



SEDE Steering Committee Meeting Summary

2.24.2026

Steering Committee Attendees

Clint O'Neal, Executive Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission (Vice-Chair)

Andrew Deye, CFO, JobsOhio

Michelle Hataway, Director, Missouri Department of Economic Development

Thomas Burns, Executive Director, Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development

Hope Knight, President and CEO, Empire State Development

Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) Staff

Bob Isaacson, SVP

Ken Poole, CEO

Leif Olson, Sr. Research Analyst

Summary

The steering committee meeting opened with Clint O'Neal welcoming members and reviewing the agenda items that will be covered during the discussion. Following the introductory comments, Clint asked Bob Isaacson to proceed with the agenda.

- **Fall SEDE Meeting – Colorado**

Bob Isaacson noted that Colorado received the most votes for the Fall SEDE meeting location, followed by Kentucky. CREC staff will be meeting with the Colorado team staff the following week to finalize dates, times, venues, and activities for the fall meeting, planned for late September or early October 2026. Bob invited steering committee members to share ideas and suggestions for the fall meeting agenda..

- **May 2026 SEDE Meeting at SelectUSA**

Bob provided an update on agenda planning for the May 4th meeting at SelectUSA. 12 registrations have already been received, with a goal of 25–30 attendees. The proposed 4 ½ hour agenda includes introductions over lunch, followed by a discussion of key state issues and two one-hour time slots for either small group breakouts or an NGA/federal speaker. Members reached consensus on the following structure:

- One of the one-hour time slots would be filled by a speaker representing EDA (potentially Ben Page, EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary and another speaker representing NGA or the USTR to discuss state actions to support trade. The two speakers would provide a 15-minute presentation followed by 15 minutes of Q&A.



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- Small group breakout discussions on topics of interest, modeled after the well-received format from the New York SEDE meeting. Housing was mentioned as a topic that could be included in one of the small groups or in a future meeting.

- **SEDE Website Redesign**

Leif Olson briefly discussed the improved [SEDE website](#) which has been redesigned with SEDE members in mind. The user interface has been refined to offer a member-focused experience including a member dashboard that will list relevant resources including contact information for peers, notes from previous meetings, data products, and relevant reports. Bob also mentioned that additional podcast and blog content has been added covering topics of interest as noted by SEDE members.

- **Working Group Activities**

Bob noted that CREC continues to develop content and media for key topics identified by SEDE leaders. Three working groups are being developed, and CREC will be sending a note to gauge member interest in participation:

- University Connections. A webinar is being planned in partnership with UEDA to help state EDOs connect with university networks.
- Labor Statistics. In response to concerns about recent job number revisions, CREC is working with LMII to develop a webinar that explains the nuances of labor market data and the significance of recent revisions.
- Incentives. A working group will be established to examine incentive tools and strategies.

Bob also noted two organizations that are interested in discussing issues with SEDE members:

- The Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) is working with state energy offices and has expressed interest in collaborating with state economic development officials in a series of community of practice (CoP) meetings to address energy challenges. RMI plans to hold 2–3 meetings over the next several months and will be reaching out to SEDE members that have indicated interest in participating.
- The Brookings Institution has developed a report on the next generation of economic development and is interested in convening a group of SEDE leaders to provide perspectives and recommendations. The report is expected to be released in summer 2026, and Brookings is seeking input now in anticipation of leadership transitions following upcoming gubernatorial elections. CREC will send a note to alert members about this opportunity.



- **CREC Statement of Work**

CREC worked with the SEDE Chair and Vice Chair to finalize its 2026 Statement of Work. CREC's work will be more focused on SEDE members - for example, the SEDE Bulletin has been adjusted and condensed to emphasize state economic development items, with a goal of being more timely and relevant to member needs. The new [blog posts](#) authored by Ken Poole (and mentioned above) have been added to the SEDE website, covering topics identified as important by SEDE leaders.

- **SEDE Finances**

SEDE is in strong financial shape. Membership has grown to 27 investing states, up from 25 last year and investment totals \$135,000. Although the funding is slightly below 2025 levels, an additional \$9,000 investment is pending from one state. Historically, SEDE investment has ranged from approximately \$120,000 to \$150,000, and current projections place the organization within that historical range. with

Action Items

CREC will:

- Continue planning for the May 4, 2026 SEDE meeting at SelectUSA, including coordination on speakers potentially from EDA, NGA, and USTR (with Andrew Deye).
- Identify small group discussion topics for the May 4 meeting.
- Finalize venue, date, and activities for the Fall 2026 SEDE meeting in Colorado.
- Send a note to SEDE network to gauge interest in participating in working groups on university connections, labor statistics, and incentives.
- Coordinate with RMI on energy community of practice outreach to interested SEDE members.
- Reach out to the SEDE network regarding Brookings Institution report review and input opportunity.
- Continue SEDE website updates and SEDE Bulletin improvements.