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## Are The Economic Investments Worth It?



MetroNews Talkline  
Statewide

The Executive Director of the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy says the impact of economic incentives from the state for private companies should be evaluated every year.

"Any good business person would make sure their investments are cost effective and, if they're not, you'd stop doing what you're doing," Ted Boettner said.

Right now, though, Boettner says there is no such review process in the Mountain State for the tax credits, subsidies and loans offered to companies as helping hands. Recent incentives have gone to Century Aluminum, Macy's and Gestamp.

Often, though, Boettner says, the predicted benefits are only guesses.

A new report from the Pew Center includes West Virginia on the list of 26 states that, researchers say, do not do enough to track the effectiveness of those incentives to determine whether they're worth the costs associated with them.

"We just don't have any evidence on whether these tax incentives are cost effective and, often times, we have little or no information on the value of the tax incentive deals," Boettner said.

The report from the Pew Center, which is focused on only the analysis of the results of credits, subsidies and loans, said the following: "In the wake of the Great Recession, states have to do more with less so every dollar counts."

Neither those with the Pew Center nor the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy are addressing the overall validity of such economic incentives.

Instead, Boettner says they just want lawmakers to be able to find out if such investments are worth it for West Virginia.

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