



# Legislative Bulletin

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## The Recap

In the new Barbie movie, Ken receives a new occupation that he simply calls “Beach.” A friend asked me how I would describe my job similarly, and my answer was immediate: “North Carolina.” That’s because working as a lobbyist on behalf of N.C. municipal officials ultimately means working for North Carolina.

More precisely, our Government Affairs team works passionately so that you as local officials can make the best possible decisions for North Carolina—its businesses, residents, and visitors. Keeping you up to date on major state-level developments that affect your local decision-making is a big part of our mission here at NCLM.

This Bulletin provides a consistent, regular connection between the legislative happenings in Raleigh and local communities across the state. Now that the state legislature’s regular business has largely wrapped up for the year—save for one major outstanding vote on the state budget and another on redistricting—we are switching to a monthly publication schedule. We will also be making some slight changes to the format. These changes will keep our content fresh and relevant, coming to your inbox every first Friday of the month until we go weekly again when legislative business picks back up next spring. And if that state budget vote or other need-to-know-now news happens in between publications, we’ll send you a special edition.

You can also expect to see our team members out in your communities in many different ways in the coming months, connecting with you and state leaders closer to home. Whether you Beach or Mountain, Small Town or Big City, we can’t wait to see you!

Erin Wynia

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin L. Wynia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

NCLM Director of Government Affairs

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## NCLM, Metro Mayors Host 'Rail Response' Event in Wilmington



Municipal and civic leaders from the Wilmington region learned more about opportunities to bring back intercity passenger rail service to that city and possible expansion throughout the state at an event Thursday hosted by the City of Wilmington and organized by the N.C. Metro Mayors Coalition. With dozens of attendees, both in person and virtually, federal and state officials discussed the potential for new passenger rail routes created by funding through the federal bipartisan infrastructure bill. The event is the first of several regional meetings organized as a part of the Metro Mayors' Rail Response initiative, with the assistance of NCLM. The focus of these events is on expansion and improvements of intercity passenger rail, connecting more cities across the state to each other and to the larger Amtrak network, rather than commuter rail, which refers to rail service within a community or larger metropolitan area. The goal is to raise awareness about how municipalities can best prepare for and position themselves for these funding opportunities.

Speakers on Thursday included Amit Bose, Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration; Nicole Bucich, Vice President of Network Development for Amtrak; and Jason Orthner, Rail Division Director at the state Department of Transportation. Attendees also heard from Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo, and the co-chairs of the Rail Response Workgroup – Susan Kluttz, former Salisbury mayor and former Secretary of the N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources and Nick Tennyson, former mayor of Durham and former Secretary of the N.C. Dept. of Transportation. You can read more about the event and the topic through extensive media coverage that can be found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

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## Broadband Access and Affordability

A [new study from the Pew Charitable Trust](#) calls for ongoing federal funding to help maintain broadband access once the huge amounts of infrastructure dollars from federal programs are deployed. The group notes that the Affordable Connectivity Program, established as part of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, provides subsidies of \$30 a month to eligible households and that more than 20 million households have

enrolled. Funding, though, is set to run out in 2024. [The study](#) examines how the ACP funding has become critical in closing the digital divide.

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