



## A Business and Economic Recovery Plan for West Virginia

- I. Expand Broadband:
  - Working remotely is all the more important. Let's correctly deploy federal assistance to strengthen internet capabilities.
  - Make West Virginia an attractive site for remote and telecommuting workers.
  - Attract telecommuting workers to West Virginia for quality of living and outdoor enjoyment.
  
- II. Address the Skills Gap:
  - Double down on the importance of preparing students for next phases of education, career training and life services. West Virginia must set annual targets and identify strategies to increase the number and percent of West Virginians who are attaining post-secondary degrees.
  - Create a talent exchange platform to rapidly address the mismatch of labor supply with demand for workers.
  - We must allow students time to catch up following the lost in-person instruction time.
  - Use this time for worker retraining and skill development
  
- III. Strengthen Health Care:
  - Bring COVID-19 testing to scale; more and better testing will speed the return to work process.
  - Examine what does work & doesn't work within our healthcare system.
  - Set a goal to be the most inoculated state when an inoculation becomes available.
  - The financial viability of West Virginia's hospitals must be addressed. Loans and grants to hospitals to ensure their continued health and viability should be considered.
  - Carefully review statutes and regulations regarding Telehealth in West Virginia.
  
- IV. Assist small business:
  - Based on low infection rates become a mecca for senior tourism.
  - Credit access needs for small business will remain high.
  - Angel investors will see opportunity as the economy reopens.
  - Establish a coalition with the State & Chambers to have immediate, direct input from business to decision makers.

- V. Stable, predictable legal environment:
- Let's take steps now to head off an expansion of lawsuits that are almost certain to result from COVID-19.
  - A thorough examination of liability issues will be urgently needed.
- VI. Provide Incentives for healthy choices:
- Recognize the connection between health and economic prosperity in our communities.
  - Discourage tobacco use.
  - Provide financial incentives for healthy living choices.
  - Explore a Community Health Infrastructure Investment Fund to create a source of matching funds available to communities to improve infrastructure needed for residents to make healthy choices.
  - Work with local leaders to address social detriments of health at a community level.
- VII. Right Size Government:
- West Virginia has more state government workers per capita than 43 states. Let's examine and identify opportunities for efficiency in government services.
- VIII. Make Sure Everyone Counts
- All efforts to obtain an accurate census count is critical. Voting will also be a challenge in 2020. Efforts to boost voter turnout should be undertaken.
- IX. Win the battle for reshoring:
- Bring off-shore manufacturing back to West Virginia.
  - Many businesses are finding that work-from-home arrangements are successful. West Virginia must sell its excellent quality of life to individuals who can live in our state and work remotely.
- X. Specific Government Actions to include:
- Grants to reopen small business.
  - Keep the benefits pipeline open and moving.
  - Accelerate state and local government payments to local vendors.
  - Immediately address pressing needs for up-to-date technology and human resource management within state government. State government can learn from this crisis and must adopt 21<sup>st</sup> century data processing systems and 21<sup>st</sup> century human resource management practices.

- XI. Foster the Energy Market and Encourage Production of Low-Cost Energy.
- West Virginia is an energy-producing state, but COVID-19 has led to a significant over-supply that has led to plummeting energy prices. West Virginia must look at new sources of demand and utilization for our vast energy resources.
  - Work to assure the viability of energy production at all levels.
- XII. Preserve the private insurance market
- Business cannot reopen/function without insurance protections.
  - Preserving healthy, well reserved and thriving insurance companies is crucial for the future well-being of all employers.
  - Insurers must be protected from attempts to force coverage of items that were not covered under existing policies.