

## Chamber Mission

The mission of the Beckley-Raleigh County Chamber of Commerce is to build a vibrant community through programs of advocacy, public awareness, and policy development.

## Government Affairs Division-Key Objectives

Communicate to elected our positions on legislative issues; offer assistance in monitoring business legislation; to generally be the liaison between government and the business community. Legislative Positions are available at [www.brccc.com](http://www.brccc.com)

## Civil Justice Reform

The Chamber supports civil justice reform that will restore balance and fairness to all citizens of our State, and create a business climate needed to attract new business venture capital and to support existing businesses.

## Education

Education Positions are available as a separate brochure [www.brccc.com](http://www.brccc.com).

## Energy

Coal electrical generation remains a cost-effective method of producing electrical power. Low cost energy has been one of the chief drivers of our economy and standard of living.

The precipitous decline in the coal industry has led to detrimental effects in our economy and tax base, and has affected our region in a negative manner. The United States is blessed with some of the world's outstanding coal reserves. At this time – when the United States is among the world's leading oil and natural gas producers – it is prudent to continue research into clean coal technology and alternative uses for coal. This will help ensure coal remains a viable part of our economy and a vital part of our national energy mix.

The Chamber supports continued clean coal research and technologies, and supports a national energy policy that makes low-cost, coal-generated electrical power a pillar of our nation's economy and standard of living.

## Environment

Southern West Virginia is blessed with abundant natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities, and those blessings have been the catalyst for a thriving tourism industry. The Chamber recognizes that the sustainment and continued growth of our tourism industry is contingent upon the protection and preservation of our environment. Toward that end, the Chamber supports the enforcement of laws that prevent or retard the despoliation of our environment by unregulated garbage and litter, by improperly treated sewage and industrial discharge, Marcellus Shale fracking waste, other harmful injections into abandoned mines, and by improperly reclaimed mine and industrial sites.

## Government Modernization

The Chamber recognizes transformative change is taking place in West Virginia's economy. Erosion of our tax base from the decline of our natural resource industries coupled with the inability to diversify our economy has created substantial revenue at all levels of state government. These circumstances will create many challenges in providing future government services.

The Chamber supports policies which promote and enable the modernization of government at all levels. Too often government innovation is by archaic state code provisions and status quo leadership. West Virginia can by implementing that have already taken place in both the business world and neighboring localities. Government modernization will create an atmosphere in which our citizens receive services faster, cheaper and better. While at the same time, modernization promotes a pro-growth economic climate.

## Highway and Infrastructure Funding

The Chamber recognizes the critical role of highways and infrastructure in establishing the foundation for a vibrant economy. The people of our state have embraced the Governor's leadership in this area, and West Virginia is poised on the threshold of tremendous new investment in priority roadways.

These are exciting times: The Chamber advocates policy reforms that embrace both proven approaches and new innovation which make roadway (and other infrastructure) construction, operation and maintenance timely and cost Sustainment of our existing highway network is of at least equal importance to the construction of new highways.

In recognition of the funding challenges that impact West Virginia's transportation network, we believe the removal of tolling ability on the WV Turnpike is imprudent. While we support sustaining tolling ability, we advocate reforms to ensure toll revenues remain dedicated and leveraged to support infrastructure needs within the counties contiguous to the existing toll road.

## Public Employees Collective Bargaining

The Chamber strongly opposes any legislation that mandates taxpayer-funded entities to enter into collective bargaining agreements where wages, hours and working conditions are discussed.

## Redistricting

The Chamber believes voters should pick their representatives and representatives should not pick their voters and calls for the Legislature to establish an independent redistricting commission ahead of the 2020 census. This commission should determine legislative districts that are non-partisan in nature and closely adhere to existing county borders, municipalities and magisterial districts and communities of similar interest.

## Substance Abuse

While the Chamber recognizes and supports the many steps that have been taken by the Legislature to address this issue, more work is needed. Substance abuse, legal and illegal is killing West Virginians and our future. Funding for treatment and recovery is a critical need that must be addressed.

The Second Chance for Employment Act is a step in the right direction. It allows someone who made a mistake to have an opportunity to put that mistake behind him/her and become an employable productive member of our society.

There are concerns the ten (10) year waiting period, and the fact the underlying felony remains on the individual's public record, will prevent this act from becoming widely utilized and minimize its potential positive impact of enabling substance abusers and non-violent criminal offenders from becoming employable and productive members of society.

West Virginia has the lowest labor force participation rate in the nation. We must continue to explore every available avenue to expand and educate our labor force. We must provide a dependable and skilled labor force if we are going to attract and maintain investments in our economy.

## Tax Reform

The work of Joint Select Committee on Tax Reform should continue. The committee must look at ways to ensure that state taxes are fair and competitive with neighboring states and provide for stable and predictable sources of revenue for government. Any reforms proposed must be carefully planned so they do not harm education and/or essential local government funding.

## Reaching your representatives and how the Chamber can help

### Make Correspondence Easy

Keep contact information on hand at work, where you probably spend much of your time. Enter fax and phone numbers and email addresses in an easy-to-activate database. Don't struggle: a brief letter of concern can influence as well as a dissertation.

### Use the Chamber as a Megaphone

Our Chamber is the region's strongest business voice, representing 700 member businesses. It quickly draws the attention of legislators and other officials.

### Use Your Member Influence

Chamber functions provide a forum in which you may discuss public policy with the most influential members of our society. Formally or informally, it's a good way to express your opinion and educate others. Reporters routinely contact the Chamber to discuss public policy issues.

### “Call to Action”

Our strongest means of communication is the “**Call to Action.**” During such a call, members immediately begin to fax and email representatives to express their opinions on particular issues.

The Legislative Positions & Guide to Utilizing Your Representatives is produced yearly by the Beckley-Raleigh County Chamber of Commerce. Contact the BRCCC at: (304) 252-7328, 1-877-987-3847, (304) 252-7373 fax,

# Legislative Representatives

## WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR

### Governor Jim Justice

1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
State Capitol Building 1  
Charleston, WV 25305

governor@wv.gov  
1-888-438-2731  
(304)558-2000  
(304)342-7025 fax

## U.S. SENATORS

### U.S. Senator Joe Manchin, III

306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

senator@manchin.senate.gov  
manchin.senate.gov  
(202)224-3954 Washington, DC  
(202)228-0002 fax DC

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin, III  
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 629  
Charleston, WV 25302

(304)342-5855 Charleston, WV  
(304)343-7144 fax WV

### U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito

172 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

(202)224-6472 Washington, DC  
(202)224-7665 fax DC

U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito  
500 Virginia Street, East  
United Towers Suite 950  
Charleston, WV 25304

(304)347-5372 Charleston, WV  
(304)347-5371 fax WV

U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito  
220 North Kanawha Street, Suite 1  
Beckley, WV 25801

(304)253-7853 Beckley, WV  
(304) 253-7862 fax WV

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### Congressman Evan Jenkins

1609 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

michael.thirico@mail.house.gov  
(202)225-3452 Washington, DC  
(202)225-9061 Fax DC

Congressman Evan Jenkins  
307 Prince Street  
Beckley, WV 25801

(304)250-6177  
(304)250-6179 fax

Congressman Evan Jenkins  
601 Federal St., Suite 1003  
Elizabeth Kee Federal Building  
Bluefield, WV 24701

(304)325-6800

Congressman Evan Jenkins  
845 Fifth Avenue, Suite 314  
Huntington, WV 25701

(304)522-2201 Huntington, WV  
(304)529-5716 fax

## WEST VIRGINIA SENATORS – 9TH DISTRICT

### Sue Cline

West Virginia State Senate  
216W State Capitol  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Charleston, WV 25305

### Jeff Mullins

West Virginia State Senate  
441M State Capitol  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Charleston, WV 25305

## WEST VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES – 27TH DISTRICT

WEST VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
212-M State Capitol  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East  
Charleston, WV 25305

www.wvlegislature.gov

### District 27

Joe Ellington  
Marty Gearheart  
John H. Shott

### District 30

Mick Bates

### District 31

Karen "Lynne" Arvon

### District 28

Ray Cooper  
John O'Neal, IV

### District 29

Ricky Moye

## RALEIGH COUNTY COMMISSION

Linda Epling, Commissioner  
Byrd E. White, III, Commissioner  
David Tolliver, Commissioner  
116 ½ N. Heber Street  
Beckley, WV 25801

ralcom@raleighcounty.com

(304)255-9146

(304)255-9166 fax

## MAYOR OF BECKLEY

Robert Rappold  
Post Office Box 2514  
Beckley, WV 25802-2514

www.beckley.org  
robert.rappold@beckley.org  
(304)256-1750  
(304)256-1816 fax

## How A Bill Becomes State Law

### STEP 1: PREPARING A BILL

Anyone can propose a bill to a legislator. As many as seven of the 100 delegates and all 34 senators may sponsor. To ensure proper form, it must also pass legislative council or the Office of Legislative Services.

After a draft is prepared, the sponsor submits the bill to the chamber's clerk, who assigns a number and presents it to the House Speaker or Senate President for reference to a committee.

### STEP 2: COMMITTEE STUDY

Small groups of delegates are assigned to standing committees to examine bills in detail. After study, the committee files a written report, rejecting the bill or allowing it, or a committee substitute, to pass with or without amendment or recommendation. Some bills die in committee because of limited time.

### STEP 3: FLOOR ACTION

If the committee presents the bill, the clerk will provide a summary on the floor and place it on a calendar for consideration. Toward the end of the session, a rules committee prioritizes remaining bills, adopting a "Special Calendar" for the most urgent.

Your bill will be read three times – first to alert the membership, then for a vote on committee and individual amendments, and finally for a vote on passage. If passed, it will be sent to the opposite house, where the process repeats.

If the second house passes the bill, it will be sent to the governor for approval. If the second house makes changes, the first house must concur. If the houses cannot agree, a conference committee of an equal number of members is named. If the committee reaches an agreement, both chambers must adopt their report and vote again on passage. If it cannot agree, another committee may be named, or the measure may die when the Legislature adjourns.

### STEP 4: GUBERNATORIAL ACTION

If the bill passes both chambers, the governor has five days to approve or veto while the Legislature is in session and 15 days to act otherwise. (The governor must act within five days on budget and supplemental-appropriations bills, irregardless.)

If the governor does not act, the bill automatically becomes law. If he vetoes, a simple majority in both houses may pass the bill. (A two-thirds majority in both houses is needed to override budget and supplemental-appropriations vetoes.)

### District 32

Kayla Kessinger  
Shirley Love  
Tom Fast



A legislator introduces the bill



The bill is referred to a committee for study



The committee reports its findings



Members read the bill a first time



Members read the bill a second time and consider amendments



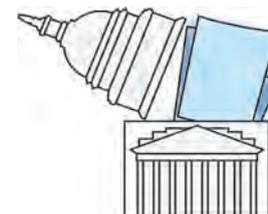
Members read the bill a third time and debate or vote on its acceptance



If passed, the bill is sent to the opposite chamber, and therein the process repeats



If passed by the second chamber, the governor may pass or veto the bill



If vetoed, the Legislature may vote to override, and the bill becomes law.

## Monitoring Your Bill

The Legislature's Reference & Information Center provides ready access to bill status and calendars for both houses and can provide copies of bills. For information, call (304) 347-4836, or visit [www.legis.state.wv.us](http://www.legis.state.wv.us)



**Beckley-Raleigh County  
Chamber of Commerce**

**legislative  
positions**

