

Morrissey Launches Grow West Virginia Economic Plan

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West Virginia Governor Patrick Morrissey has launched the Grow West Virginia Project, an ambitious plan designed to lift the Mountain State's economy, create new jobs, and improve wages. The initiative aims to end West Virginia's low rankings in employment and income while building a stronger free-market environment.

Governor Morrissey presented the project at the State Capitol, outlining a strategy to focus on five main priorities: boosting paychecks, expanding job opportunities, strengthening the free market, increasing labor force participation, and creating more career paths. He

stressed that simply settling for the status quo is unacceptable, noting, “We cannot declare success if you’re 49th or 50th in the rankings. We have to be aggressive.”

A major part of the plan is the West Virginia Jobs Initiative, a \$50 million fund dedicated to targeted investments expected to deliver a measurable return on investment, often abbreviated as ROI. Unlike past approaches that relied on indiscriminate federal funding, this effort will prioritize practical economic outcomes. The first investment of \$400,000 will help Mettler Packaging expand its Moorefield facility, adding approximately 50 jobs to the existing 120 positions in Hardy County.

Morrissey emphasized eliminating excessive regulations to make West Virginia among the fastest states for permitting. He cited Senate Bill 458, the Universal Professional and Occupational Licensing Act, which enables reciprocity for professional licenses from other states, and House Bill 2002, which establishes a streamlined online permitting process for construction, infrastructure, economic development, and natural resources projects. The governor described these measures as key to building “the best red-tape-free zone around.”

Additionally, the Grow West Virginia Project supports vocational and technical education to train residents for roles in emerging industries. When asked about reports that the U.S. Department of Education had frozen funds for adult education, Morrissey said he would investigate further while reaffirming his commitment to prioritizing West Virginia’s needs.

Governor Morrissey concluded by stressing that West Virginia must end its position near the bottom of national rankings. “Fiftieth is not acceptable,” he said. “But we’re making the decisions and taking steps to make things stronger and better”.

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