



## **More Than a Meeting: West Virginia's Best Sales Pitch to the World**

*By: Steve Roberts, President, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce*

August 27 is more than just another date on the calendar. It marks the opening of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce 89th Annual Meeting & Business Summit, our flagship gathering and the largest event of its kind in the state. Held at The Greenbrier, fondly referred to as "America's Resort," this is more than a meeting, it's a moment, steeped in tradition, that moves our state forward.

For nearly nine decades, this summit has brought together West Virginia's best and brightest minds - from business and healthcare to education, finance and public policy. It is a powerful showcase of all that our state has to offer. The West Virginia Chamber has experienced a year of growth and vitality – all leading up to a new record crowd, support and engagement in the event's history.

Every seat will be filled. Every room in the state's most iconic hotel will be occupied. For three full days, leaders from every sector of West Virginia's economy will convene under one roof to chart a course for a better, stronger, more resilient state. Business owners, local chamber executives, energy producers, educators, healthcare providers, bankers and economic development authorities will be there - not out of obligation, but out of shared purpose.

This is where business gets done. Connections are made. Ideas are launched. And all of it is fueled by a deep belief in West Virginia's promise.

As the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra plays "The West Virginia Hills," attendees will enter the historic Colonial Hall with pride and anticipation. They'll be walking into a space where conversations become strategy, and strategy becomes action. Where challenges are met with innovation, and where success is measured by real progress, not just the headlines.

The West Virginia Chamber is not a government agency. We take no public funding. We are an all-volunteer army of employers, working toward a common goal: a healthier, more educated, more prosperous and more welcoming West Virginia. Our independence is our strength. It gives us the freedom to speak truth to power and to advocate boldly for what's best for the people and businesses of our state.

And our track record speaks for itself. The Chamber has led the charge on major reforms, including overhauling the state's broken workers' compensation system, eliminating the burdensome business franchise tax, lowering an uncompetitive corporate tax rate and



helping to establish our state's Rainy-Day fund. We created the successful *All West Virginia Communities* program and continue to champion pro-growth, pro-jobs policies that move West Virginia forward.

This summit, above all, is about leadership. It's about bringing together those who are most invested in West Virginia's future to ask, and answer, the hard questions. How do we build a stronger workforce? How do we attract and retain talent? How do we position our state to compete and thrive in a changing world?

Most importantly: What kind of West Virginia will we leave for the next generation?

Dignitaries, national thought leaders, TV personalities and homegrown entrepreneurs will all gather with one shared goal, to ensure that the answer to that question is full of hope, opportunity and promise.

This is our moment to show the world what West Virginia is made of. And there's no better place to do that than here - together, at the West Virginia Chamber Annual Meeting & Business Summit.