Pennsylvania Jumps Four Spots From Last Year's Ranking – Making The Commonwealth #13 In The Nation For Business.

This is the highest Pennsylvania has been listed on the CNBC rankings in 15 years.

By PA Department of Community & Economic Development

Since taking office, Governor Shapiro has made Pennsylvania more competitive — cutting red tape, implementing transformative changes to permitting and licensing, and making strategic investments that have attracted over $41 billion in private sector investment, created more than 24,000 good-paying jobs, and expanded opportunity across the Commonwealth.

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Governor Josh Shapiro announced Pennsylvania is ranked 13th by CNBC in their America's Top States for Business 2026 rankings — up four spots from last year – making Pennsylvania the top state for business in the Northeast.

For this year's scores, CNBC looked at states in several different categories, including infrastructure, workforce, quality of life, technology and innovation – and for the first time ever, ease of permitting. Governor Shapiro has made cutting red tape and speeding up permitting a key priority – and it's no coincidence that this is the highest Pennsylvania has ranked on the CNBC study on business friendliness in the last 15 years. This year, Pennsylvania was also ranked 5th in the technology and innovation category.

Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, Pennsylvania's economy is strong, competitive, and on the rise. Last year, according to a new analysis of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Commonwealth ranked third in the nation for job growth, and a Moody's analysis found Pennsylvania is the only state in the Northeast with a growing economy.

"Pennsylvania is winning deals and seeing record economic growth because we're focused on what matters – building a strong workforce, cutting unnecessary red tape, and creating an environment where businesses can grow and create good-paying jobs," said Governor Shapiro. "This recognition reflects the progress we're making – and we're going to keep pushing aggressively to attract more business, get stuff done, and create more opportunity across our Commonwealth."

Governor Shapiro recently joined CNBC's The Exchange with Scott Cohn and Kelly Evans to speak about his Administration's work to spur economic growth and significantly reform the Commonwealth's permitting process.

Since taking office, Governor Shapiro has made Pennsylvania more competitive — launching the Commonwealth's first economic development strategy in nearly two decades — and by cutting red tape, streamlining permitting and licensing, and making strategic investments that have attracted over $41 billion in private-sector investment, created more than 24,000 good-paying jobs, and expanded opportunity across the Commonwealth. That includes a historic $3.5 billion investment from Eli Lilly to build a state-of-the-art pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in Lehigh County – the largest life sciences investment in PA history.

"CNBC's rankings reflect the work the Shapiro Administration is doing to make Pennsylvania one of the best places for businesses to grow and thrive," said Department of Community and Economic Development Secretary Rick Siger. "We're creating a more competitive business climate by making strategic investments, streamlining permitting through PA Permit Fast Track, strengthening our workforce, and partnering with companies that are choosing to invest and create jobs here. The growing national recognition proves Pennsylvania is open for business."

Cutting Red Tape and Moving at the Speed of Business

Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, Pennsylvania is reforming government and delivering faster, more predictable permitting and licensing processes that give businesses the certainty they need to invest and grow:

Launched the Office of Transformation and Opportunity (OTO) to coordinate permitting and business support, assisting over 300 companies in 2025.

Created the PA Permit Fast Track Program, the first in the nation for multi-agency coordination to expedite major projects.

Introduced PAyback, a money-back guarantee for timely permit and license processing.

Companies like Excelitas Technologies, which moved its headquarters from Massachusetts to Pittsburgh; Adare Pharma, which relocated to Northeast Philadelphia; and Eos Energy, which moved its headquarters from New Jersey to Pittsburgh are choosing Pennsylvania as their home for growth.

Across the Commonwealth, manufacturers like Nokia in the Lehigh Valley and McCarl's LLC in Beaver County are expanding their facilities, creating hundreds of new jobs, and strengthening Pennsylvania's industrial backbone.

Investing in Infrastructure, Innovation, and the Workforce

The Shapiro Administration is investing $500 million in site development, including $400 million for the PA SITES (Pennsylvania Strategic Investments to Enhance Sites) Program to make more locations shovel-ready for business investment. To date, 38 projects have been awarded over $156 million, helping communities across Pennsylvania compete for new job-creating opportunities.

These investments are revitalizing downtowns, strengthening main streets, and fueling local economies — from $60 million in state capital supporting $600 million in private investment in Downtown Pittsburgh to targeted funding for small businesses through the Main Streets Matter program.

Delivering Results for Pennsylvanians

Governor Shapiro's leadership is delivering results: faster government, stronger communities, and an economy built for the future. The Shapiro Administration continues to move quickly and efficiently to process permit applications, get businesses answers, and land major deals that benefit the people of Pennsylvania.

Learn more about the Shapiro Administration's efforts to support Pennsylvania's workers and businesses and spur the economy in the Governor's 2026-27 budget proposal and discover how the Administration is creating economic opportunity to build a stronger, more competitive economy for all Pennsylvanians.