- C^3E kept the Committee apprised of its findings with presentations throughout the life of the Committee.
- As part of its research, C^3E organized an *Economic Development Incentives Symposium* and invited the Committee members to attend. Five world-renown academic experts in the field of economic development joined about 60 North Carolinians in a four-hour examination of incentives in general and, more specifically, the use of incentives in North Carolina. The panel of experts included the following: Dr. Michael Luger, Dean, Manchester Business School, Manchester, England; Dr. Ed Feser, Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Dr. Dagney Faulk, Director of Research, Center for Business and Economic Research, Ball State University; Brian Dabson, President, Rural Policy Research Institute, and Professor, Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Columbia; and Dr. Timothy Bartik, Senior Economist, Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Kalamazoo, Michigan. All of the panelists commended the North Carolina General Assembly on its willingness to reexamine its policy on incentives. The panelists drew the following conclusions, based on national research:
    - The effectiveness of economic development incentives is mixed and the cost of incentives is often expensive.
    - Evidence suggests that companies may 'game' the system by bidding one state or community against another.
    - Incentives cannot replace traditional business growth factors, such as good infrastructure, trained workforces, and quality lifestyles.
    - Statutory tax incentives appear to be the least effective form of economic development policy.
    - Discretionary incentives may be used more strategically and effectively than statutory tax incentives.
    - Human resource incentives, such as customized job training, provide the best return to the community and appear to be most important in business location decisions.
    - Targeting incentives to distressed areas makes policy sense, but there is scant evidence that they make a difference in location decisions.
    - Using incentives in growing urban areas is of marginal importance in business location decisions and may contribute to growth management problems in those areas.
    - Replacing incentives with adjustments in the corporate tax structure should be considered.
    - Data, information, and research are critical in deciding how to best allocate tax expenditures and General Fund appropriations among the various economic development incentive programs.