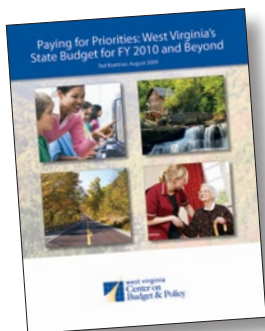
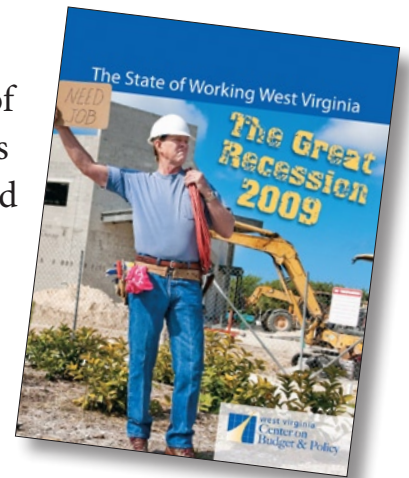


## West Virginia faces down the Great Recession

After dodging the early months of the national recession, West Virginia workers experienced its full force during 2009. The number of unemployed state residents more than doubled. More than 25,000 jobs were lost, many of them good-paying jobs as manufacturers downsized or closed their doors. The number of poor people climbed, and the poverty rate for children may reach one in three.

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy partnered with dozens of other organizations to address the plight of workers and their families. The state's policymakers took several key actions to reduce hardship and promote recovery:



### Recovery Act funds shore up state budget and fuel economy.

West Virginia is eligible for \$1.8 billion in federal funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) passed by Congress in early 2009. West Virginia policymakers wisely chose to maximize these federal dollars in order to avoid cuts in needed services and to

stabilize the state's economy. The infusion of these funds helped West Virginia become one of only a handful of states that experienced growth in aggregate personal income in 2009. (See the Center's reports, *Paying for Priorities: The State Budget for FY 2010* and *The State of Working West Virginia*.)

### State and federal reforms extend lifeline to jobless workers.

As the number of jobless workers soared during 2009, Unemployment Insurance became the lifeline for many workers and their families. A coalition of groups worked with policymakers to bolster the program to meet the

increased needs. The Legislature passed key bills to keep the unemployment trust fund solvent, expand eligibility for unemployment benefits using ARRA funds, and authorize extended benefits to workers who exhaust other benefits. Additional proposals to expand eligibility will be considered during the 2010 legislative session. (See the Center's report *Unemployment Insurance Modernization: \$33 Million at Stake for West Virginia Workers*.)

### Policy changes expand health coverage for uninsured children.

During the past year, the state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Board increased family income eligibility to 250 percent of the federal poverty level and approved a reduction in the waiting period between loss of private insurance and enrollment in CHIP from six months to three months. The federal reauthorization of CHIP in 2009 provides increased funding and more flexibility to states to insure additional children. The Center is partnering with other groups to study further enhancements in 2010. (See the Center's report *Almost There: Covering ALL Uninsured Children in West Virginia by Improving CHIP*.)

# Working Toward a Broadly Shared Prosperity

In addition to the state budget, jobs and the economy, the Center worked on a variety of other issues in 2009 aimed at creating a shared prosperity for all West Virginians:



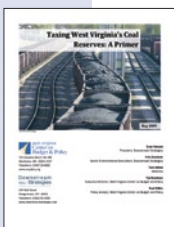
As health care reform took front and center stage in 2009, the Center partnered with West Virginians for Affordable Health Care to educate the public and policymakers on what the reforms would mean for the Mountain State. The two groups launched *The Health Express* to provide regular updates on national reform efforts; hosted a town hall meeting with Senator Jay Rockefeller in August; and conducted and published an analysis of the fiscal benefits of Medicaid expansion in West Virginia in December.



The Center is collaborating with AARP and state policymakers to create a system of voluntary retirement accounts for small businesses, self-employed persons and others who don't have access to retirement plans at work. The Center published its research and recommendations in *Closing the Retirement Gap: Voluntary Retirement Accounts Offer Solution for Small Investors* in March and was featured in a national webinar by the Shriver National Center on Poverty Law in December.



The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is recognized as one of the most effective anti-poverty tools in the United States. A State EITC, modeled after the federal credit, would expand this economic benefit for low- and moderate-income families. The Center is partnering with the West Virginia Alliance for Sustainable Families on the issue, published the report *Making Work Pay: A State Earned Income Tax Credit for West Virginia*, and made presentations on the SEITC to the West Virginia Tax Modernization Commission.



Taxes on coal reserves became a hot topic in early 2009 when coal property owners began getting notices that their tax assessments had gone up due to improved methods of appraising coal reserves. The Center collaborated with Morgantown-based Downstream Strategies to develop and publish *Taxing West Virginia's Coal Reserves: A Primer*, a useful reference for county officials, coal companies, landowners, and local citizens.

Other 2009 publications available on the Center's website ([www.wvpolicy.org](http://www.wvpolicy.org)) include:

- What the Federal Recovery Act Means for Low- and Moderate-Income Families
- Balancing the State Budget: Raise Revenues before Cutting Programs
- Recession Raises Poverty in West Virginia, Especially Among Children
- Boosting West Virginia's Potential: Greater investments needed in early childhood
- Magic Money a Mere Illusion: Refund Anticipation Loans and the Earned Income Tax Credit
- Raising Taxable Wage Base Is Best Way to Keep State Unemployment Fund Solvent
- Money for Nothing: Do Business Subsidies Create Jobs or Leave Workers in Dire Straits?
- Tobacco Tax Benefits Outweigh Concerns
- Drug Testing of Public Assistance Recipients Raises Legal and Other Concerns

# Center Granted Full Membership in National SFAI Network

In December 2009, the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy was granted full membership in the State Fiscal Analysis Initiative (SFAI), a project of the national Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The member organizations share a commitment to rigorous policy analysis, responsible budget and tax policies, and a particular focus on the needs of low- and moderate-income families.

After receiving a SFAI planning grant from the Kellogg Foundation in 2007, the Center began its first year of operation in January 2008. The Center is proud to join the 31 other states in the SFAI network. In addition, the Center participates in the Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN) of the Economic Policy Institute.

## 2009 Financial Statement

### Revenues

Funds carried over from 2008	\$340,862
New grants	\$59,250
Donations	\$41,150
Interest	\$720
Reimbursements	\$830
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$442,812</b>

### Expenses

Program	\$279,999
Management and General	\$47,893
Development	\$25,000
Fundraising	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$352,892</b>

Net Assets end of year	\$89,920
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## 2008-2009 Funders

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Sisters of Saint Joseph Charitable Fund, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Economic Policy Institute, Wider Opportunities for Women, Service Employees Union International 1199, AFL-CIO, WV Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, WV Community Voices, Fieldstone Alliance, Unite Here

## West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy

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## 2009 Public Policy Events

Co-sponsored by the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy



### Health Care Reform Town Hall Meeting with Senator Jay Rockefeller

August 11, 10:00 a.m. - Noon  
University of Charleston

This town hall meeting featured Senator Rockefeller speaking on the key provisions of the health care reform bills under consideration in Congress. The event was co-sponsored by the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, West Virginians for Affordable Health Care, West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition, and AARP.



### Good Jobs, Green Jobs

October 18, 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Big Sandy Arena, Huntington

Entrepreneurs, educators, environmentalists, labor leaders and policymakers gathered for this three-hour forum on advancing green jobs in West Virginia. The event, sponsored by the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, Katalyst, and BuildGreen WV, was part of the 2009 Create West Virginia Conference.



### Promoting Health Equity: Addressing the Root Causes of Disparities

November 17, 7:00–9:00 p.m.  
Capital High School, Charleston

This public forum was co-sponsored by 11 organizations and moderated by the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy. The featured speaker was Dr. Camara Jones, Research Director on Social Determinants of Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She spoke on the impact of racism on the health and well-being of the nation.



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The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization. Our aim is to support public policies that contribute to a shared prosperity for all West Virginians. We study critical issues, share what we learn with the public and policymakers, and work with diverse groups on sound solutions to economic and social problems.