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# 12 Days of Regulatory Insights: Day 9 – The Economic Development Edge

## SPEAKERS

David B. Dove | Kirk W. Dillard

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In this episode of our special *12 Days of Regulatory Insights* podcast series, RISE partner David Dove is joined by colleague, former State Senator Kirk Dillard, partner at Troutman Strategies to examine 2025 economic development trends and what to expect in 2026. Kirk currently serves as chairman of the Regional Transportation Authority in metropolitan Chicago and was recently appointed to the Illinois Economic Development Corporation. David is the chairman of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and actively represents clients in economic development projects across the U.S. David and Kirk examine 2025 economic development trends and what to expect in 2026.

David and Kirk discuss how shifting federal regulations and tariffs continue to shape onshoring and investment decisions, particularly across the Midwest's advanced and traditional manufacturing, agribusiness, clean energy, and emerging sectors like quantum computing, microelectronics, and AI. Drawing on their government and dealroom experience, David and Kirk highlight "positive lawyering" for growth projects — aligning incentives, grants, and workforce programs — while emphasizing the importance of knowing the client's business and decisionmakers. They explore the role of local partnerships and chambers, navigating community concerns in rural siting (from truck counts to road redesigns), and the pivotal infrastructure needs behind data centers, including utilities, water, and grid capacity.

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