

March 17, 2011

Larry Puccio: Democrats run West Virginia very well

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Recently, the West Virginia Republican chairman resorted to his favorite tactic of preaching gloom and doom about our state. While state Republicans claim they want to better our state, they spend most of their time disparaging it instead of promoting it.

West Virginia has certainly not been completely immune to the national economic recession that started under President George Bush, but our state's Democratic leadership over the last few years have put us in a very enviable position. Most states are facing crippling budget deficits and are being forced to make drastic cuts and raise taxes, but West Virginia has been able to avoid painful choices and divisive battles such as those suffered in Ohio and Wisconsin.

Consider that West Virginia is one of very few states in recent years to:

- | Have a budget surplus
- | Cut taxes, including those on food and several business taxes
- | Avoid layoffs of teachers, state police, and other employees
- | Pay down billions in state debts, including workers' comp and retirement systems

West Virginia has gained national recognition for being a well-managed state. The conservative libertarian CATO Institute gave us an "A" rating for our state's fiscal health. Wall Street also recognized that West Virginia's budget is in great shape and upgraded (for the second year in a row) our bond rating to Aa1, which will save school boards millions on reduced interest rates, for example.

The Republican chairman was quick to attack our Legislature for passing a pay raise for teachers and state employees (even though it enjoyed bipartisan support from 10 Republican legislators). However, he failed to note that the workers have gone five years without a raise. West Virginia is uniquely fortunate to be able even to consider pay raises since our state's finances have been managed so well in recent years.

While our Democratic leaders will continue to strive to make West Virginia even better, we have much progress to point to already and many reasons to be proud. After all, major companies like Macy's and Toyota would not have recently chosen to expand here if our state was in such dire straits as the Republican chairman would have you believe in his fear-and-smear campaign. West Virginia Democrats will continue to promote our state in a positive way and work to continue to govern it responsibly.

Puccio is chairman of the West Virginia Democratic Party.

3 Comments

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Posted By: RipOff

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Larry, please come down off the mountain and join us in the wilderness. I like how you gloss over 90 plus years of Democratic rule to pick out some recent highpoints achieved by all West Virginians, not a single political party. WV's bank account is better than most because the political machine ran it into the ground and it finally imploded in 2000. Remember the medical malpractice, care insurance, workers' compensation good old days of crisis created by the Democratic machine. No doctors, no car insurance and a abused compensation system. Now the Democrats did not broker these deals nor did your former boss Mr. "Common Sense I borrowed this from Palin" Manchin. Rather, for a first time big labor and business leaders sat down and finally agreed on a limited business friendly play. Presto, the problems were addressed and we now have

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doctors, car insurance and workers' compensation. Its funny how a splintered Demoratic party tries to speak with one voice. What a fraud. Real estate

Posted at: March 18, 2011 1:36:18 am

Posted By: Banderillo

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Isn't that because Joe Manchin is really a Republican?

Posted at: March 18, 2011 6:06:39 am

Posted By: MU4WVU2

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A direct result of the administration of Manchin. He attempted to create a better business climate and push the resource, coal, that can and does set WV apart.

Now come daily comments from WV Democrats about the desire to rid the state of Manchin because he has Republican tendencies. With good leadership, the state can be a player in the economic recovery of the US. This is not the time to go to extremes, but to perpetuate the business climate initiated by the new US Senator.

WV will continue to elect Democrats with the registration ratio currently in existence. That is fine as long as they are centrist leaning. Now is not the time to elect a C Pritt clone.

Posted at: March 18, 2011 8:08:56 am