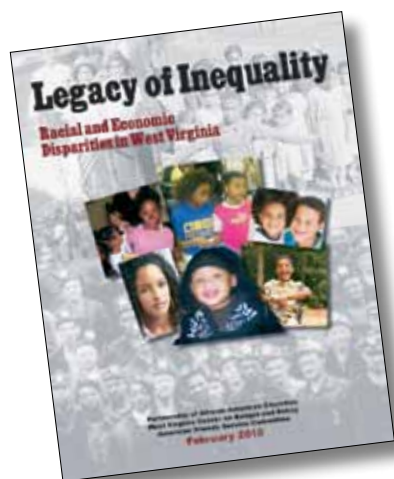


## Legacy of racial inequality still present in West Virginia



African Americans in West Virginia continue to earn less and experience poverty at higher rates than whites. They also are less likely to own a home or have health insurance than whites, and more likely to be incarcerated. These racial disparities in the Mountain State were the findings of a report co-authored by the Partnership of African American Churches, the American Friends Service Committee, and the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy. The report examined the history, causes, and consequences of racial disparities in West Virginia and what can be done to resolve them.

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy worked with many organizations across the state and nation to study a wide variety of issues affecting low- and moderate-income West Virginians.

### Many West Virginia seniors do not have enough resources for basic needs.

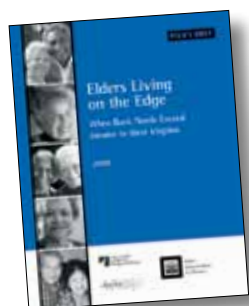
West Virginia currently has the nation's second oldest population and is expected to become increasingly gray over the next twenty years. The state's seniors face rising expenses (housing, health care) and often struggle to make ends meet. For those seniors with modest incomes and limited assets, these rising costs threaten their economic security and ability to remain in their communities as they age.



*The Elder Economic Security Standard Index for West Virginia* and *Elders Living on the Edge: When Basic Needs Exceed Income in West Virginia*. The reports highlight the economic challenges facing the state's aging population.

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

In 2010, the West Virginia House of Delegates and the West Virginia Tax Modernization Project Workgroup endorsed allowing counties to exempt business personal property from property tax rolls. In the report, *Taking Inventory: The Impact of Exempting the Business Personal Property Tax*, the Center showed that such an exemption would reduce funding for the state's education system. It would also place a financial strain on counties and city governments and could shift taxes onto homeowners and other in-state businesses. After testimony by the Center's staff in August, the Tax Modernization Workgroup decided not to pursue any changes to policy.



The Center partnered with Wider Opportunities for Women, based in Washington, D.C., the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the West Virginia Long Term Care Partnership to produce two reports,

## The Center Expands Staff, Broadens Focus

The Center continued its work on key issues aimed at creating a shared prosperity for all West Virginians and maintained a presence at the state Legislature to educate policymakers and their staff. During the 60-day legislative session, the Center produced a weekly e-newsletter to highlight important events, such as budget hearings, and provided analysis of legislative proposals.

With an expanded staff, the Center broadened its research focus to examine business personal property taxation, racial disparities in the state, and the impacts of health care reform. In addition, the Center worked on a variety of other issues aimed at improving the lives of the state's families.

- In collaboration with the Alliance for Sustainable Families, the Center continued its efforts to educate lawmakers on the benefits of a state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for working West Virginia families. The Center updated its research in the report, *Giving Credit to West Virginia's Working Families*, and created new talking points about the state EITC. Center staff also met with members of the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resources Accountability and presented on the topic at the Alliance's Asset Building Summit.
- Coal has long been a part of West Virginia's economy and culture, but its net impact on the state's budget had not been examined. The Center and Downstream Strategies co-authored, "The Impact of Coal on the West Virginia State Budget," which showed that the industry—including its direct and indirect employees—actually costs West Virginia state taxpayers more than it provides. Executive Director Ted Boettner and Downstream Strategies Project Manager Rory McIlmoil presented the report's findings to a joint interim committee during the interim sessions.
- Under the guidance of board member Dr. Karen Kunz, West Virginia University students researched West Virginia's budget development process and compared it to other states. West Virginia has received poor grades from national organizations on accountability and transparency in the budget process. The report of the students' findings, *Accountability and Transparency in the West Virginia Budget Process*, concluded that the Legislature needs to be a stronger partner in the budget process, the public must have access to more detail about expenditures, and there should be an impartial analysis of new program costs.
- As the full impact of the Great Recession was felt in early 2010, and West Virginia's jobless rate passed nine percent, the Center released a brief discussing how modernizing the state's unemployment insurance program could leverage \$22 million in federal funds. These funds could be used to help previously ineligible out-of-work residents and help the state's low- and moderate-income struggling families.

Other 2010 publications are available on the Center's website at [www.wvpolicy.org/publications.htm](http://www.wvpolicy.org/publications.htm).

Several reports that will be released in early 2011 had the bulk of their work done in 2010. These include the State of Working West Virginia, a brief on expanding broadband access, a primer on property taxes in West Virginia, and a report on retiree health care for public employees (OPEB).

In its first full year of membership in the State Fiscal Analysis Initiative (SFAI), the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy attracted funding from new sources while receiving continued support from several foundations. This allowed the Center to focus on its state tax and budget policy analysis while branching out to some policy areas particular to Appalachia. This new funding also provided the Center the financial opportunity to expand its local coalition beyond its traditional partners.

### 2010 Financial Statement\*

#### Revenues

Funds carried over from 2009	\$89,920
Grants	\$366,880
Donations	\$21,500
Contracts	\$40,000
Interest	\$1,152
Reimbursements	\$2,528
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$521,980</b>

#### Expenses

Program	\$262,737
Management and General	\$99,399
Development	\$30,000
Fundraising	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$392,136</b>

Net Assets end of year \$129,844

\*Statement subject to annual audit

### 2009-2010 Funders

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Sisters of Saint Joseph Charitable Fund, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, National Employment Law Project, Rockefeller Family Fund, Wider Opportunities for Women, Economic Policy Institute, Blue Moon, Sierra Club, National Resources Defense Council, University of Colorado, Service Employees Union International 1199, Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, and the Communications Workers of America.

## West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy

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**Joe Miller**

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

**David Love**

*The Phillips Group*

## 2010 Public Policy Events

### Good Jobs, Green Jobs National Conference

May 4-6 • Washington, D.C.



Executive Director Ted Boettner served as a panelist on “Can’t Wait for the Fed: Moving Green Jobs with State-Level Policy.” The workshop looked at how states can build coalitions, find funding, and change rules and regulations to create quality green jobs. The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy was a convener of the conference.

### Health Care Forum

June 28 • Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Moderated by Beth Vorhees with West Virginia Public Broadcasting



This community town-hall style meeting drew residents from across the Capital region and provided an opportunity for them to ask questions about how health reform will impact their lives. Health Policy Analyst Renate Pore was joined on the panel by Perry Bryant (Executive Director, West Virginians for Affordable Health Care), Gaylene Miller (Senior State Director, AARP), and Senator Dan Foster (D-Kanawha). The forum was co-sponsored by dozens of labor, community and industry groups.



### Growing Healthy Children Conference

August 30–31 • Charleston Marriott Town Center

The West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy was a proud sponsor of the Growing Healthy Children conference, which focused on health care reform and its impact on West Virginia’s family and children. Other event sponsors were a broad-based coalition from labor, the faith community, state agencies, foundations, nonprofits, health care associations and membership organizations.

### West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy’s Annual Meeting

November 30 • Charleston Marriott Town Center

Keynote Address by Dr. Bob Tannenwald



The morning panel focused on Appalachia in Economic Transition and included presentations from state leaders on the issue. Sandra Mikush from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation moderated. During his keynote address, Dr. Tannenwald from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities discussed the role of taxes in economic development. The afternoon breakout session allowed attendees to network and strategize with the Center’s staff and board members. Over 100 people attended the event.



#### West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy

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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.