

We're Not in Kansas Anymore

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy (WVCBP) prevented hundreds of millions of dollars in tax cuts by stopping the elimination of the state's personal income tax. There were about a dozen bills introduced during the 2017 Legislative Session that would have made this change and all were defeated, even though they were supported by the governor.

While touted as tax "reform", these bills would have raised taxes on most West Virginians while giving huge tax breaks to the top one percent. Similar legislation in Kansas created a financial meltdown and steep budget cuts.

Influencing the Governor:

Our research was pivotal in stopping Governor Jim Justice's plan to eliminate the state's personal income tax while relying more on the sales tax, a policy that would have cost the state \$170 million in 2019. While this positive development was great news, it didn't solve the state's looming budget crisis that took the legislature into a protracted special session. During deliberations, Governor Justice endorsed two WVCBP recommendations: an increase in the sugary-sweetened beverage tax and a surcharge on higher incomes.

Our work also stopped a \$73 million cut in the coal severance tax and \$55 million cut in the natural gas severance tax which would have further deepened the state's financial crisis.

Our fourth-annual Budget Breakfast panel included Governor Justice's Chief of Staff Nick Casey and Senate Finance Chair Mike Hall, along with the public release of the Budget Calculator. Both

We released two new tools to provide information to policymakers and citizens: the Budget Calculator (where users could practice balancing the state budget) and the Budget Browser (a 10-year history of funding priorities showing where the money goes).

For the second year in a row, the West Virginia Legislature had to go into extra innings to pass a budget just ahead of a government shutdown. There were some unforgettable theatrics, including Governor Justice's April veto of the "bull crap" budget bill. In the end, legislators pieced together a package that included another draw-down from the state's Rainy Day Fund and other short-term fixes.

leaders had accolades for the new tool and attendees had the opportunity to discuss the new governor's fiscal priorities with a member of his legislative leadership.

5th Annual BUDGET Breakfast



2017 Budget Breakfast panel: Senate Finance Chair Mike Hall, Delegate Matthew Rohrbach and Governor's Chief of Staff Nick Casey

OUR VISION

A prosperous West Virginia where everyone has a meaningful and equitable opportunity to thrive.

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY *Celebration*

We Turned 10!

In December, the WVCBP celebrated its 10th anniversary with a gala at the Charleston Civic Center. Our keynote speaker was Nick Johnson, Senior Vice President of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. We debuted our new logo and video, along with our revamped website. It was a great opportunity for staff to thank current and former board members, as well as coalition partners, funders and supporters, who made our first decade possible.

Our Accomplishments:

FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE

Raised pay for 127,000 West Virginians by \$157 million annually by increasing the state's minimum wage by \$1.50 an hour

57.6%
of Workers in Low-Wage
JOBS IN WEST VIRGINIA
EARN AT OR BELOW
MINIMUM WAGE.



FIGHT FOR FAMILIES

Protected SNAP and child care benefits for tens of thousands of West Virginians

FIGHT FOR AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE

Expanded health coverage to 94% of West Virginians

FIGHT FOR TAX FAIRNESS

Closed corporate tax loopholes and stopped hundreds of millions in budget-busting tax cuts

A DECADE OF GROWTH

Grew from a two-person to five-person staff thanks to the generosity of long-term foundation support and partners like you!



- 1: Founding and long-standing board member Reverend James Patterson presents award to Renate Pore, founding board member and former board president
- 2: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Senior Vice President Nick Johnson, event keynote, receives a thank you gift from WVCBP Executive Director Ted Boettner

PROTECTING THE SAFETY NET

Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act and food-assistance programs all faced major threats. The West Virginia House of Delegates passed legislation to require thousands of SNAP recipients to work in order to receive benefits. Our coalition's constant presence both at the Capitol and on social media, its Protect SNAP twitter storm in April, and its strong presence at a public hearing on the bill, killed the legislation despite a last-minute petition of support from one of the bill's sponsors.

We worked throughout the year to protect the Affordable Care Act from what seemed to be certain repeal and replace efforts. Medicaid Expansion and the ACA's other provisions which have helped tens of thousands of West Virginians receive affordable health care were saved.

IN THE COMMUNITY



SUMMER POLICY INSTITUTE

The second Summer Policy Institute was held in July at West Virginia University. Attendees from across the state participated in the weekend, visiting the university's archives and designing case studies on how to prevent a repeat of the state's deadly floods of 1985 and 2016.



1: 2017 SPI panel discussion at West Virginia University



2: SPI attendees begin case study research at WVU archives

WE'VE MOVED!

After almost a decade in Charleston's historic Union Building we outgrew our space.





Visit us across the street at our new home on the 4th floor of 8 Capitol Street in the Terminal Building!



WVCBP In the News

In 2017 the WVCBP was featured in 258 stories in 65 local and national media outlets including USA Today, the Washington Post, U.S. World and News Report and Time, which sent a reporter to the Budget Breakfast in February.

Our Social Engagement

	2014	2015	2016	2017
 FB LIKES	828	907	1,759	2,119
 SUBSCRIBERS	1,153	1,503	1,974	2,039
 FOLLOWERS	1,054	1,131	1,825	2,101
 MEDIA HITS	165	224	164	258

2017 Major Publications

Repealing the Affordable Care Act: Hurting Our Health and Our Economy (January)

Income Tax Cuts and Shifting to Sales Tax a Poor Strategy for Growing West Virginia's Economy (February)

State Budget Cuts Hit Higher Education Hard (March)

On the Brink: Closing West Virginia's Budget Gap (April)

West Virginia Economy Would Suffer Under Proposed Health Care Plans (July)

State of Working West Virginia - Understanding Low-Wage Work in West Virginia (September)

Improving Juvenile Justice in West Virginia (September)

Poverty in West Virginia: Lack of Progress and New Threats Ahead (November)

Expenditures

General Program

\$552,870

Management & General

\$62,761

Fundraising

\$12,973

\$628,604 Total

2017 Funders

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy thankfully acknowledges the following foundations and organizations who financially contributed to its work in 2017:

American Federation of Teachers – WV, American Friends Service Committee, Ami Nagle and Associates, Center for Responsible Lending, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Covenant House, Communications Workers of America, Institute for Labor Studies and Research, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, MAZON, National Association of Social Workers – WV, New Venture Fund, Rockefeller Family Foundation, Service Employees Union International 1199, Sisters Health Foundation, Southwestern District Labor Council, Stoneman Family Foundation, West Virginia Citizen Action Education Fund, West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence, West Virginia Community Development HUB, West Virginia Education Association, West Virginia FREE, West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition, West Virginians for Affordable Health Care, and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy

OUR MISSION

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy's mission is to use research and analysis to advance the well-being of West Virginia communities, and to promote and support the essential role of government in improving the quality of life in the state.

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