

North Carolina Economic Development Board

Asheville, North Carolina
November 21, 2008



NORTH CAROLINA
the state of minds

A Labor Market in Transition

- An economy in a recession
- High unemployment, significant worker layoffs (% unemployed, 17,100 layoffs reported through October, 2008)
- Frequent difficulty finding workers for the new “middle jobs”
- Baby boom generation retirements adds to shortage of skilled workers

Labor Market in Transition

- An increasingly diverse workforce including in-migrants from other states, nations, ethnic minorities, and older workers
- Young high school dropouts are underutilized resource with high rates of unemployment
- Adult displaced workers who lack skills for new middle jobs now fill low wage jobs

Policy, Research and Strategic Planning Occupational Trends within Target Clusters

- Significant portion of current cluster jobs are in low paying, low educational attainment jobs
- Substantial decline in production-related jobs between 2006-2016
- Few direct matches between declining cluster occupations and growing/emerging cluster occupations
- Disappearance of middle jobs in growing and emerging clusters

Recommendations

- **Target education and training opportunities for workers in declining occupations**
- **Increase high school graduation rates and ensure youth are prepared for work or education**
- **Increase the number of adults with post secondary education**
- **Provide adults with good access to lifelong education, training, and employment opportunities**
- **Expand education and training capacity**
- **Align clusters and targeted industry sectors with education, training and employment programs and resources**