



## **North Carolina Small Business Environmental Assistance Program Named Best in the Nation**

**RALEIGH, N.C. —** The North Carolina Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP), a vital resource that helps small businesses navigate complex environmental regulations, has once again been named the nation’s best by the National Network of State Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs.

This marks the third time the North Carolina program, led solely by Tony Pendola, has earned this prestigious national recognition—a record-setting achievement. Due to a three-year waiting period between awards, no other program in the country has reached this milestone.

The national award recognizes outstanding performance in areas such as compliance assistance, sustainability, advocacy, and collaboration at the national level. The North Carolina SBEAP continues to set the standard nationwide, with Tony Pendola playing a pivotal leadership role.

“North Carolina has consistently been one of our top contributors and Tony Pendola, individually, has been a leader in our national network for decades,” said Chris Lynch, Chair of the National Steering Committee for State SBEAPs. “I remember when he joined 26 years ago, and it’s been incredible to watch him become such tremendous advocate for small businesses.”

A recognized expert and facilitator, Pendola is particularly known for his work with the collision repair industry, regularly contributing to trade publications that reached more than 11,500 automotive professionals this past year alone. His collaborative approach has also made the NC SBEAP a trusted partner among national trade associations, helping ensure small businesses have access to critical compliance assistance from the outset.

Pendola’s outreach extends to federal regulators as well. By sharing small business innovations with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, he has helped shape more practical and effective

environmental regulations—regulations that better reflect on-the-ground realities for small businesses and safeguard the health of communities across the nation.

Established under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, SBEAPs operate in most states—though with no federal funding. North Carolina’s program is funded through state air permit fees and continues to serve as a model of excellence.

**Media Contact:**

Chris Lynch

Chair, SBEAP National Steering Committee

Director, Nevada Business Environmental Program

The College of Business at the University of Nevada, Reno

775.420.6432