



Federal Issues Report

February 3, 2010

This is an e-newsletter of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce focusing on key federal policy issues and bills. Provided are overviews and status updates on a number of major federal matters that are of concern to business and economic development in West Virginia.

Governor Manchin To Meet Today With President Obama

Governor Joe Manchin will be joining 10 other state governors in a meeting this afternoon with President Obama. The meeting is designed to discuss energy issues and was organized by the National Governor's Association. Manchin said he wants to discuss a number of energy issues, particularly ones affecting the state's coal industry. [Click to read Daily Mail story.](#) Governor Manchin is the incoming Chairman of the National Governors Association.

Congresswoman Capito Questions President Obama About Coal, Natural Gas During House GOP Conference

During last week's GOP House Issues Conference in Baltimore, Second District Congresswoman had an opportunity to take the floor and ask President Obama about the energy industry and some new policies coming out of Washington that could have adverse impacts on coal and natural gas. Click to read an excerpt of her question and President Obama's response:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/29/AR2010012902770.html>

Bipartisan Effort Developing To Stop EPA Regulation Of Greenhouse Gases

The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce is calling on West Virginia's three congressional representatives to add their names to a bipartisan U.S. House bill that will rein in the EPA. The bill ([click to read](#)) has been developed by Reps. Ike Skelton of Missouri, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, and Collin Peterson of Minnesota, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. It will prevent the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from regulating greenhouse gas emissions under the authority of the Clean Air Act and to change federal law to strengthen America's renewable fuels industry. The bill would limit the EPA from defining air pollution to include carbon dioxide, methane and other "greenhouse gases."

Click to read more - http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mo04_skelton/StopEPA.html

Similar legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate by Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski. The W.Va. Chamber also is asking Senators Byrd and Rockefeller to back her legislation. Murkowski's

resolution is SJR 26, which would stop the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from imposing new, costly regulations on greenhouse gas (carbon dioxide/methane) emissions.

Provided is a link to a press release and statements made last week by Senator Murkowski:

Press release -

http://murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=7a4b5017-15eb-41ff-922b-6ae3975cbe87

Floor statement - http://murkowski.senate.gov/public/?a=Files.Serve&File_id=46342a62-3e24-4f69-98fa-437d6f6f29db

SJR 26 already has the support of 38 Senators. West Virginia Senator Jay Rockefeller is quoted in a recent New York Times article ([click to read](#)) as saying he is undecided on this resolution.

“These regulations, which the EPA is moving to establish, would lead to higher energy prices, particularly on electricity from coal-fired power plants, and would impose tough emission control requirements and added costs on manufacturers, small businesses, hospitals, farmers and automobiles/trucks,” said Steve Roberts, Chamber President. “Stopping the EPA’s war on coal and energy will help every West Virginia business and taxpayer. We must fight to preserve our jobs, our tax base and our communities.”

SPEAK OUT -- Contact information for the state’s congressional delegation – [click here](#)

Businesses, Groups Urged To Keep Pressure On EPA

Business groups, employers and public officials are encouraged to continue to speak out about the U.S. EPA’s ongoing actions involving coal permits and regulations. To get contact information for W.Va.’s Congressional delegation: [click here to get information](#) (Note: *The most immediate way to get your voice heard is to call or send a fax to any of the D.C. offices.*)

WSJ: Obama Backing Away From Cap-And-Trade?

The *Wall Street Journal* has an article in today’s paper that indicates President Obama may be backing away from cap-and-trade.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704022804575041632860721438.html?mod=WSJ_business_whatsNews

Cap-and-Trade Cost Calculator

[Click to determine](#) possible cost impact on you.

U.N. climate panel chief: Error shouldn't derail global warming efforts in India

[Washington Post, Jan. 24, 2010](#)

OTHER KEY FEDERAL ISSUES

Banking/Financial Reform

Media reports indicate that Christopher Dodd, Chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, is trying to work out a bipartisan bill dealing with banking and financial report. The U.S. House has passed its version of financial/banking regulatory reform (Financial Regulatory Reform Bill -- H.R. 4173), and now the U.S. Senate is focusing on the matter. Both the U.S. Chamber and the American Bankers Association are unhappy with the bill passed by the House.

U.S. Chamber’s statement – [click to read](#)

ABA’s Statement – [click to read](#)

Card Check/EFCA

Rumors are circulating that an effort may be made to try to amend card check into the Jobs Bill pending in the U.S. Senate.

Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) ([H.R. 1409](#), [S. 560](#))

The West Virginia Chamber and other national business groups continue to closely monitor legislation pending in Congress that would enact a “card check” system for unionization. The Employee Free Choice Act (HR 1409/S 560) is one of the major objectives of organized labor groups, and it continues to have the full backing of President Obama. W.Va. Chamber members, both large and small...and from all business sectors, continue to be overwhelmingly (85 percent) opposed to EFCA.

EFCA Positions of W.Va.’s Delegation:

Congressmen Mollohan and Rahall are co-sponsors of HR 1409 ([Source: Thomas](#))

Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito opposes HR 1409

Senators Byrd and Rockefeller are co-sponsors of S. 560 ([Source: Thomas](#))

W.Va. Chamber’s EFCA policy paper – [click to read](#)

Election/Campaign Finance

Other Federal Bills:

[H.R. 12](#): Paycheck Fairness Act

[H.R. 635](#) – National Commission on State Workers’ Compensation Laws Act of 2009

[H.R. 3042](#), S. 1374 -- Federal Oversight, Reform, and Enforcement of the WARN (“FOREWARN”) Act

[H.R. 2460](#); S. 1152 -- The Healthy Families Act (Mandated Paid Sick Leave)

TAKE ACTION -- RESOURCES:

Contact information for W.Va.’s Congressional delegation: [click to read](#)

(Note: The most immediate way to get your voice heard is to call or send a fax to any of the D.C. offices.)

Vote For Business: West Virginia - <http://www.wvbusinessvoice.com/>