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**EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES NORTHERN BORDER REGIONAL
COMMISSION GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

*Grant Application Process Outlined for Projects in Upstate Counties
with Priority to Distressed Counties*

Empire State Development today announced that it will be the lead state agency for managing the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) grant program for New York State. Federal funds totaling \$1.3 million is available through NBRC for eligible projects.

The federal-state regional commission targets new resources to promote wealth generation and economic growth strategies and projects within the four-state, 36 county region of Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. New York is home to 14 of the 36 counties, although priority will be given to seven of the 14 New York counties defined as “distressed.” The eligible distressed counties in New York State are Franklin, Fulton, Herkimer, Lewis, Oneida, Oswego and St. Lawrence counties.

“NBRC funding will provide the economic boost these distressed counties in Upstate New York critically need, while increasing long-term investment and improving the quality of life for our residents along the nation’s northern border,” said Governor David A. Paterson. “The counties included in the coverage area have similar challenges with real need. I look forward to seeing public, private and philanthropic resources leveraged to develop true economic competitiveness in these New York counties and create vibrant communities where New Yorkers will want to live, work and raise families.”

“This federal allocation provides funding with a regional approach and through targeted investment, which will undoubtedly provide much needed assistance to our local communities,” said ESD Chairman & CEO Dennis M. Mullen. “I’m pleased that ESD will be the lead agency through this process and will ensure that the funds will be used to promote economic development in the most effective and meaningful way possible.”

The Northern Border Regional Commission’s primary responsibility will be to assist in the creation and implementation of regional economic development plans that will reduce poverty, address changing land use, and improve the quality of life for residents. The Commission will

use a “bottom-up” approach where local development districts, non-profit organizations, and others bring project ideas and priorities to the Commission from the local level. It will also make grants for projects that are consistent with those locally developed economic development plans.

The NBRC was created by Congress to alleviate economic distress and to save and create job opportunities. The commission, which became operational in April 2010, is responsible for 14 counties in New York; six counties in Vermont; four counties in New Hampshire, and 12 counties in Maine. The NBRC is governed by a board consisting of Federal Co-Chair Stanford Blitz and the governor of each of the four states.

In accordance with the law, priority must be given to those “distressed counties” and “isolated areas of distress” within the 36 counties covered by the commission. Distress is measured by the extent of negative economic distress factors a county or area suffers. The economic distress measurements include per capita income lower than the national average; unemployment higher than the national average; negative out migration; and poverty rates higher than the national average.

NBRC eligible projects must adhere to one of the following:

- Develop the transportation, water, sewer, energy and telecommunications infrastructure of the region.
- Assist the region in obtaining job skills and employment related education, as well as entrepreneurship, technology and business development.
- Provide basic health care and other public services for those areas that are severely economically distressed and underdeveloped.
- Promote resource conservation, tourism, recreation and preservation of open spaces in a manner consistent with economic development goals.
- Promote the development of renewable and alternative energy sources.

ESD, as the lead agency for the State of New York, will accept and review grant applications. The ESD Plattsburgh Regional Office, working closely with Local Development Districts in the eligible areas, will provide technical assistance to grant applicants and accept applications for all counties in NBRC territory, except Fulton, Herkimer and Oneida counties. The Mohawk Valley Economic Development District (MVEDD) will coordinate application in-take and review in Fulton, Herkimer and Oneida counties. Applications for NBRC grants should be postmarked by August 30, 2010 *and* emailed to:

Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oswego, Seneca and St. Lawrence counties:

ESDC Regional Office Plattsburgh

Attn: Roseanne Murphy

401 West Bay Plaza

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

518-561-5642

NBRCGRANT@empire.state.ny.us

Fulton, Herkimer and Oneida counties:

Mohawk Valley Economic Development District

Attn: Greg Eisenhut

26 West Main Street

PO Box 69

Mohawk, NY 13407-0106

315-866-4671

gregmved@twcnny.rr.com

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency, committed to being recognized on a global scale as the economic development engine driving job growth, strategic investment and prosperity in New York State. ESD is intent on paving the way for New York State to become the leader of the innovation economy and one of the most business friendly, productive and competitive economic development climates in the world. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit www.esd.ny.gov.

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