

Legislative Report
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by Val Coluni

Significant economic//business reports are providing important information dealing with economic development:

1. **Economic development—The need for a skilled workforce.** Almost all of the recent business/economic reports recently submitted to GO VIRGINIA concluded that **"The biggest barrier to economic development in our state is the gap between the skills of our workforce and the skills needed by our workforce to help us attract and get expanding and new companies to do business in Virginia."** These skills are generally referred to as "middle skills" acquired through credentials from community colleges. The many authors and others who published these nine reports come from business and from research firms with years of experience in the field. The reports cover different regional economies in nine different parts of Virginia
2. **Impact of college tuition.** These reports stated further that lower taxes, more investments in the coal industry (e.g., pumping water from abandoned mines to generate power to help reduce energy costs), uranium mining, raising the minimum wage, and other such efforts will not significantly affect the skills gap problems. However, lower college costs would help. In Virginia we have the seventh highest tuition in the nation compared to a benchmark of comparable schools. Our neighbor North Carolina ranks forty seventh.
3. **Gap between business leaders and politicians?** If you listen to the recommendations from many of our current candidates for office, you will probably find only a few which deal with the issues as described above. Those who published the above reports are not amateurs in the field. Do we have some kind of unintentional barriers between business leaders and politicians?
4. **Spreading the word.** This is where you come in to play a very important role in the November election. Meet or call your representatives to insure he/she is aware of these reports. Ask for one or two copies for your review and become a quasi-expert on that report. Discuss with your family and friends and then either thru a personal meeting or a town hall meeting discuss the results of your review. Make sure you are satisfied your candidates are on the "right track."
5. **Vote in November.** This year only two states (New Jersey and Virginia) have an election for Governor. Let's make sure we elect our best candidate, and let's elect the top people for the General Assembly and elsewhere to help.