

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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McKinney praises GOP lawmakers for fighting for people of West Virginia

Republicans in the House of Delegates fought successfully for West Virginians in the just-concluded legislative session by opposing a number of laws that would cost jobs, burden residents with additional taxation, and worsen the current economic downturn.

Dr. Doug McKinney, state Republican Party chairman, said that House GOP leader Tim Armstead deserved high marks for leading his caucus to stand firmly against Democrat initiatives that would have been disastrous for West Virginians.

"People across the state should thank Del. Armstead and the GOP caucus for boldly countering a Democrat agenda that once again focused on trivial issues and ignored the bold actions needed to turn our state around," said McKinney.

Even on issues that were passed, the GOP fought hard to improve the bills and spare citizens and small businesses from unfunded mandates and tax hikes.

"From the tax hikes on unemployment premiums, to unfunded mandates like forcing restaurants to post calorie counts, to breaking their promise on Promise Scholarships, to ignoring West Virginia values on marriage and abortion, Democrats in the legislature proved once again they are out of touch with average West Virginians," said McKinney.

McKinney commended Republicans for pointing out that Promise Scholarships were originally touted hand in hand with the expansion of video lottery machines, which have blossomed across the state while still somehow failing to adequately fund the scholarships, the standards for which have changed since the bill originally became law.

McKinney also lauded GOP lawmakers for opposing rate hikes on employment insurance premiums, and also for fighting to, at the very least, exempt businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

"These small businesses are the backbone of our state, and the least able to afford these rate hikes," said McKinney. "But Democrats don't seem to care, and they've approved legislation virtually guaranteed to cost jobs and add more people to unemployment lines, increasing the fund's burden even more."

McKinney also applauded Del. Craig Blair for his effort to end the practice of tax dollars supporting the drug habits of those who have learned to abuse the public assistance system, noting that Blair's bill enjoyed widespread support from citizens in West Virginia and across the nation who are tired of lawmakers turning a blind eye to the problem.

McKinney also criticized Democrats for ignoring the need for a Defense of Marriage Amendment (DOMA), especially in the wake of the developments in Iowa, where a state law similar to West Virginia's was struck down by that state's Supreme Court, as well as legislation to end public funding of abortion.

"Republicans fought hard to add a DOMA initiative to the agenda, but Democrats once again said no," said McKinney. "And once again, Democrats failed to act on ending public funding of abortion, ignoring the values of the people of West Virginia."

McKinney warned Republicans to be on guard against backdoor maneuvering by Gov. Joe Manchin and Democrats between now and late May, when lawmakers will reconvene to finalize a budget.

"Since the session has not officially ended, there's plenty of time for Democrats to engage in their old tricks and spring a few surprises on the people of West Virginia," said McKinney. "And as history shows us, their surprises usually end up costing taxpayers for the benefit of those in power."

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