

# ECONOMIX

## Risk and Resilience in Site Selection and Economic Development

A Strategic Framework to Prepare for Tomorrow

Lake Nona, Florida  
November 13, 2025

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# New Report Launch!

## RISK & RESILIENCE

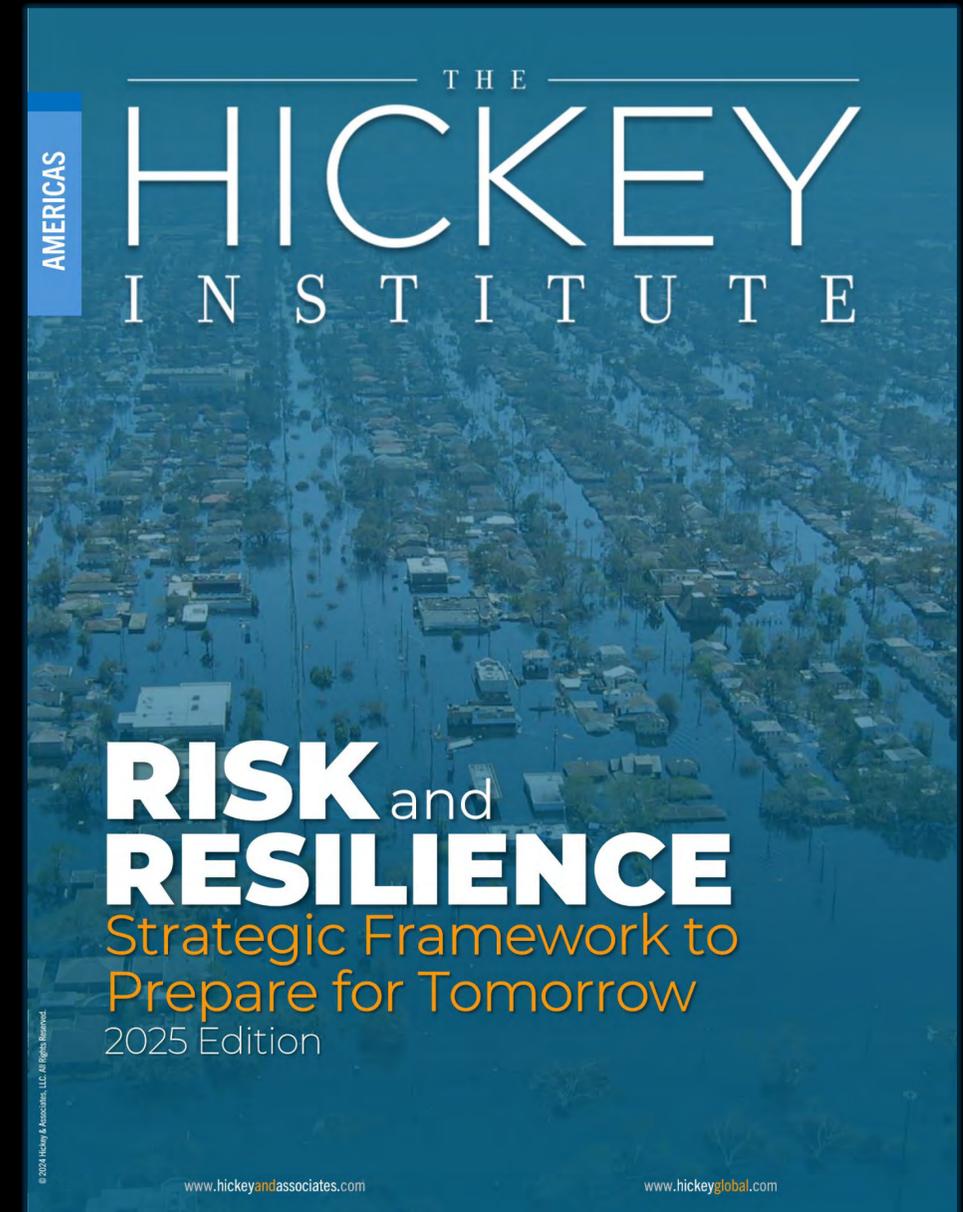
### Strategic Framework to Prepare for Tomorrow

- How resilience is reshaping site selection and economic development strategy
- Power and infrastructure readiness emerging as the new site-selection baseline
- Workforce and community strength driving operational resilience
- Proactive risk management turning disruption into competitive advantage
- Regions investing in resilience today will lead the next wave of growth

Download now!



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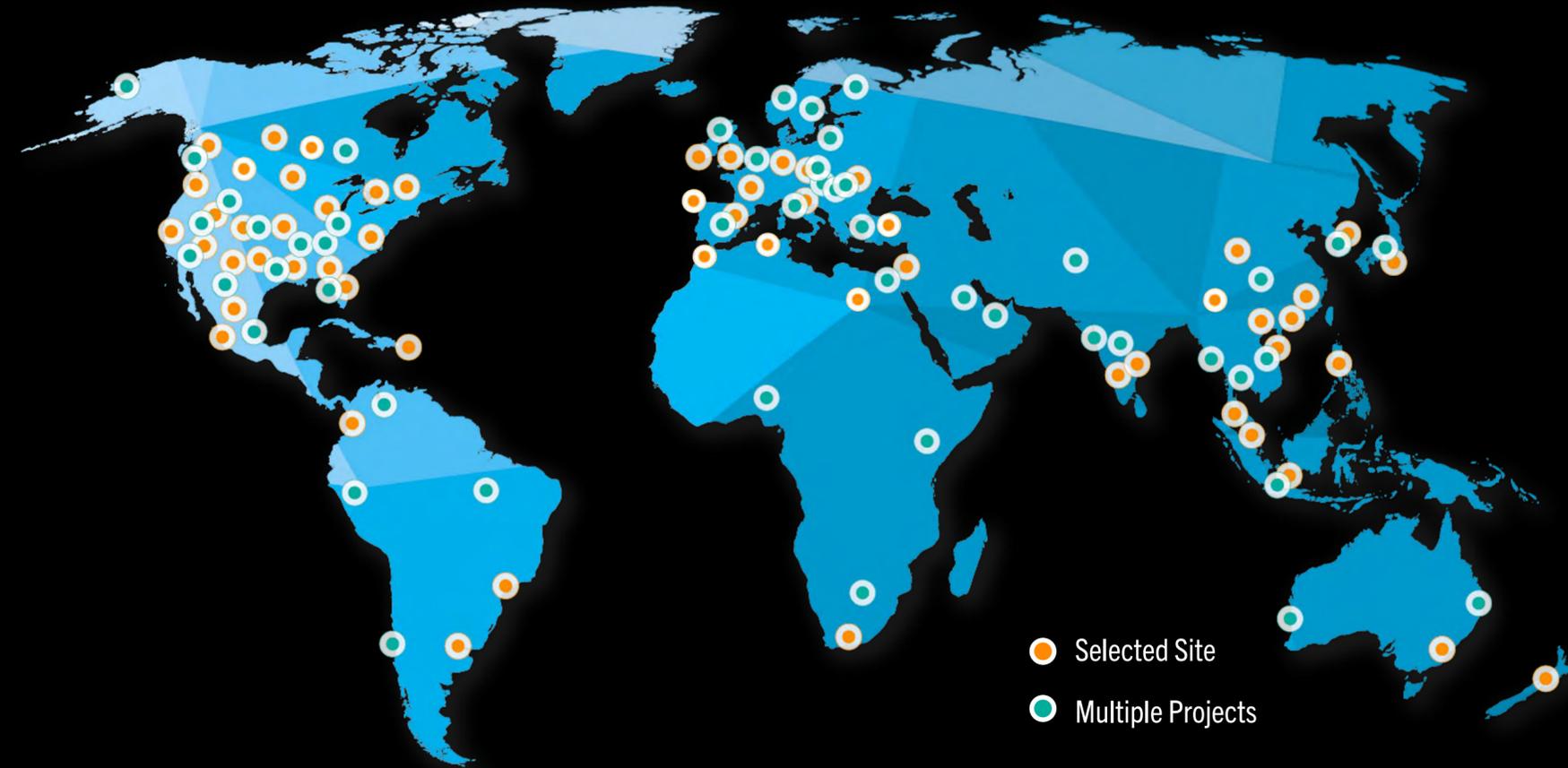


# About Hickey



We combine one of the largest independent site selection firms in the world, an international think tank, a foundation, and an economic development consulting practice into an integrated team.

EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE **AROUND THE WORLD**



**HICKEY**  
A NEW ERA IN SITE SELECTION

**HICKEY** GLOBAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING

THE  
**HICKEY**  
INSTITUTE



*Michael P. Hickey*  
FOUNDATION

*You work in a globally connected environment;  
and you need a global firm - **HICKEY***

# What are the top risk factors impacting Site Selection and Economic Development?



Power Requirements



Construction Timelines



Workforce & Immigration



Community Engagement



Disrupted Logistics



Policy & Incentives



Tariffs & Trade Policy



Electricity Costs

# Shifting Trends in Location Strategy



For **every dollar** of U.S. gross domestic product, **at least 20% more** logistic space is needed today than before the pandemic

Every company has shifted from **'just-in-time'** to **'just-in-case'**

Geographic **investment diversification** underway on a global scale

**Community engagement** is **unprecedented** and can be **unpredictable**

Some regions in North America are going to become **flash points for workforce scarcity**

Many companies have **established alternative supply chains** in the event of **global tariffs**

**Power rates are increasing** across most of the USA

# Key Risk Areas for Businesses Today

## Natural Disasters

- Across the U.S., regions are experiencing an onslaught of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and wildfires, often exceeding historical averages.
- Flood zones overlap heavily with industrial parks and transportation hubs, posing complex risk management challenges.
- Unpredictable weather patterns leads to uncertain seasonal timing and impact severity, complicating planning.

## Power & Infrastructure

- Aging infrastructure and increasing power demand nationwide causes frequent outages, impacting manufacturing lines and cold chain logistics.
- Transportation bottlenecks due to weather or aging bridges/roads can delay critical shipments, raising inventory costs and losing customer trust.
- The 2021 Texas grid failure revealed systemic vulnerabilities in power supply, transmission, and regulation.

## Immigration & Workforce Stability

- Industries dependent on immigrant labor face uncertainty due to shifting federal and state enforcement policies.
- Deportations and visa restrictions shrink labor pools and increase recruitment/training costs.
- Aging native workforce in rural areas requires strategic recruitment and retention to avoid labor shortages.

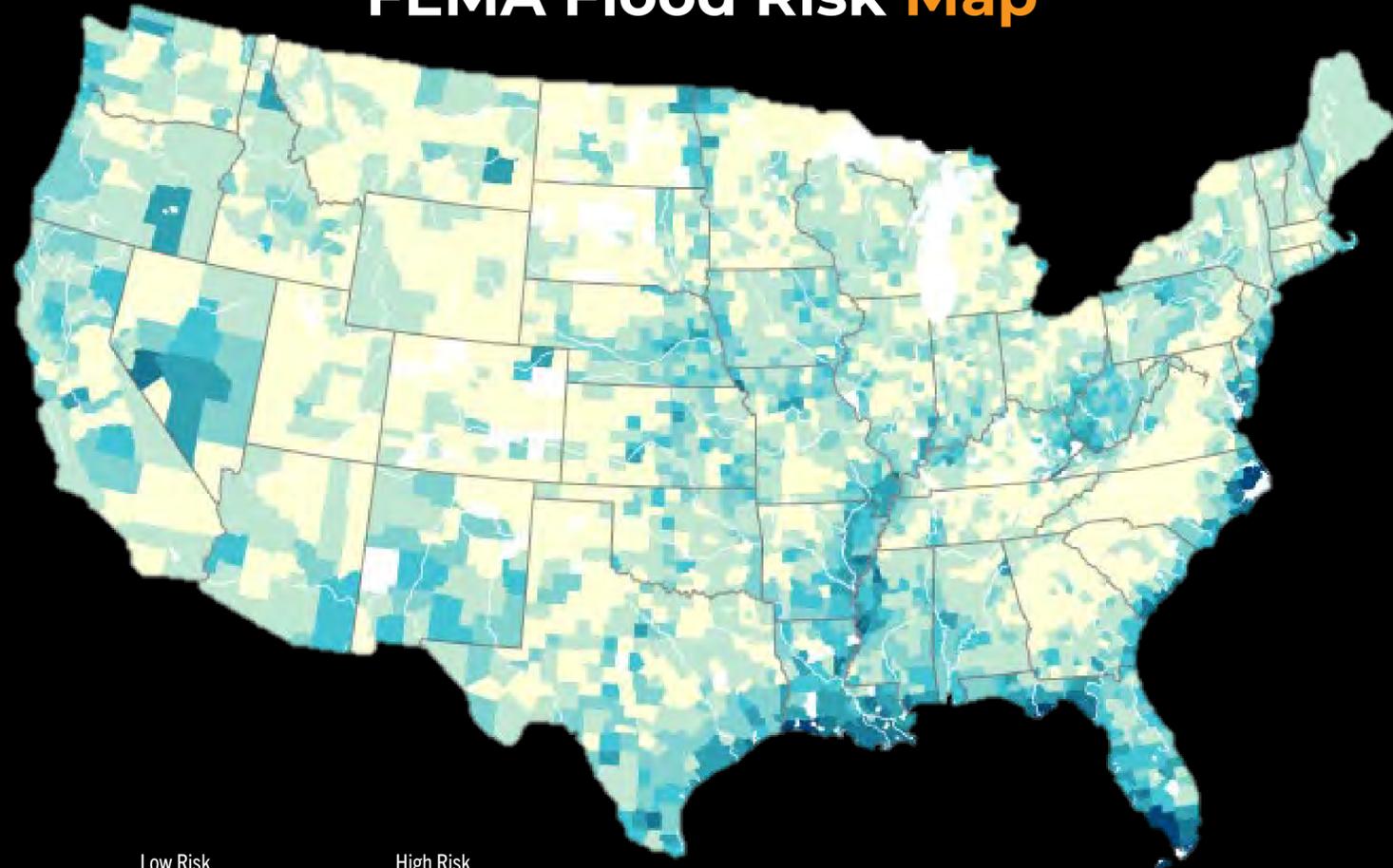
# Risk: Natural Disasters

- A primary reason to consider natural disaster risks in site selection is to **ensure business continuity**.
- When a facility is located in an area prone to flooding, wildfires, or hurricanes, it faces a higher **probability of disruptions that could halt production, delay shipments, introduce major supply chain interruptions, or temporarily displace employees**.
- For example, **a manufacturing plant located in a floodplain** may experience **operational downtime due to inundation, requiring costly repairs and cleanup efforts**.
- Similarly, a **data center in an earthquake-prone zone** without adequate seismic protections may face **significant damage, leading to data loss and service interruptions**.

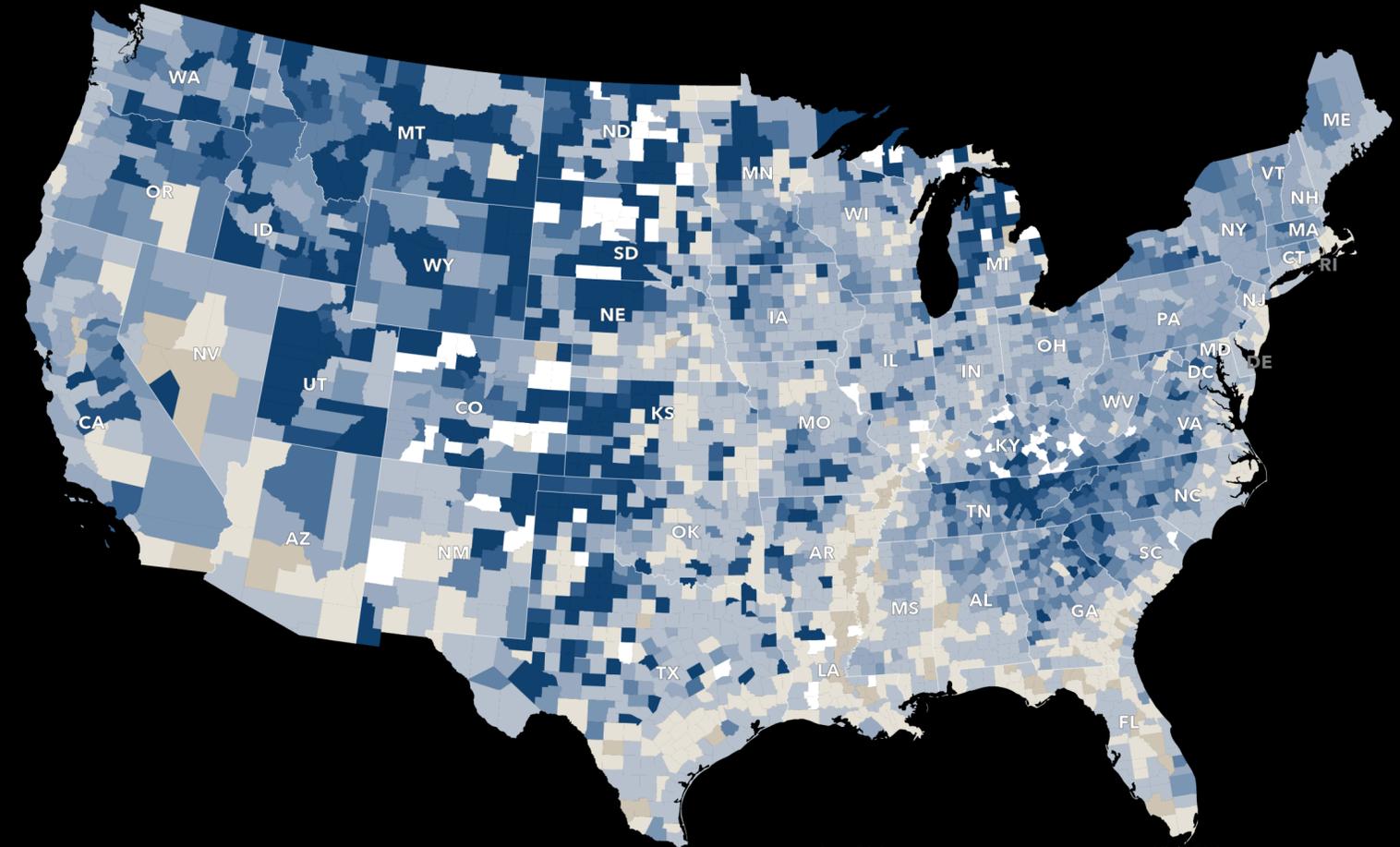
# Navigating Outdated Flood Maps



## FEMA Flood Risk Map



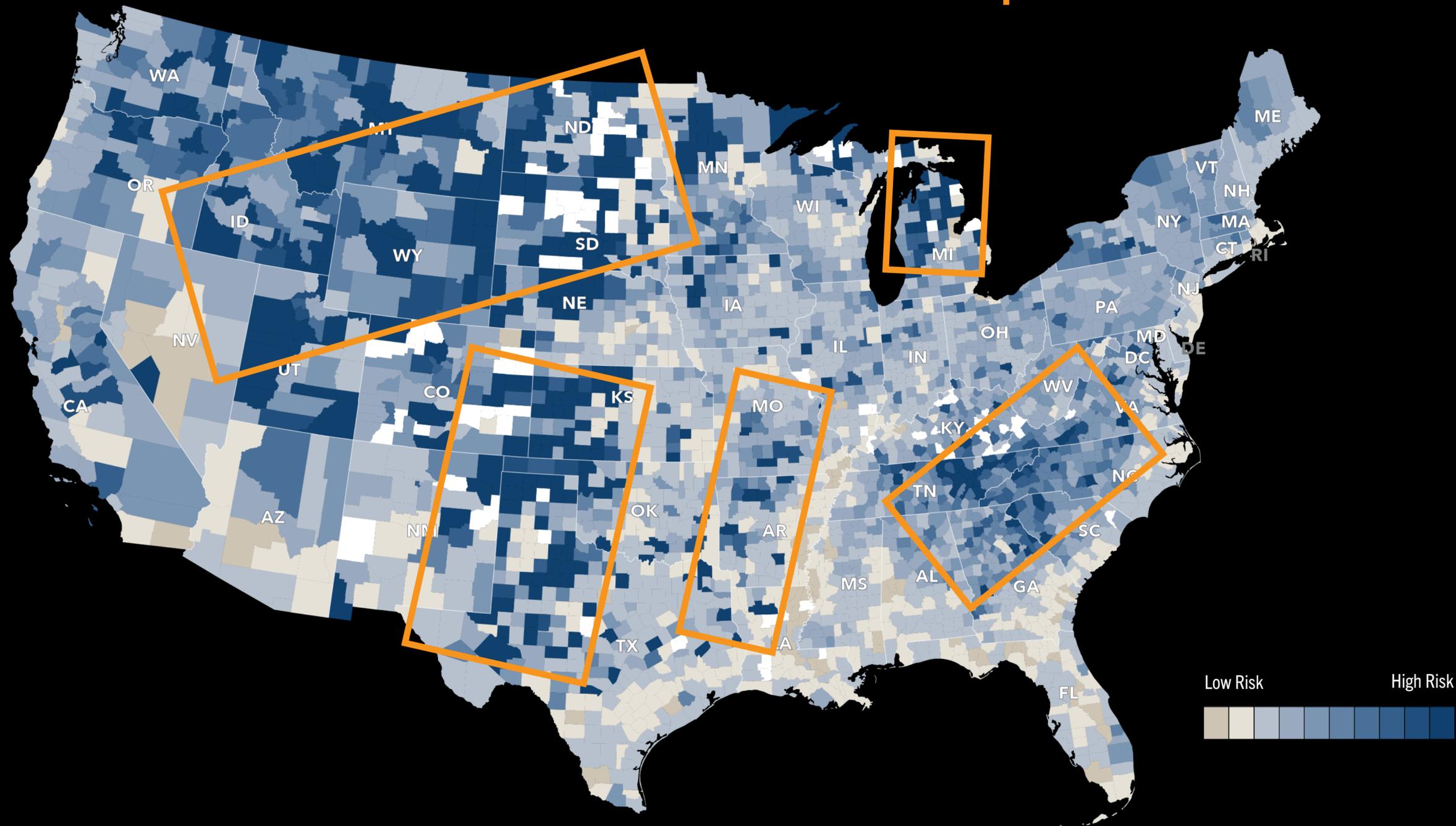
## First Street Risk Differential Map



# Navigating Outdated Flood Maps



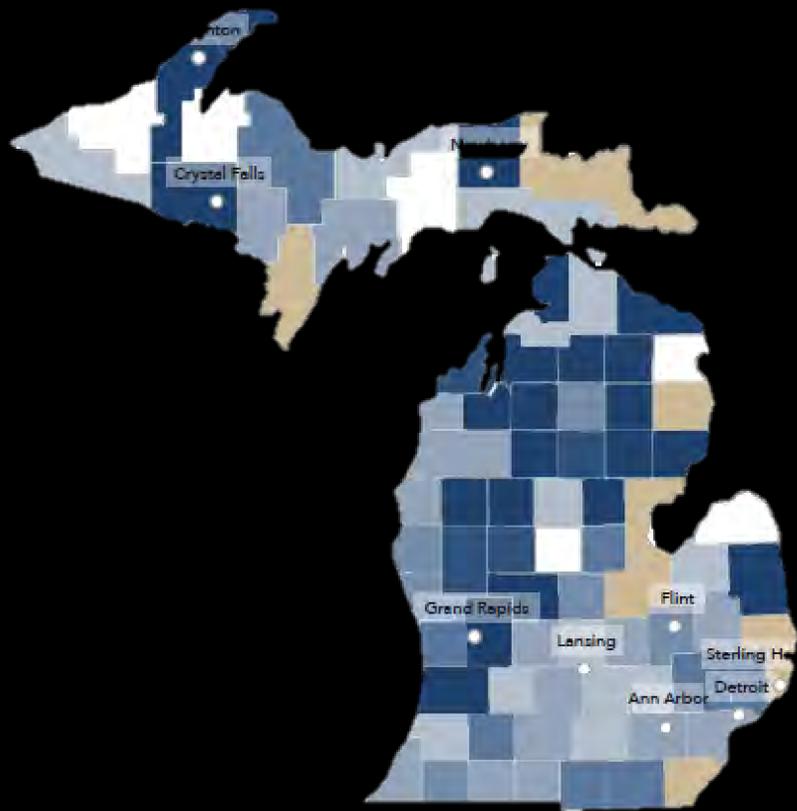
## First Street Risk Differential Map



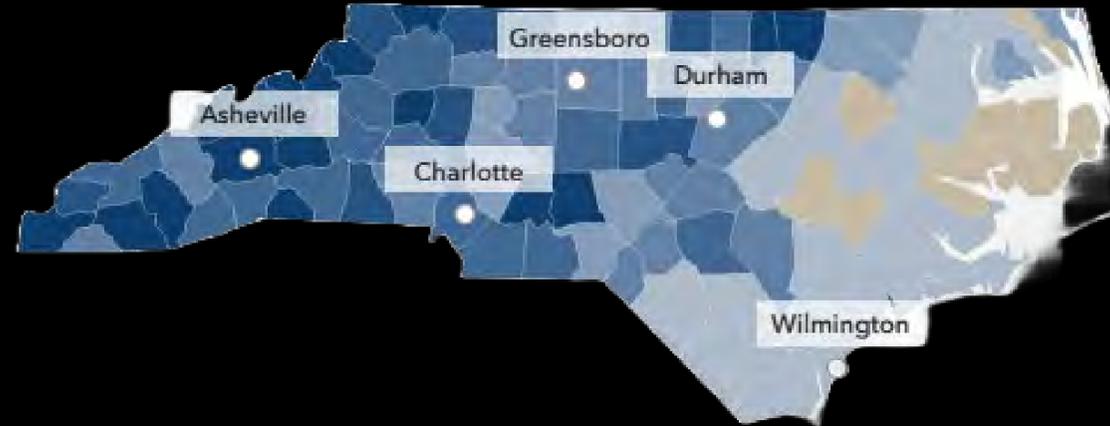
# Navigating Outdated Flood Maps

## First Street Risk Differential Map – State Level

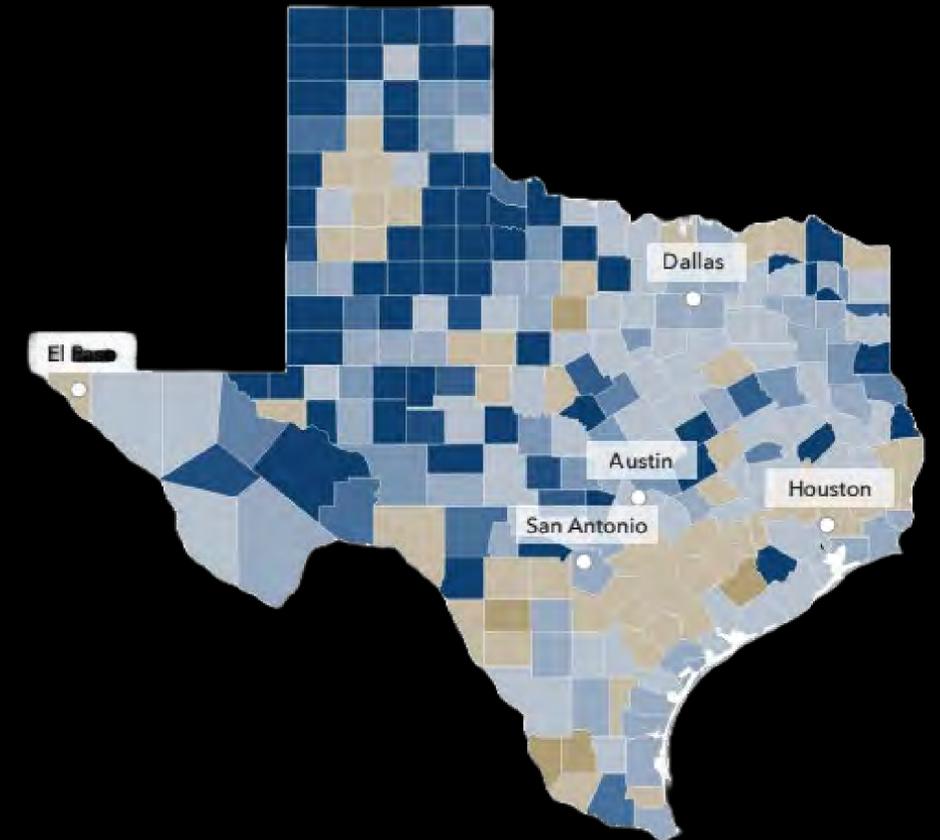
Michigan



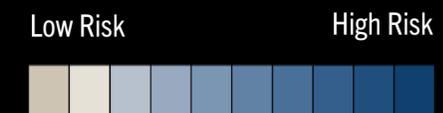
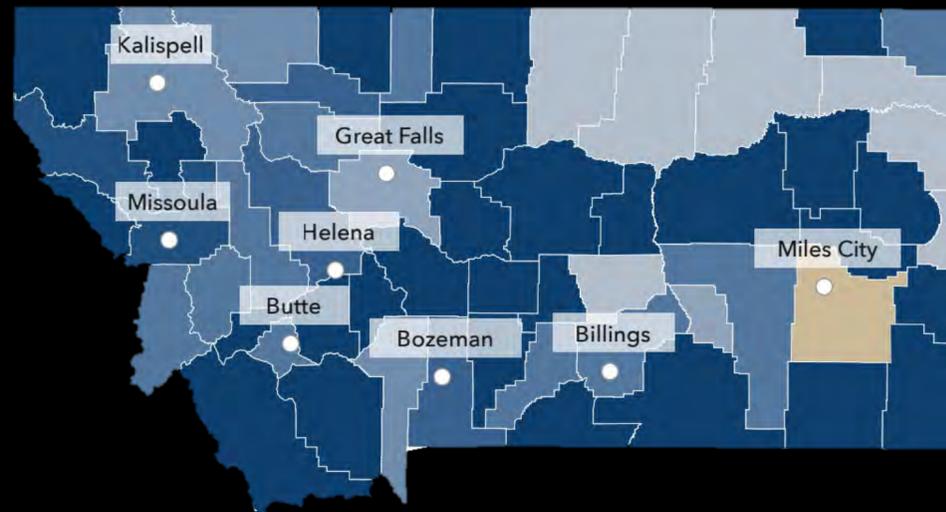
North Carolina



Texas



Montana



# Unprecedented Power Demand



## U.S. Electricity Consumption Growth Rate

EIA Short Term Energy Outlook 2025

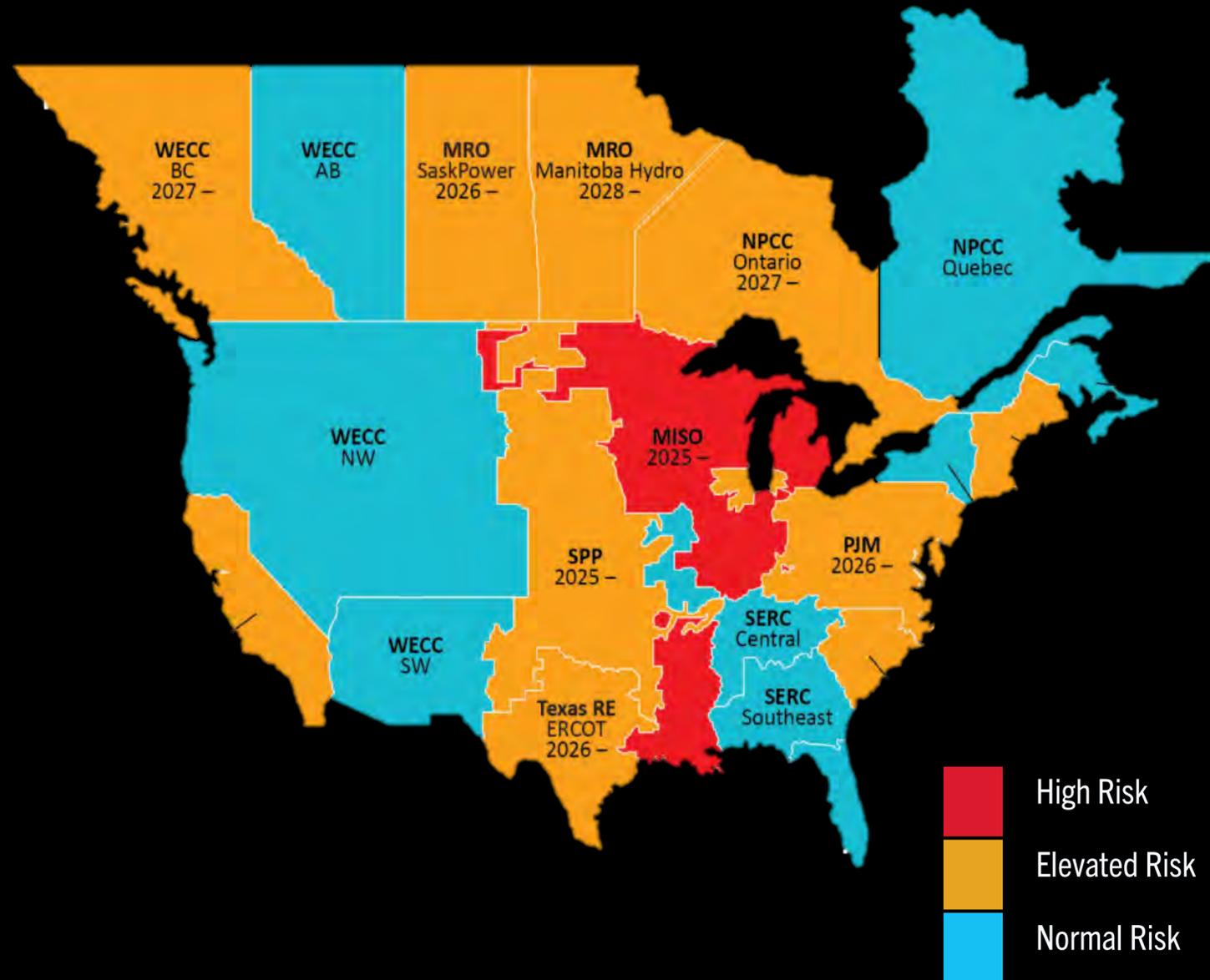


# Running Out of Power



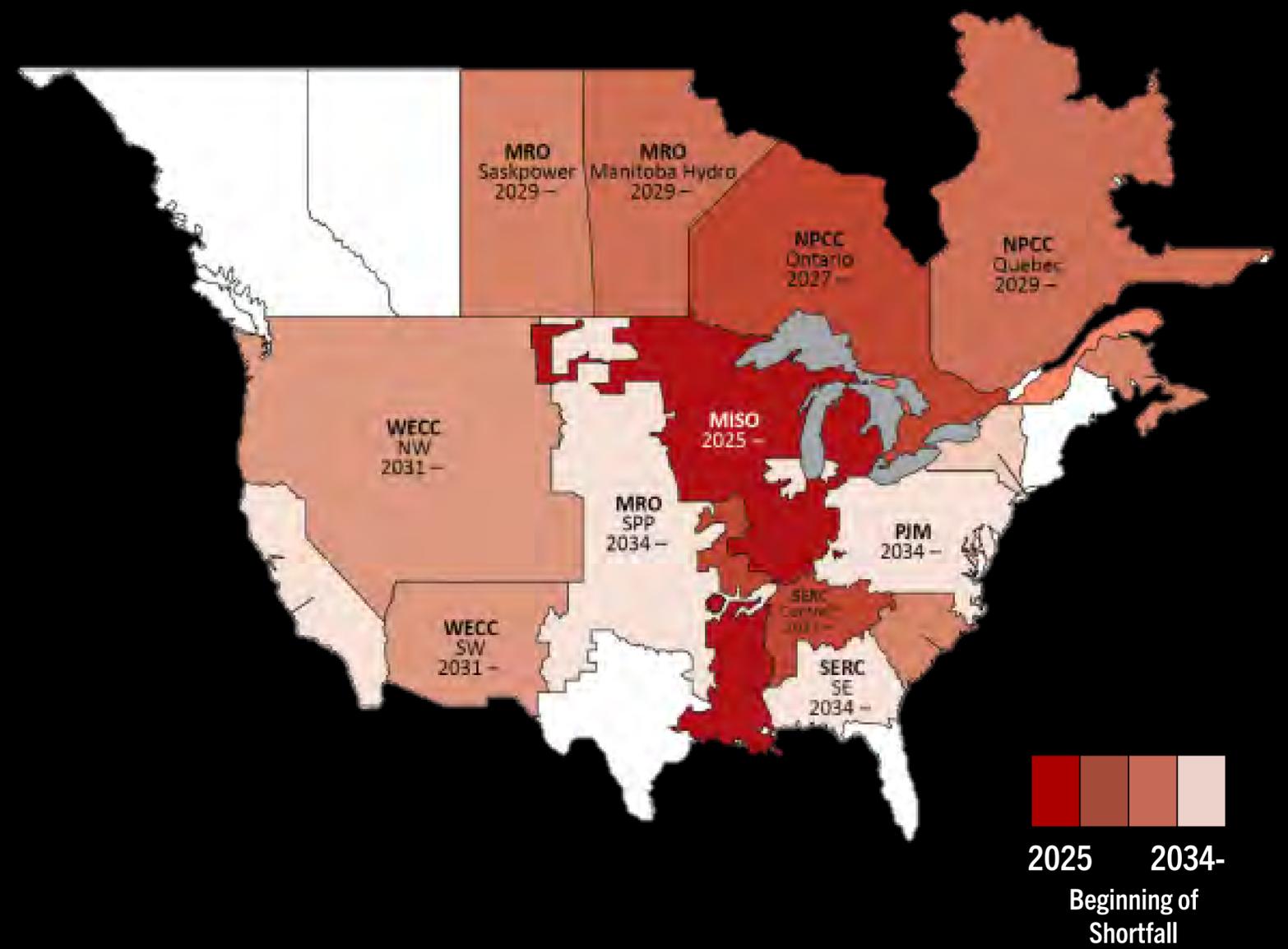
## NERC Long-Term Reliability Assessment

Risk Areas 2025-2029



## Projected Reserve Margin Shortfall Areas

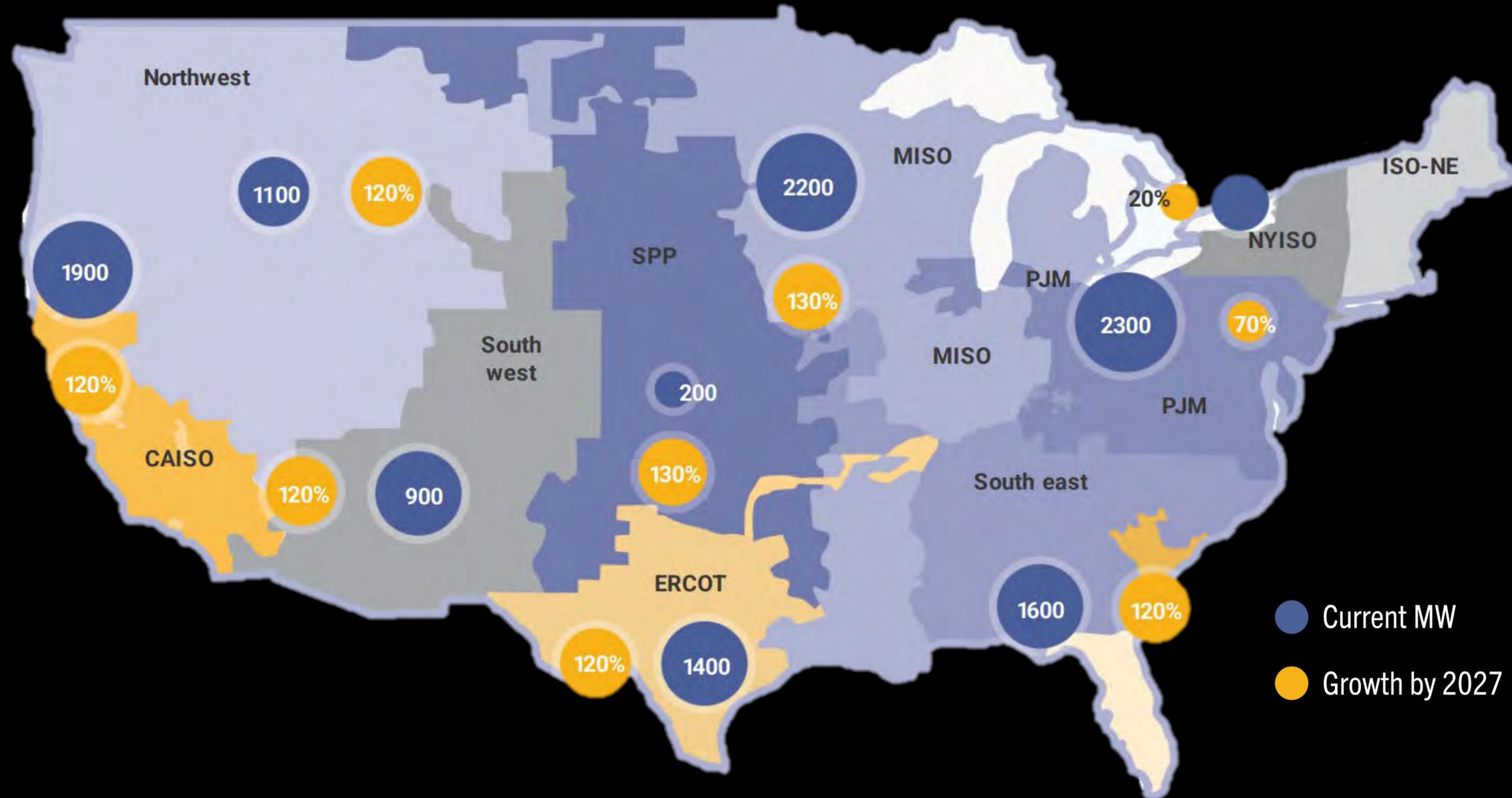
2025 through 2034



# Unprecedented Power Demand

## Data Center Demand

Growth by 2027



● Current MW  
● Growth by 2027

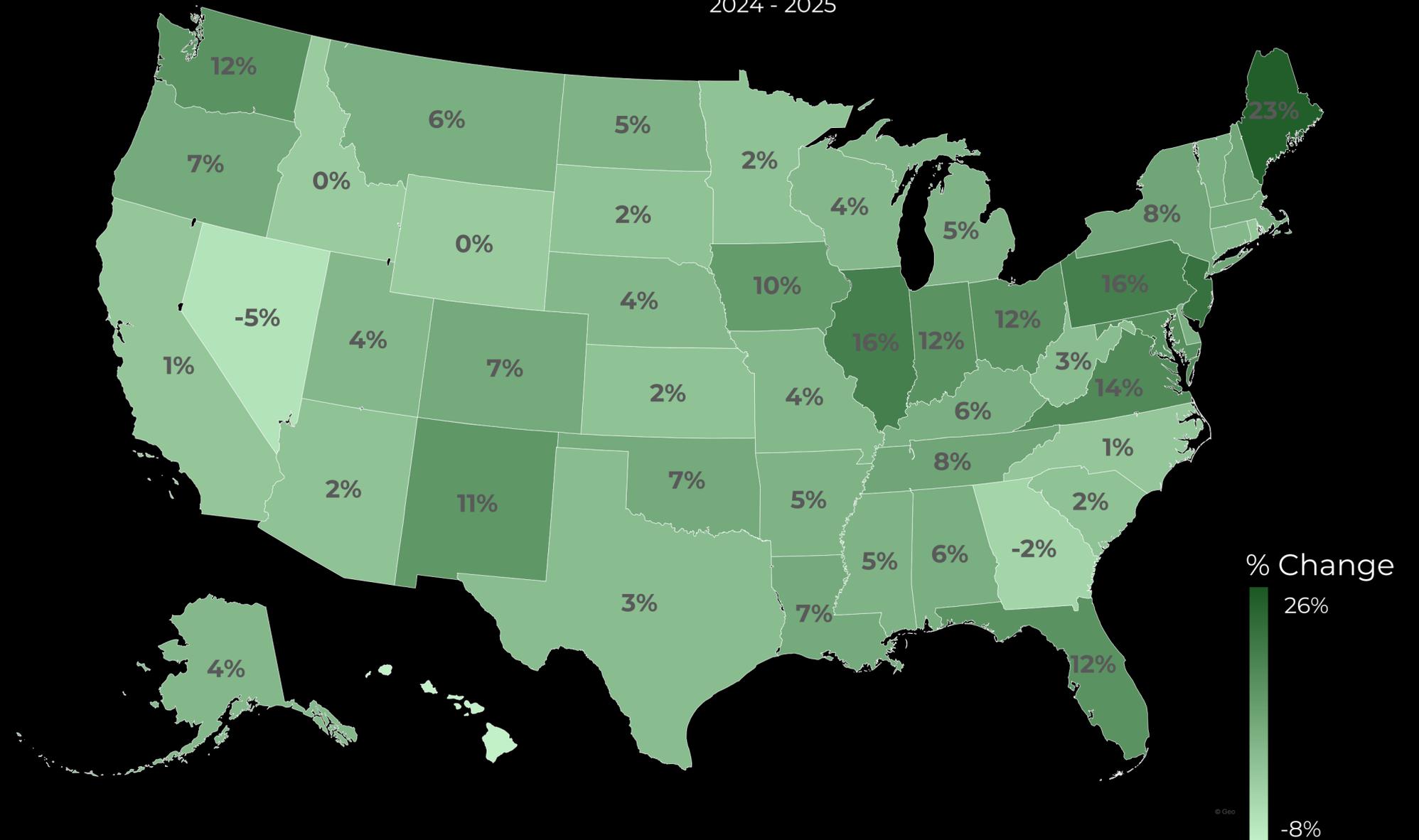
# Increasing Power Costs

- States with the largest average electricity price growth rates:  
Maine, New Jersey, Illinois, Virginia, Washington

- States with the lowest average electricity price growth rates:  
California, Georgia, Carolinas, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming

## Change in U.S. Electricity Prices

2024 - 2025



# Navigating the Power Risk

- All too often, companies don't adequately **quantify the power requirement** for a prospective facility or existing site expansion
- By **understanding what the requirements are** for a new site and/or expansion during the planning phase can be vital for **resiliency and risk management** in the future
- Defining the **power requirements for at least the next 5-10 years**, is vital to sound location strategy
- Not only does the company need to do the **due diligence on the infrastructure** and power capacity to the site for initial operations, but also **assess long-term viability**
- Understand the **time required to have the due diligence and studies** to be completed – process can take years to complete

# Shifting Workforce



## U.S. Labor Participation Rate

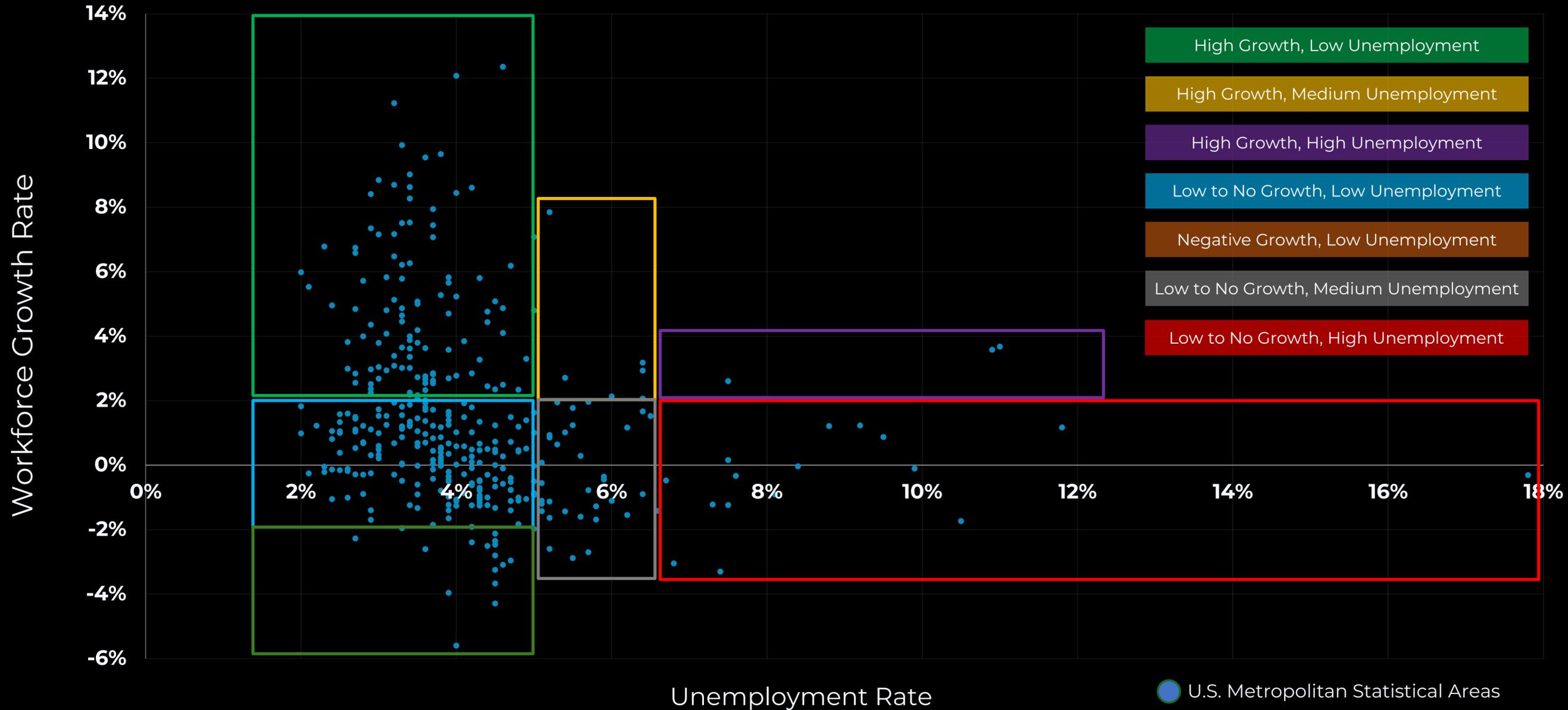
BLS, August 2025



# Shifting Workforce



## Hickey Workforce Longevity Model Workforce Growth vs Unemployment Rates



Source: Hickey Analytics, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Federal Reserve

# Shifting Workforce



## High Growth, Low Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
Myrtle Beach-Conway-North Myrtle Beach, SC	12.4%	4.6%
Lakeland-Winter, FL	12.1%	4.0%
St. George, UT	11.2%	3.2%
Wilmington, NC	9.9%	3.3%
Port St Lucie, FL	9.5%	3.6%

## High Growth, Medium Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
Homosassa Springs, FL	7.8%	5.2%
Coeur d'Alene, ID	7.1%	5.0%
Las Vegas-Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV	2.7%	5.4%
Bend, OR	4.8%	5.0%
Spokane-Spokane Valley, WA	2.1%	6.0%

## High Growth, High Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
Yuma, AZ	3.7%	11.0%
Merced, CA	3.6%	10.9%
Stockton-Lodi, CA	2.6%	7.5%
Kennewick-Richland, WA	3.2%	6.4%
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	2.9%	6.4%

## Low to No Growth, Low Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
Burlington-South Burlington, VT	1.0%	2.0%
Madison, WI	1.8%	2.0%
Grand Forks, ND-MN	-1.1%	2.4%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	0.8%	2.4%
Lincoln, NE	1.1%	2.4%

## Low to No Growth, Medium Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
Toledo, OH	-0.9%	5.0%
Rocky Mount, NC	1.0%	5.0%
Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL	-1.1%	5.2%
Bridgeport-Stamford-Danbury, CT	0.9%	5.2%
Riverside-San Bernadino-Ontario, CA	1.8%	5.5%

## Low to No Growth, High Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
El Centro, CA	-0.3%	17.8%
Yakima, WA	0.0%	8.4%
Modesto, CA	-0.3%	7.6%
Kankakee, IL	-1.2%	7.5%
Atlantic City-Hammonton, NJ	0.2%	7.5%

## Negative Growth, Low Unemployment

MSA	Growth	Unemployment
New Orleans-Metairie, LA	-4.3%	4.5%
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	-3.7%	4.5%
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	-2.5%	4.4%
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	-2.5%	4.5%
Urban Honolulu, HI	-2.3%	2.7%



**HICKEY**  
A NEW ERA IN SITE SELECTION

# Workforce Stability & Immigration

Industry		Sector Demand	Potential Impact
	<b>Manufacturing</b>	Heavy reliance on skilled and semi-skilled immigrant labor	Disruptions in production due to workforce shortages
	<b>Professional Services</b>	Difficulty attracting and retaining international talent	Dependence on diverse talent pools for innovation and client servicing
	<b>Information Technology</b>	Reliance on H-1B visa holders	Delays and restrictions in visa processing affecting project timelines. Significant cost variables.
	<b>Software Development</b>	Global competition for talent amplifies the need for streamlined immigration pathways	Talent shortages hindering product development
	<b>Agriculture</b>	Heavy reliance on seasonal immigrant workers	Labor shortages leading to reduced yields and increased costs
	<b>Construction</b>	Significant dependence on immigrant workers for skilled and unskilled roles	Project delays and rising costs

# Workforce Stability & Immigration



## Estimated Undocumented Workers

By industry

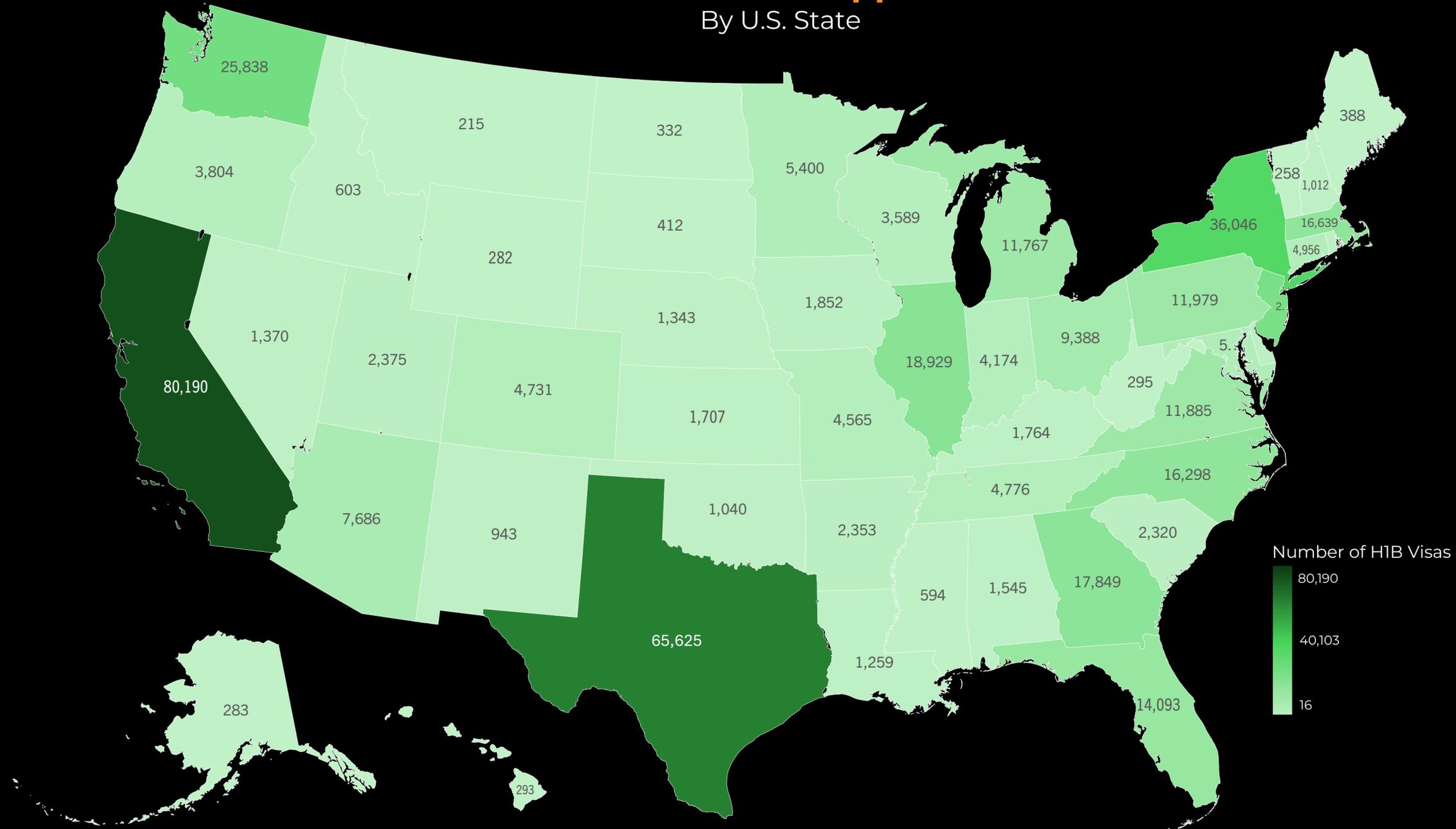
- With increased enforcement on immigration laws in the United States, there will be a significant impact on the economy and businesses
- Construction, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Agriculture, and Professional Services are already experiencing challenges
- From a localized basis, several states and communities will experience a major shift in their workforce that rely on foreign workers

Industry	Illegal Immigrant Workers	Share of Workforce
Construction	1,544,600	13.7%
Agriculture	244,700	12.7%
Hospitality	1,002,200	7.1%
General Services	500,800	6.5%
Wholesale Trade	193,400	5.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	460,500	5.5%
Manufacturing	870,400	5.4%
Professional Services	970,800	4.7%
Retail Trade	708,500	3.9%
Mining and Extraction	22,100	3.6%

# Workforce Stability & Immigration



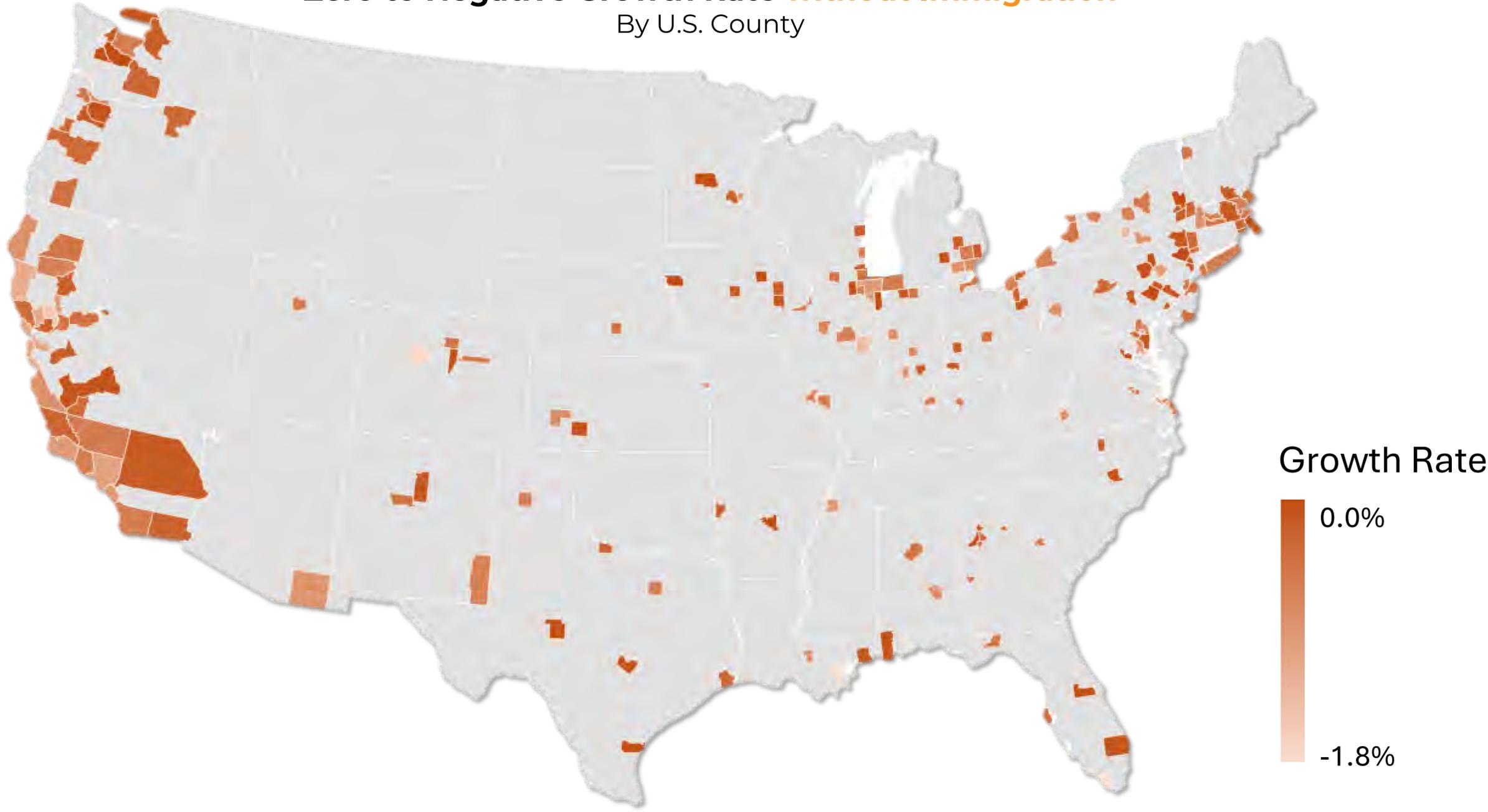
## Annual H1-B Visa Applications By U.S. State



# Workforce Stability & Immigration



Zero to Negative Growth Rate **without Immigration**  
By U.S. County



# Shifting Workforce

- Availability and affordability of childcare
- Access to reliable transportation
- Spousal employment
- Employment for youngest cohort
- 'Clean' vs 'dirty' manufacturing
- Access to affordable pathways to upskill their job
- First Months Rent
- Most important – Stop the brain drain

# Shifting Workforce



## Clarksville

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TN  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

### 18 ACRE

### CHILDCARE FACILITY

LOCATED IN THE INDUSTRIAL PARK

### 800

### CHILDCARE SLOTS

Full-Time

### 400

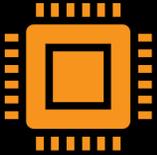
### DEDICATED SLOTS

For Park Employees +  
Active-Duty Military

# Shifting Workforce



## Core Skills by 2030



AI and big data



Networks & cybersecurity



Technological literacy



Creative thinking



Resilience, flexibility & agility



Curiosity & lifelong learning



Leadership & social influence



Talent management



Analytical thinking



Environmental stewardship

Source: World Economic Forum (2025) *Future of Jobs Report 2025*

# Shifting Workforce

## Career Pathways

### AI



Existing Industry	Current Occupation	Transferable Skills	AI Roles
Information Technology	Software Developer	systems architecture, data pipelines	Machine Learning Engineer
Business / Finance	Business Analyst	Statistical modeling, forecasting, data visualization	Data Scientist
Operations / Logistics	Supply Chain Analyst	Process optimization, KPI analysis, automation	AI Operations Analyst

### Life Sciences

Existing Industry	Current Occupation	Transferable Skills	Life Sciences Roles
Manufacturing / Engineering	Process Engineer / Quality Control Technician	Optimization, technical drawing, prototyping	Quality Assurance Specialist / Medical Device Engineer
Information Technology	Software Developer / Data Analyst	Data analysis and visualization, software coding	Bioinformatics Analyst / Clinical Data Manager
Business / Finance	Financial Analyst / Business Analyst	Budgeting and forecasting, strategic planning	Clinical Trial Project Manager / Market Access Analyst

### Industry 4.0

Existing Industry	Current Occupation	Transferable Skills	Industry 4.0 Roles
Traditional Manufacturing	CNC Operator / Maintenance Technician	Precision engineering, mechanical systems	Robotics Technician / Mechatronics Engineer
Information Technology	Network Administrator / Systems Analyst	IoT connectivity, automation integration, systems optimization	Industrial IoT Specialist / Automation Systems Engineer
Engineering / Design	Process Engineer / Industrial Designer	CAD modeling, prototyping, process improvement	Advanced Manufacturing Engineer / Digital Twin Developer

# Community Engagement



# Community Engagement



**NO** Gotion Communist-Owned Battery Plant Meeting  
April 5th, 6:30 PM @ Ferris State University  
SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF WILLIAMS AUDITORIUM  
630 S. MICHIGAN AVE. • BIG RAPIDS • MI  
**Bring Your Handmade NO Signs!**

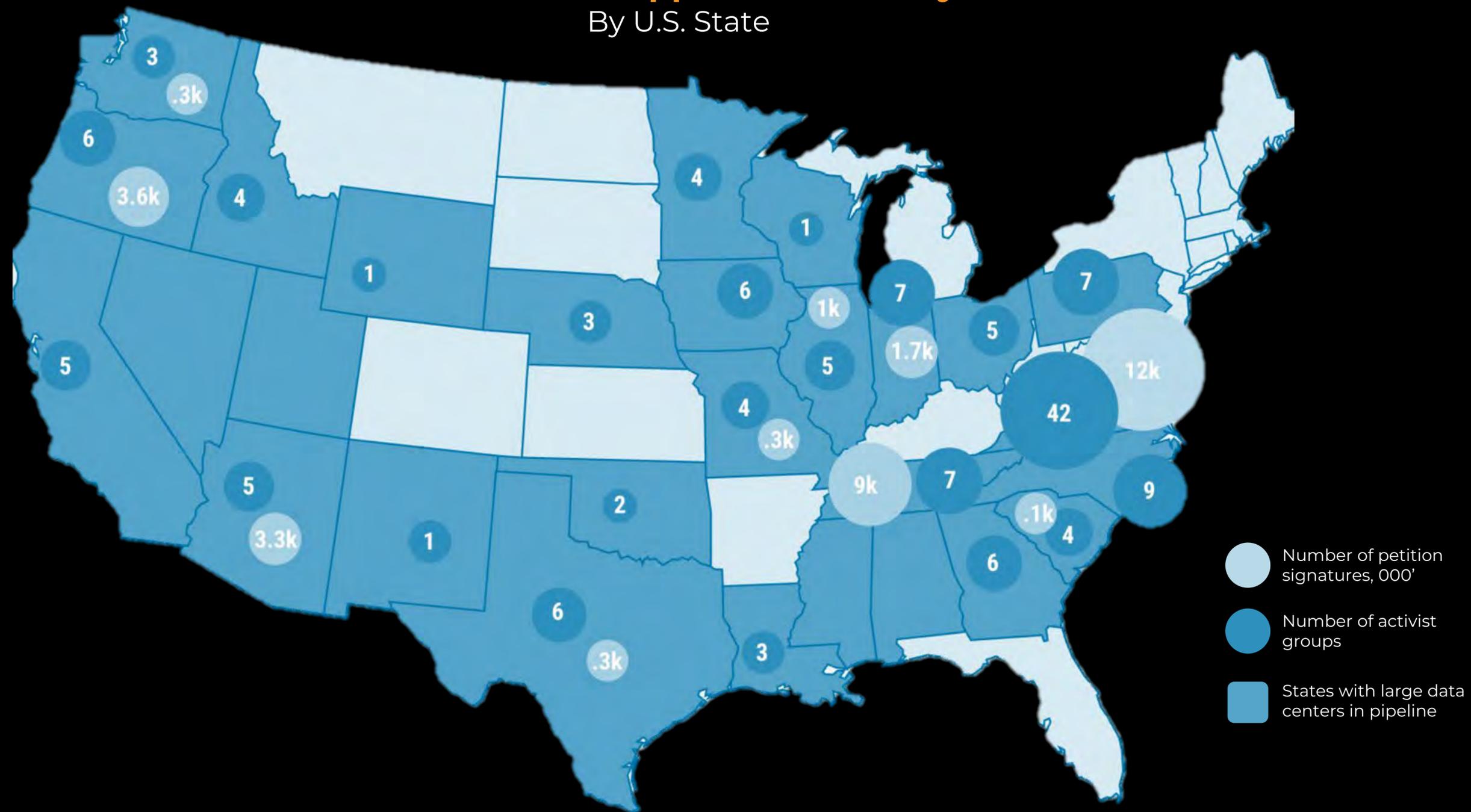


# Community Engagement



# Community Engagement

## Data Center Opposition Activity By U.S. State



Source: Hickey Analytics, Data Center Watch

# Community Engagement

- More **community engagement** for infrastructure and development
- Citizens interested in who comprises company ownership
- **Environmental and social impact** awareness
- Companies adding risk mitigation factors to the decision process of sites
- Data Centers and **cost of electricity** top three issue in upcoming **midterm elections** in 2026
- Elected Official and Stakeholder training very critical

# Navigating Risk

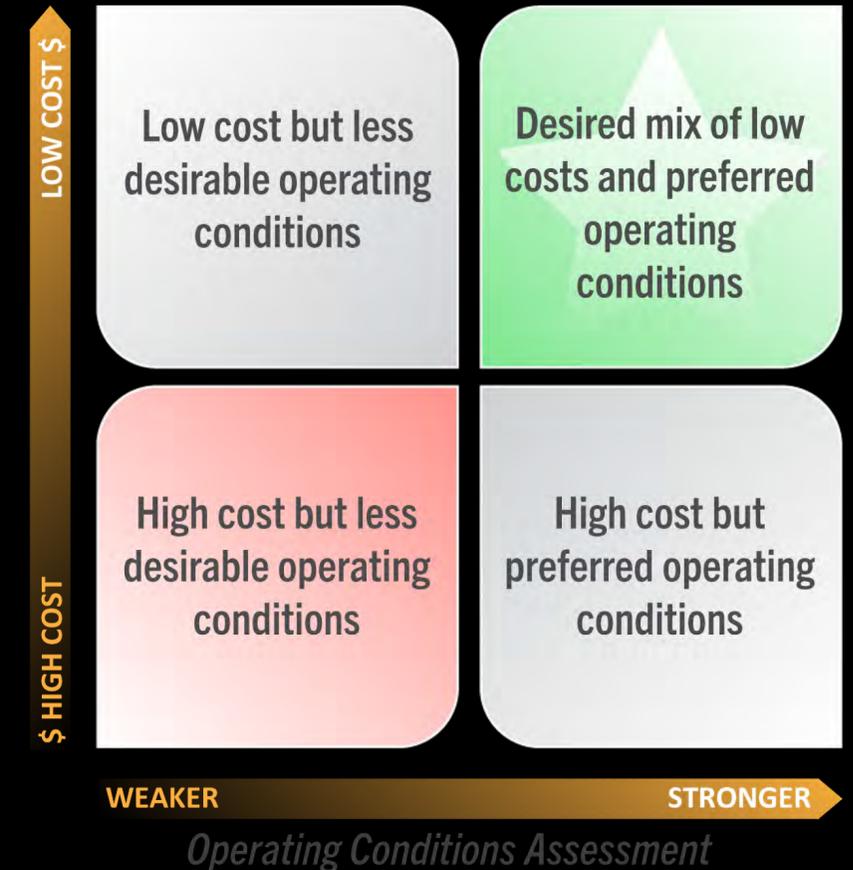
## KEY LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR GEOGRAPHIC DEPLOYMENT

CONSIDERATIONS	ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATORS & METRICS
<b>Labor Availability &amp; Quality</b>	Ability to scale/sustain, university pipeline, competencies, languages, attrition, labor regulations, costs, relocation acceptance, diversity + inclusion
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Capacity/quality/resilience of power, telco, data; real estate availability and flexibility: work-from-home readiness
<b>Risk &amp; Resilience</b>	Climate, natural disaster incl. pandemics, security, politics, macroeconomics, financial, IP, regulation
<b>Business Climate</b>	Ease of doing business, level of government support incl. incentives, bureaucracy, corruption, regulations, quality of life, ESG
<b>Operating Costs</b>	Labor, benefits, shift premiums, inflation, real estate, taxes, utilities
<b>Competitive Environment</b>	Established precedent for similar operations, incl. functions and scale, market maturity and trajectory
<b>Access</b>	Travel access to key sites, time-zone compatibility, work-from-home readiness
<b>Innovation Ecosystem</b>	Caliber/presence of universities, and other educational & research institutions, IP creation (patents, etc.)
<b>Strategic Fit</b>	Alignment with corporate strategy for region and presence of existing operations and infrastructure
<b>One-Time Costs</b>	Severance, relocation, recruitment, training, dual staffing, real estate fit-out, other equipment, restructuring charges

Labor
\$
Real Estate
\$
One-Time
\$

Financial Assessment

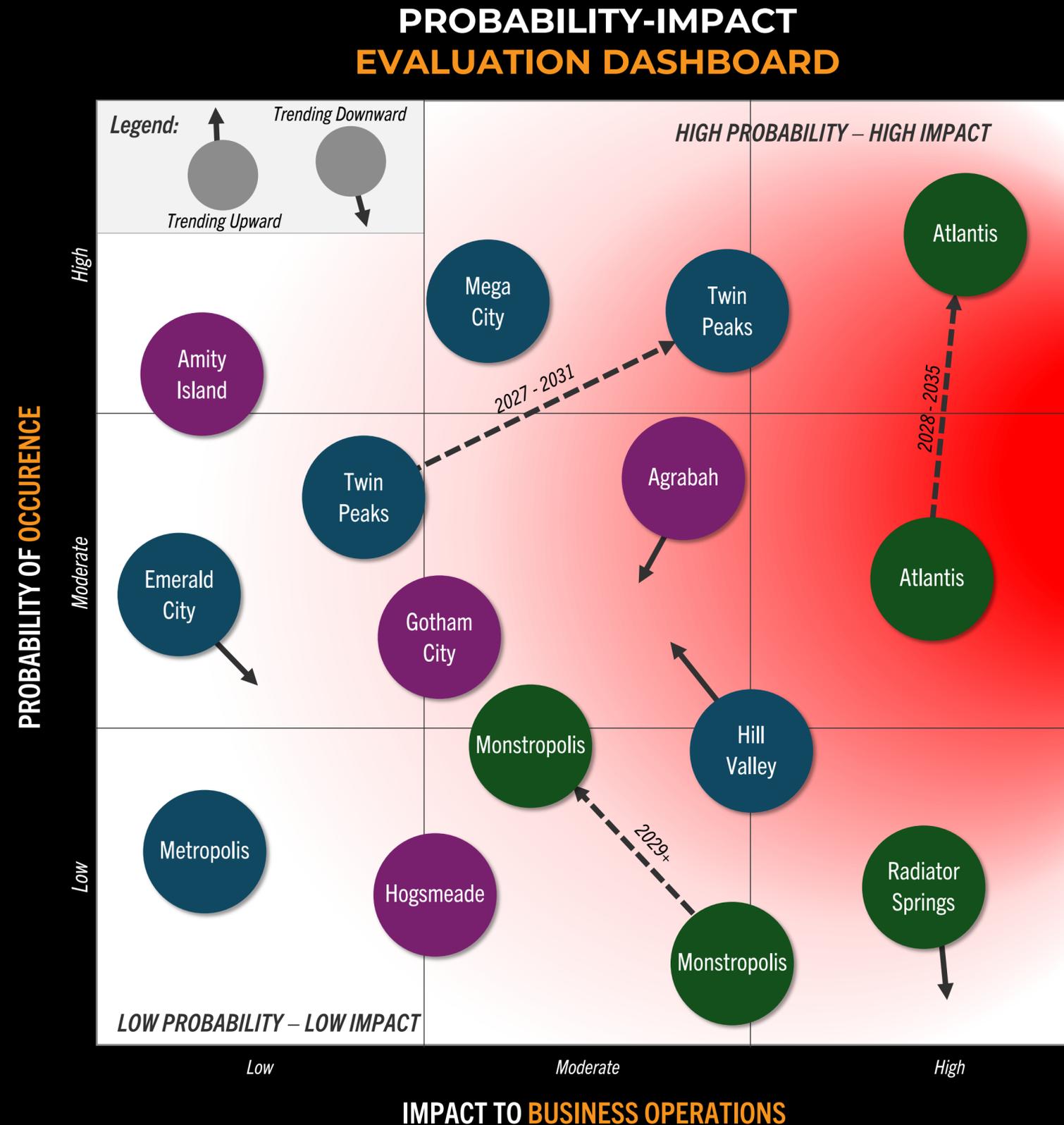
## ILLUSTRATIVE LOCATION EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



Labor Quality & Availability	Competitive Environment	Innovation Ecosystem	Business Climate
_%	_%	_%	_%
Accessibility	Speed of Execution	Character of Life	Risk
_%	_%	_%	_%

# Navigating Risk

Diagnosing risk exposure across a client's footprint down to the individual site level is the first critical step to fostering greater resilience and flexibility, and positioning operations for recovery and resurgence



# Developing Resilience



- Businesses must **evaluate risk exposure early** to avoid costly interruptions that ripple through operations, supply chains, and customer commitments.
- Increasingly, **investors and customers demand corporate responsibility compliance**, which includes resilience planning and risk mitigation. Ignoring resilience risks can mean lost contracts, fines, or brand damage.
- Supply chain disruptions during events like Hurricane Katrina, the 2021 Texas power crisis, and the COVID pandemic have shown that **risk tolerance is shrinking, and recovery speed is critical for competitiveness**.
- Location strategy that integrates resilience supports **operational continuity, workforce reliability, and risk-adjusted growth projections**.
- Resilience also affects **insurance premiums, credit ratings, and access to capital**, influencing overall financial health.

# Developing Resilience

## Scenario and Resiliency Planning

Businesses should conduct scenario planning exercises to understand how a crisis might impact existing business operations. Subsequently, that proactive review will help inform those sites with higher risk to develop contingency plans for challenging scenarios.

## Community & Utility Engagement

Direct engagement with the local community and utility partners is vital to having the on-the-ground, real-time access to data, future capacity, infrastructure investment planning, and risk profile for a site. Businesses are increasingly finding themselves in precarious situations as they work to navigate locally.

## Partner with Experts

Businesses need to partner with experts from across critical disciplines to navigate their portfolios and location strategy when it comes to the challenges ahead. For example, site engineers can provide line of sight on the transmission infrastructure, investment forecasts, and dynamics unique to the region.

# Community Resilience

**Defining community resilience** is the ability of a community, whether at the level of a city, region, or country, to withstand, recover from, and adapt to shocks or disruptions such as natural disasters, economic downturns, technological changes, or other crises.

## Absorptive Capacity

How well a community can absorb shocks without significant disruption.

For example, having diversified portfolios reduces reliance on a single site vulnerable to downturns.

## Adaptive Capacity

The ability for a community to adjust and transform in response to changing conditions.

This could involve retraining workers, investing in infrastructure, or shifting focus to alternative sites.

## Recovery Capacity

How quickly and effectively the community can bounce back after a shock.

Ability to restore operations, rebuild infrastructure, rehire or retrain workers, and return to normal economic function.

# Community Resilience



- **Economic ecosystems depend on community resilience:** Businesses rely on local infrastructure, workforce, regulatory environment, and quality of life factors to operate and grow. A community's ability to maintain these elements during and after disruptions determines its economic stability.
- **Faster recovery protects tax base and social fabric:** Quick rebound after disasters minimizes prolonged unemployment, reduces demand on social services, and maintains funding for essential services.
- **Attraction and retention of talent:** Workers and families prioritize communities that provide safety, stability, and support during crises, influencing migration and labor availability.
- **Economic developers as resilience facilitators:** They coordinate diverse stakeholder, public agencies, private sector, nonprofits, to integrate resilience into planning, investment, and messaging.

# Community Resilience



## Phases of a Disaster Cycle



**MITIGATION**

**Pre-Disaster  
Mitigation Efforts**

Mitigation Efforts  
Pre-Disaster



**PREPAREDNESS**

**Education, Outreach,  
and Training**

**Business Continuity &  
Emergency Planning**

Emergency Planning  
Business Continuity &  
and Training



**RESPONSE**

**Immediate Response  
to Stakeholders**

**Establish Business  
Recovery Center**

Recovery Center  
Establish Business  
to Stakeholders



**RECOVERY**

**Develop and  
Implement Post-  
Disaster Economic  
Recovery Plan**

Recovery Plan  
Disaster Economic  
Implementation Post-

# Community Resilience



## Critical & Proactive Strategies

### Disaster Preparedness & Recovery

Planning and coordination for rapid response and swift economic rebound

### Infrastructure Modernization & Redundancy

Upgrading critical systems to withstand shocks and maintain operations.

### Workforce Development & Stability

Building adaptable skills and supporting workers through change.

### Economic Diversification & BRE Strategy

Spreading risk across industries and empowering local enterprises.

### Strategic Policy & Initiatives

Encouraging resilient investments through strategic regulations and rewards.

### Culture Of Community Resilience

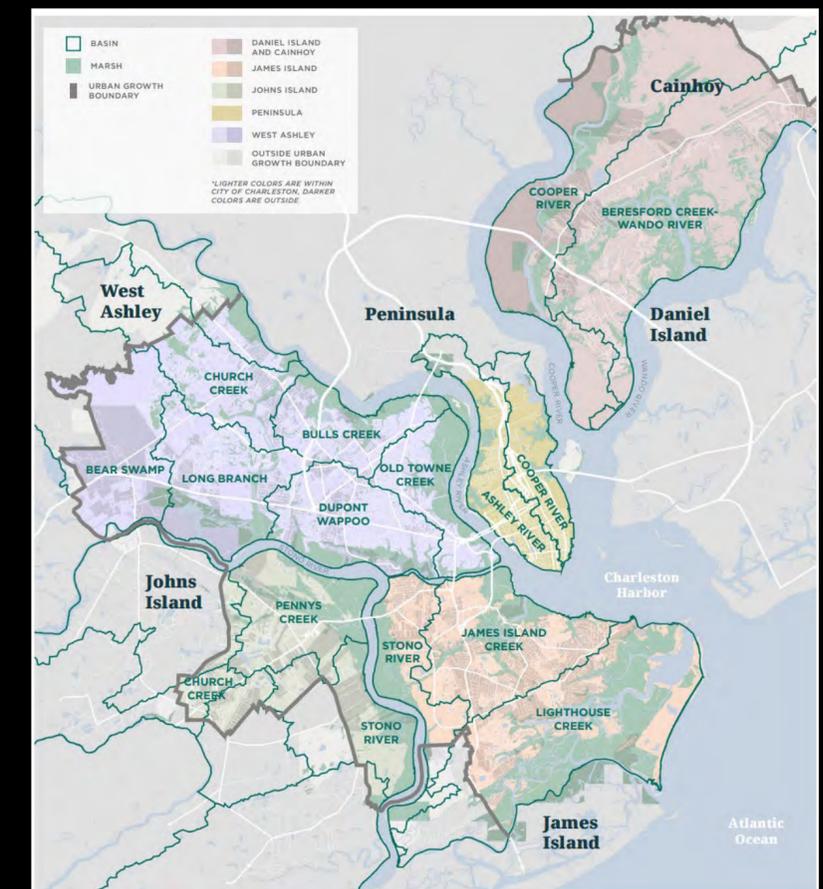
Engaging the community to embrace preparedness and continuous improvement.

# Community Resilience

## Building Codes, Zoning & Government Incentives

- **Adopt and enforce resilient building codes:** Require new developments to meet standards designed for local hazards, such as flood-proofing and wind resistance.
- **Land-use and zoning policies:** Restrict development in high-risk areas and incentivize redevelopment or green space creation that serves as natural buffers.
- **Tax credits and incentives:** Offer relief or credits to businesses investing in resilience measures like backup power, energy efficiency, and hazard mitigation retrofits.
- **State and federal grants:** Assist communities in navigating and securing funding from state and federal resources.
- **Economic development plan integration:** Incorporate resilience goals explicitly into strategic economic development and comprehensive community plans.
- **Potential for locally sourced development funding:** New rules under the OBBBA and Executive Order allows for 401K investment outside of stocks and mutual funds.

### Land Use / Zoning for Resilience Strategy Sample: Charleston, SC



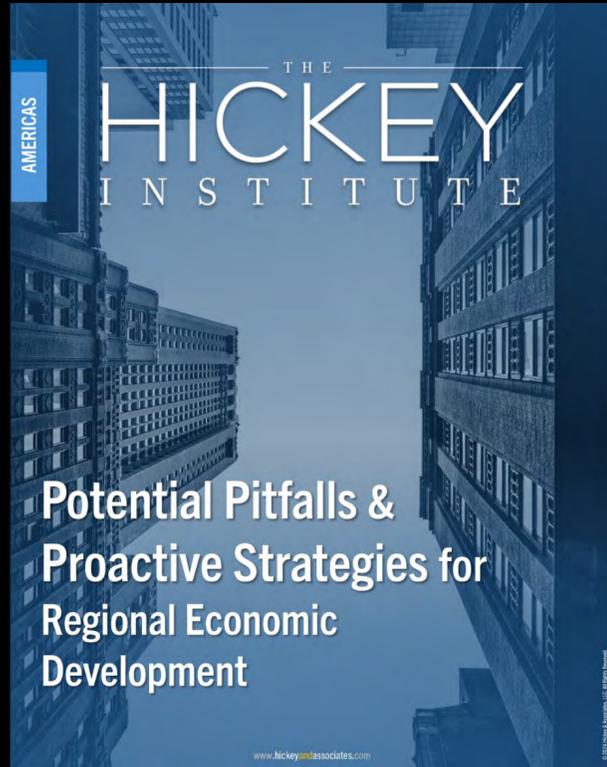
Source: Charleston, South Carolina City Plan [2023]

# Risk & Resilience

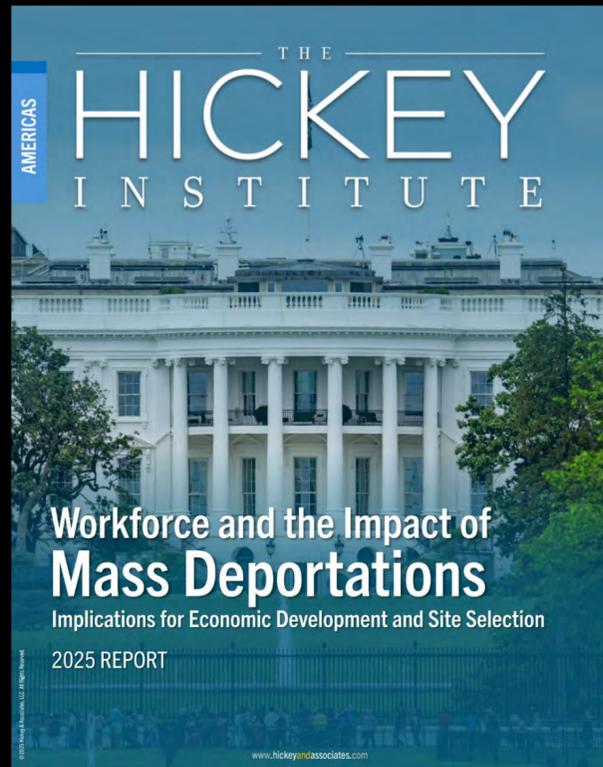


- Top risk factors driving site decisions did not exist 10 years ago
- Some risks could lead to scarcities and unplanned interruptions
- Evaluate how incentives in business strategy, location decisions and targeted economic development strategy align
- Proactive community engagement; educate neighborhood leaders; monitor social media
- Create Career Pathways for every project
- Engage elected officials on an ongoing basis
- Be prepared!

# Join the Conversation



Regional EDO Strategy Report



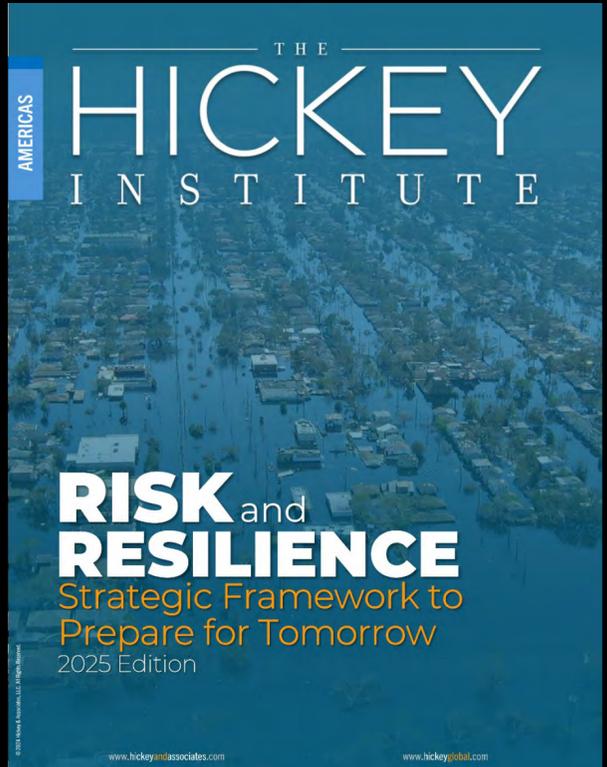
Workforce & Impact of Mass Deportations Report



Life Sciences & Medtech Location Strategy Report



U.S. Credits & Incentives Fall 2025 Report



Risk & Resilience Strategic Framework Report

now available online!



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[www.hickeyglobal.com](http://www.hickeyglobal.com)