

**PRIORITY RATING OF THE CHALLENGES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT MONTICELLO BREAKFAST MEETING**

| <b>Priority Points</b> | <b>Challenges to this Region's Development</b>   | <b>Under our Control?</b> |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <b>20.4</b>            | Insufficient state funding for airports and surface transportation.  | <b>L</b>                  |
|                        | The area is not very ethnically diverse & less attractive to some.   |                           |
| <b>2.0</b>             | State funding for higher education is not keeping pace with enrollment growth  |                           |
|                        | Arkansas is a flyover state.   |                           |
| <b>12.2</b>            | We lose our college graduates and the best of the younger generation to other areas  | <b>S</b>                  |
| <b>2.0</b>             | Businesses face too much uncertainty as they wait for federal government decisions on cap and trade, health care reform, etc.                        | <b>L</b>                  |
|                        | Environmental restrictions resulting from EPA policies or law suits filed by other states.   |                           |
| <b>6.1</b>             | It is hard to recruit and retain skilled workers (i.e., those without four-year degrees but with skills in technology, advanced manufacturing, etc.) | <b>S</b>                  |
| <b>4.1</b>             | The declines in the rural and small community health care system.  | <b>S</b>                  |
|                        | Amendment 82.  |                           |
| <b>4.1</b>             | The small and/or declining population.   | <b>L</b>                  |
| <b>6.1</b>             | Insufficient high-tech infrastructure, e.g., broadband.  | <b>S</b>                  |
|                        | The state's inability to compete with our neighboring states.  |                           |
|                        | The effect of term limits by which we will lose experienced legislators to represent us in the capitol.  |                           |
| <b>2.0</b>             | We lack the quality of life amenities to attract workers and employers.  | <b>S</b>                  |
|                        | Communities do not have a tax with revenue dedicated to economic development.  |                           |
| <b>10.2</b>            | Our schools are not sufficiently preparing graduates for college or for jobs.  | <b>H</b>                  |
|                        | The crime rate and concerns about public safety.   |                           |
|                        | Racial tensions and divisions within our communities.  |                           |
|                        | Insufficient public transportation.  |                           |
| <b>2.0</b>             | We are not good enough at working together regionally; we get hung up on boundaries; our plans and efforts are not coordinated.                      | <b>S</b>                  |
|                        | Our per capita tax burden is too great.  |                           |
|                        | We need new leadership; leaders with vision and willingness to work to the greater good; and the next generation of leaders.                         |                           |
| <b>16.3</b>            | Drugs—workers are unable to pass drug tests; they undermine our families and communities.  | <b>S</b>                  |
| <b>2.0</b>             | Site selectors have preconceived notions that work to our disadvantage.  | <b>N</b>                  |
| <b>10.2</b>            | Too much of our available labor pool lacks skills and a work ethic.  | <b>L</b>                  |
|                        | Arkansas's usury law.  |                           |
|                        | Card check or employee free choice.  |                           |

The discussion groups allocated a total of ten (10) priority points across the twenty plus challenges. In this table, the priority assessment has been converted to a 100 point scale. The discussion groups then assessed the highest priority challenges on the extent to which we can “control” them locally, regionally, and/or at the state level, with H for high control, S for some, L for low control, and N for no control. This table reports an average assessment of the degree of control.