

CNBC Ranks North Dakota the Best State for Business Friendliness for the Fourth Year in a Row

Grand Forks showcases the state's workforce, innovation, and pro-business environment

GRAND FORKT, ND, UNITED STATES, August 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Every year, CNBC ranks all 50 states on 135 metrics in ten categories related to business—economy, infrastructure, workforce, cost of doing business, business friendliness, quality of life, technology and innovation, and more. This year, North Dakota has once again been named #1 in Business Friendliness, marking the fourth consecutive year the state has held this prestigious ranking.

The rankings are designed to help business owners and entrepreneurs identify the best places for growth and innovation. Business friendliness is determined by state laws and regulations surrounding business

ownership. North Dakota is one of 41 states that do not require a statewide general business license—removing barriers to entry for startups and growing companies alike. Combined with some of the lowest corporate income tax rates in the nation (1.41%–4.31%, compared to Minnesota at 9.8% and Montana at 6.75%), North Dakota creates an environment where businesses can thrive.

Grand Forks: A Hub of Opportunity

Grand Forks exemplifies the state's pro-business climate. With more than seven higher education institutions in the region and access to over 39,000 students, companies benefit from a steady



The Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation Logo

pipeline of skilled and motivated talent. The state further supports business growth through tax incentives such as the Corporate Income Tax Exemption, Sales & Use Tax Exemption, Automation Tax Credit, and Property Tax Exemption—contributing to North Dakota’s 77% business survival rate.

North Dakota is also home to the nation’s only state-owned bank, the Bank of North Dakota, which partners with local lenders to provide unique business support programs like the PACE and FlexPACE Loans. These tools give companies access to competitive financing options while lowering the cost of capital—an advantage that helps both startups and established businesses expand with confidence.

A Strategic Advantage for Growth

In today’s global economy, business friendliness carries even greater weight as both foreign and domestic companies look for the fastest path into the U.S. market. North Dakota’s consistent recognition as the most business-friendly state is a testament to its leadership, workforce, and ability to innovate.

“North Dakota’s continued recognition as the most business-friendly state reflects the strength of our people, policies, and partnerships,” said Keith Lund, EDC President & CEO. “Here in Grand Forks, we see firsthand how this environment helps businesses not only start but scale successfully. With our access to talent, innovative spirit, and supportive ecosystem, Grand Forks is proving to be one of the most dynamic regions in the nation for business growth and investment.”

As North Dakota celebrates its fourth consecutive year as the leader in business friendliness, Grand Forks and communities across the state remain committed to fostering innovation, attracting talent, and building an economy that thrives for generations to come.

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