



Fiscal Responsibility, Legal Fairness, Job Development and Infrastructure Improvement Underpin Business Community's Policy Goals



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While 2020 was fraught with incredible challenges for all West Virginians, Governor Justice and his team have led our state through the worst of the pandemic using common sense, expert counsel, and unwavering compassion.

And while many states have buckled economically under the strain, West Virginia is posting record budget surpluses. Our state is in better shape financially today that it was four years ago.

Newly elected Senate President Craig Blair, House Speaker Roger Hanshaw and the Republican Legislature have delivered incredible policy gains and transformed our

business climate since they took control of the West Virginia Legislature after the 2014 election. This stellar team knows it must continue a path focused on fiscal responsibility, legal fairness, job development and infrastructure improvement so that West Virginia's economic tide continues to rise.

At the West Virginia Business & Industry Council (BIC), we stand shoulder to shoulder with Governor Justice and the legislative leadership because those four goals are the foundation of BIC's nearly forty-year history of advancing pro-growth policies under the Golden Dome.

While state revenues continue in the black, lawmakers will need to be strategic and responsible as they tackle massive challenges such as eliminating the state income tax and advancing West Virginia's broadband infrastructure.

We share in the Legislature's

goal of providing business liability protection from COVID-19 related lawsuits, establishing an Intermediate Court of Appeals and tort reform initiatives that bring our civil justice system in line with neighboring states and the rest of the country.

We encourage increased investment in infrastructure development and maintenance for our roads, bridges, public buildings, water, sewer, broadband, etc. And we must implement policies that sustain and grow employment in our industrial base. The coal, gas and manufacturing industries are foundational to our state's economy and we must keep them strong.

We support maintaining the professional licensure designation for our engineers, architects, accountants, surveyors, foresters, contractors, and real estate professionals, among other occupations. And we must implement

new workforce development strategies so West Virginia can produce enough qualified, drug-free workers to fill the many jobs available.

Enacting policies that ensure the stability and solvency of our state's hospitals and healthcare providers are needed now more than ever. And we must be cognizant of the impact of tax increases and additional regulation on our retailing community, particularly those located on our borders.

In the decades that BIC members have been foot soldiers for change in West Virginia, I cannot remember a time when our state was in a better position to be a national leader on so many fronts. Our membership represents nearly every facet of this state's economy, and we are excited and eager to see responsible, pro-growth policies make their way to Governor Justice's desk.

WV BIC Priority Issues

- BIC supports legislation to provide business liability protection from COVID-19 related lawsuits.
- BIC supports efforts to amend the West Virginia constitution to address regressive tax policy, like the business inventory and machinery tax.
- BIC supports legislation to create an Intermediate Court of Appeals.
- BIC supports policies

- that increase investment for infrastructure development and maintenance, to include roads, bridges, public buildings, water, sewer, broadband, etc.
- BIC supports protecting professional licensure designation to include those in the following professions: engineers, architects, accountants, surveyors, foresters, and real estate professionals.
- BIC supports policy ini-

- tiatives that provide incentives to local governments that consolidate.
- BIC supports the long-term sustainability of PEIA, with emphasis on reducing the cost shift to West Virginia's employer community.
- BIC supports increased investment in workforce development.
- BIC supports amending the medical cannabis legislation to make the program

- more viable and sustainable.
- BIC supports tort reform initiatives that bring our civil justice system in line with neighboring states and the rest of the country.
- BIC supports efforts to statutorily address Mandolitis claims, which provide an employee the right to sue for personal injury damages in addition to receiving workers' compensation benefits.

See ISSUES, 18