Top Stories

Donna Brazile and Chris Stirewalt to be Featured Speakers at Annual Meeting and Business Summit

REGISTER NOW!

West Virginia Chamber
Annual Meeting & Business Summit
August 28-30, 2019  |  The Greenbrier Resort

Featured Speakers
Donna Brazile, FOX News Contributor and Chris Stirewalt, Political Editor, FOX News

Don’t Miss:
• Early Bird Discount (ends July 16)
• Unmatched Networking Opportunities
• First-Class Speakers
• AND MORE

To register please visit: www.wvchamber.com or call 304-342-1115
The West Virginia Chamber is excited to announce that Donna Brazile and Chris Stirewalt will be featured speakers at the 83rd Annual Meeting and Business Summit. Brazile became the first African American woman to serve as the manager of a major party presidential...
campaign. Stirewalt, a West Virginia native, is one of the liveliest commentators covering politics today.

The **83rd Annual Meeting and Business Summit** of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce will take place **Wednesday, August 28 - Friday, August 30** at The Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, WV.

**Register now** to meet and network with the best minds in business, government, education and policy in West Virginia.

Make sure you take advantage of Early Bird Registration rates by July 16 and secure your spot at this exciting event.

**To reserve your room at The Greenbrier, you must first register for the meeting.** In your confirmation e-mail you will receive a code to provide to The Greenbrier staff when booking your room. To make your hotel reservation after registering for the meeting, please call Jessica Dowdy at 1-855-453-4858, option 2, and ask for the West Virginia Chamber Room Block. Rooms at The Greenbrier sell out during this event, so don't delay!  **Register now!**

For **information about sponsorship opportunities**, please contact Amanda Pasdon at apasdon@wvchamber.com. We look forward to seeing you at The Greenbrier!

---

**Register Now!**

---

**West Virginia House of Delegates to Resume Special Session on Monday**
On Monday, the West Virginia House of Delegates will return to the State Capitol for the special session on "education betterment." Delegates are expected to consider SB 1039, West Virginia Student Success Act of 2019, along with other bills that will be introduced by the House.

The West Virginia Manufacturers Association and the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce are in strong support of SB 1039. To help demonstrate the many positive aspects of this legislation, the West Virginia Chamber has developed a webpage that contains a summary of the bill as well as a link to the full legislative text.

Among the highlights of this bill are a 5% pay raise for all teachers and school service personnel, giving counties additional flexibility to attract qualified teachers to critical-need vacancies, requiring professional development to be individualized at the school level, permitting open-enrollment across county lines, and allowing the creation of public charter schools. You can click here to learn more about the bill.

We encourage you to contact House members and urge them to VOTE YES for the Student Success Act.

____________________________________________

Brian Dayton: How we accelerate economic growth

The State Journal
West Virginia celebrates its 156th birthday next week, and there is much to celebrate. Since April 2016, West Virginia has added more than 21,000 jobs, had the eighth highest GDP growth in 2017 and had the 19th highest in 2018. Additionally, for the last three quarters of 2018, West Virginia saw faster job growth on a percentage basis than all of our surrounding states, and faster than over half of the country. This happened because West Virginia is pursuing policies that foster job growth and economic development. While we should celebrate these achievements, we must realize that today's world and economy are rapidly evolving, and we must continue the drive to better ourselves. If we want to move our state into high gear, we must address West Virginia's system of public education.  

West Virginia News

Lobbyist files federal suit against Superintendent Paine, says he tried to get him fired

WV MetroNews - A prominent West Virginia lobbyist is suing the state Superintendent of Schools in federal court, alleging that Steve Paine used his authority to try to have him fired. "This case is about the abuse of power," states the lawsuit filed Wednesday on behalf of lobbyist Jason Webb. Webb's Capitol Advocates lobbying firm includes clients like AFLAC, Airbnb, Uber, K12 and the West Virginia Land and Mineral Owners Association. In this case, it was his work on behalf of the standardized testing company ACT that led to conflict.  

Hanshaw: House will consider Student Success Act and individual education bills

WV MetroNews - House Speaker Roger Hanshaw says delegates will consider an omnibus education bill passed by the state Senate as well as individual bills when a special session resumes next week. The House is set to return to special session at 8:30 a.m. Monday. Delegates are to break into four select committees to consider education bills. Hanshaw, appearing on MetroNews' "Talkline," indicated the omnibus bill passed by the Senate last week will be considered first.  

Continue...
Lawsuit challenges 2018 gun parking lot law

**WV MetroNews** - A coalition of domestic violence programs has filed a federal lawsuit against state Attorney General Patrick Morrisey seeking to nullify what's known as the parking lot gun bill. The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence filed the suit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia on Thursday. The Coalition is represented by Everytown Law, a branch of Everytown for Gun Safety, and two Charleston law firms.  

Carmichael uneasy about a possible second Justice term

**WV MetroNews** - On the invitation for a June 20 fundraiser of Gov. Jim Justice with Donald Trump Jr., the listed attendees include the state's four Republican congressional delegates and House Speaker Roger Hanshaw, R-Clay. Senate President Mitch Carmichael, R-Jackson, is not on the invitation. "There would be no way I would attend an event like this," Carmichael said Friday. "I'm not one that believes who should want four more years of this type of leadership - or lack of leadership - at the governor's mansion."  

Panhandle senator calls on W.Va. governor to resign

**Herald Mail-Media** - West Virginia state Sen. Craig Blair has called on Gov. Jim Justice to resign, calling him a "narcissistic opportunist" and an "embarrassment" to West Virginia. "Our state deserves a leader who will improve our schools, fix our roads and work with President Trump's administration to grow our state's economy," Blair, R-Berkeley/Morgan/Hampshire/Mineral, wrote in a column that he released Friday. In his column, Blair was critical of the governor's recent remarks about Senate President Mitch Carmichael and other GOP senators on a proposed comprehensive education-reform bill pending in the West Virginia Legislature.  

Gov. Justice says state's revenue grew 11.5 percent this fiscal year
**WV News** - Gov. Jim Justice called a press conference Wednesday afternoon and discussed revenue numbers that Senate Republicans already had released. The press conference came amid a growing feud between Justice and Senate leaders, particularly between Sen. Craig Blair, who has defended the Senate releasing the numbers before the governor and has called for Justice to resign. "Basically it got out without us telling the people about them and everything," Justice said. "My issue with that is just this: It's OK to talk about it, but I just hadn't ever really seen a situation where there was a press release come from the Senate on it. Nevertheless, it did. But there's more to the story." Justice said the growth rate of West Virginia's revenue collections is the second highest in the country. For the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, revenue collections grew 11.5 percent.  

**National teachers union president: WV education bill 'a mockery'**

**Charleston Gazette-Mail** - National American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten flew into West Virginia on Wednesday and argued against parts of the state Senate's education bill, which she called "a mockery" and "a sham." West Virginia public school workers, including members of the AFT union, have held two statewide strikes in two years. Last year's strike inspired strikes in other states. West Virginia lawmakers might pass the new legislation (Senate Bill 1039), over union opposition, as soon as next week. The start of summer has blunted the power of a strike. The bill includes legalizing charter schools in the state and would ban county superintendents from closing schools in anticipation of a strike, or to help one.  

**Asked to end special session, Justice taking wait and see approach**

**Charleston Gazette-Mail** - A day after House Democrats called on him to work with Speaker Roger Hanshaw, R-Clay, to bring the special legislative session on education to an immediate end, Gov. Jim Justice said Wednesday he first wants to see if the House is able to resolve issues with the Senate. "If we get to where we're just batting stuff back and forth, that's not beneficial," Justice said after a news conference to tout strong state tax collection. "If we get into doing that, then there may be some merit," he said of House Democrats' call for him to prevent a potential impasse over education by convincing Hanshaw to end the special session without scheduling a later one.  

---

*Continue...*
Manchin, Justice speak out against Beyond Carbon initiative

**West Virginia Record** - Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Gov. Jim Justice both spoke out in opposition of former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Beyond Carbon Initiative. The campaign will work to get the country using 100 percent clean energy by shutting down every single coal-fired power plant by 2030. Bloomberg put $500 million toward the campaign last week. A spokesperson told The New York Times that the campaign expects to spend the money over the next three years.  

---

National News

One of Baltimore's most sought-after schools wants to open a second location. Will the school board OK it?

**Baltimore Sun** - For every open seat it has next year, Patterson Park Public Charter School fielded six applications. The highly sought-after school in Southeast Baltimore is asking the district's Board of School Commissioners to allow it to open a second location so it can serve more students. Leaders say a replication of Patterson Park Public is uniquely situated to serve kids from immigrant families, a demographic that's rapidly growing despite an overall decline in Baltimore's public school enrollment.  

---

Manchin eyes Senate exit

**The Hill** - Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) is eyeing a possible exit from the Senate, and his decision could be a significant factor in which party controls the majority in 2021. In moments of frustration, the centrist senator has gone so far as to tell colleagues he may leave the upper chamber before the end of this Congress, or after the 2020 elections. Senate Democratic Leader Charles Schumer (N.Y.) keeps a close watch on Manchin, and the senators have a good working relationship. While Schumer recognizes that his West Virginia colleague can get exasperated by dysfunction in the Senate, he believes Manchin is content and engaged in his job. But Manchin says he's deeply irritated with the lack of bipartisan cooperation on Capitol Hill, where passing bills has largely become an afterthought in the 116th Congress.  

---

Editorials / Op-Eds
Mark Sadd: Student Success Act not an attack on public education (Opinion)

Charleston Gazette-Mail

Sarah Krause is leaving West Virginia for good. She grandly announced her departure in Sunday's Gazette-Mail after describing her mounting frustration veering into exasperation. She describes herself as a "damn good teacher," and I believe her. She has realized that her family's opportunities in West Virginia are limited. I believe her, because they are. "But even more than finding my place of origin lacking," she writes, "something darker has begun to gather on the horizon: an attack on public education."

I don't believe her premise.  

Hoppy Kercheval: Bloomberg goes after coal, natural gas

WV MetroNews

Back during the Obama administration, we heard a lot about the War on Coal. The Environmental Protection Agency under President Obama did its level best to strangle the coal industry through regulatory fiat to try to affect climate change. The effort did serious damage to mining, industry suppliers and communities that rely on the good jobs and tax revenue that coal provides. While the EPA actions were a clear overreach, at least it originated with an elected administration. The latest attack on carbon comes from former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The multi-billionaire is giving $500 million dollars to a "Beyond Carbon" campaign. Bloomberg's plan is to donate money to political candidates at the local and state level who share his vision of shuttering every coal-fired power plant by 2030 and capping natural gas-fueled energy production.

Hoppy Kercheval: WV Commerce Secretary optimistic after meeting with China Energy
It was with great fanfare that the Justice administration announced in November 2017 a partnership with China Energy. According to the memorandum of understanding, the Chinese energy giant would invest $83.7 billion in West Virginia projects over the next 20 years. The details of that deal have always been a little sketchy. State officials said China Energy wanted to invest in the state's natural gas industry with projects including power generation, chemical manufacturing and underground storage. Since then, there hasn't been much news-no big announcements, no ribbon cuttings. However, state Commerce Secretary Ed Gaunch tells me that doesn't mean nothing is happening.  

---

Brad McElhinny: Legislative focus on fun, fellowship and betterment

As a seemingly endless journey into dystopian jungle, along with the potential for major cost overruns, it might seem like West Virginia's special session on education is Apocalypse Now. But as much as West Virginia politics might evoke the smell of napalm in the morning, resist the comparison. Instead, when the House of Delegates gets back together for a special session on Monday, think of it as something nicer. Think of it as Vacation Bible School. The House hopes to do nice things. Delegates want to gather together for a united mission and then break into four groups to consider individual education bills. At the end, they'll get together to discuss accomplishments.  

---

Upcoming West Virginia Chamber Events

West Virginia Chamber 2019 Annual Meeting & Business Summit

August 28-30, 2019
Register Now!

West Virginia Chamber 2019 Women's Leadership Summit

December 4-5, 2019