



December 15, 2009

The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell
Office of the Governor-elect
P.O. Box 588
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Governor-elect McDonnell:

Congratulations on your resounding victory in the recent election. Clearly, the people of Virginia have put their trust and confidence in your ability to lead us through the perilous times of the next four years. We are delighted by the outcome and look forward to working closely with you to restore Virginia's economic vitality. To that end, we want to share with you several fundamental priorities and concerns of the Virginia business community, as represented by the under-signed under the banner of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

1. **Transportation:** The ability to move goods and people is integral to Virginia's continued economic competitiveness, and its attractiveness for tourism depends on it. Allocating additional resources to transportation infrastructure is perhaps the most pressing need of Virginia's business community. We are committed to working with you to bring to passage a plan that brings substantial sustainable, predictable revenue to the process.
2. **Economic Development Marketing:** We all know and relish Virginia's # 1 ranking as the best state in the nation for business. Regrettably, the state's marketing arm, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, is sorely under-funded and largely unable to tout our superior position.

Some re-ordering of the Commonwealth's budget priorities, to permit commensurate promotion of Virginia's attractiveness as a business location and for tourism visitation, is in order, especially if we are to depend heavily on job creation as a means to emerge from the current fiscal malaise.

3. **Workforce Development:** The shortage of technically skilled workers continues to be a chief inhibitor to Virginia's economic progress. We hope, therefore, that you will make workforce development a very high priority within your administration. Virginia's capability is improving, but the task is complicated and demands persistent attention from the Governor to maintain a sharp focus on this critical topic.

4. **Regulatory Environment:** A thoughtful, balanced regulatory approach is necessary to maintain Virginia's status as one of the world's premier business and tourism locations as well as to maintain our outstanding quality of life. This approach on issues such as energy, environment and climate change should rely on sound science, engineering and planning practices rather than being driven by emotion and politics. As much as possible, regulatory processes should be transparent, predictable and consistent.

5. **Healthcare:** The business community supports healthcare reforms - both federal and state - that result in increased access to quality health care that is affordable for businesses and individuals. Some of the bills now being debated in the Congress provide neither better access nor lower costs. At the state level, efforts should be made to avoid mandating health insurance benefits. While they do make health insurance more comprehensive for some, they also drive up costs, making health insurance less affordable for most small businesses and individuals.

6. **Workplace stability:** The business community supports a workplace environment that is largely free of government regulation and interference. Employers, in concert with their employees, are best able to determine what promotes a productive, stable work environment.

Efforts at the federal level, for example, to tilt the balance in union elections in favor of unions or to require Virginia's state and local government employers to recognize public safety unions are but two examples of intrusive federal efforts that will do little to promote workplace stability or harmony.

7. **Energy:** Virginia's attractiveness as a business location hinges in large measure on the availability and affordability of an array of energy sources. The Commonwealth is uniquely poised to meet this need due to existing coal resources, over three decades of safe, effective use of nuclear energy, offshore deposits of natural gas (and possibly oil), and early but encouraging forays into renewables such as wind and solar. Careful but aggressive development of these resources, balanced with measured environmental safeguards, will enable us to achieve a position of leadership in this vital economic sector as well as a highly valued level of energy independence.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts with you. Congratulations again on your election. We, and the business community broadly, stand ready to collaborate and support you in every meaningful fashion.

With warm personal regards,

Kevin S. Crutchfield
CEO
Alpha Natural Resources, LLC

Michael E. Szymanczyk
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Altria Group, Inc.

Thomas F. Farrell, II
Chairman, President & CEO
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cc: Hugh Keogh, President & CEO, Virginia Chamber of Commerce