



**LANCASTER COUNTY, PA**  
Economic Development Company

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**TESTIMONY FROM:**

**John W. Biemiller**  
**Vice President**  
**Economic Development Company of Lancaster County**

**PA Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee**  
**June 20, 2017, 10:00 a.m.**  
**North Office Building, Hearing Room 1**

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to present testimony to the Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee. I am John Biemiller, Vice President of the Economic Development Company of Lancaster County, a not-for-profit economic and community development organization serving all of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Our mission is to enhance the economic well-being of Lancaster County by bringing together business resources, capital and government for selective, measurable and sustainable growth. Drivers of this effort include leadership, collaboration, responsiveness and measurement. We also operate EDC Finance Corporation, an active partner with the Department of Community & Economic Development, which provides economic development financing to companies in Lancaster County and throughout South-central PA.

We have been Partnership for Regional Economic Performance or PREP partners since the program was created, aligning with the South-Central PREP region which runs from Lancaster to Franklin County. This is a diverse region that includes eight counties, nine economic development partners, three Small Business Development Centers, two Workforce Development Boards and one Industrial Resource Center – and more than two million people.

As a region, we are a significant contributor to the Commonwealth's economy and notably a region that is growing rapidly.

Regional thinking, cooperation and partnerships in economic development make more sense than ever before and are gaining traction in the South-central region. Our PREP region is and has worked together on joint marketing materials, business attraction and retention lead sharing, workforce topics, trade group visits, and a variety of efforts to utilize our limited resources to their greatest impact. The PREP program supports those initiatives, brings us together on a regular basis and provides a vehicle for us to continue to build upon our collective strengths as a region. The Department of Community and Economic Development regularly participates with us, which helps to facilitate open, two-way communication around the economic development delivery system in Pennsylvania.

I also do not want to miss the opportunity to underline the importance of economic development corporations like EDC and our PREP partners as the local delivery system for the economic and community development programs of the Commonwealth. At EDC and EDC Finance Corporation last year, we participated in \$71 million of business development projects, many of which included DCED funding programs. We also participated with DCED on a variety of business attraction projects, including the expansion of the online reputation management firm Brand Yourself from New York City into Downtown Lancaster. Our projects included multiple farms expansions, business retention, expansion and attraction projects across the County and urban redevelopment investments – projects that impacted 613 retained jobs, 217 new jobs, and 910 acres of prime farmland. And in Lancaster County alone last year, we leveraged our \$39,000 PREP allocation with \$1.3 million of locally generated funding for economic development – we are working hard to create value in support of the Commonwealth's investment in the PREP program.

I urge you to support the PREP program and the regional initiatives and local EDC's that it helps to support. Thank you.