordinate public/private sector efforts
    - iii. Provide money for implementation in rural areas not deemed profitable by private sector companies

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