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**Create West Virginia Gubernatorial Roundtable  
Questions and Answers**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the following. I anticipate expanding on the answers to these questions and being even more specific during the roundtable session.

**Question 1: How will you identify problems and opportunities on the job?** The best new hires rapidly seek to identify problems that must be quickly addressed in their new job. Please walk us through the steps of the process that you will actually use during your first weeks to identify the most important current issues/problems, as well as any possible positive opportunities in your new job.

**Answer:** First, I will appoint well-qualified, competent members to my Cabinet who will advise me on the important issues affecting all areas of state government. The first weeks on the job will consist of gathering data and reports regarding the overall health of our state. As with any administrative transition, my focus will be on identifying the good, the bad, and the ugly—improving and streamlining the great programs available to our citizens and ferreting out waste, corruption, and inefficiency. I will have the benefit of addressing problems with a fresh set of eyes, and I will have to quickly, yet thoughtfully, face the most pressing problems head-on—using my experience, available information, and commonsense. I will also bring a fresh face and set of ideas to the Governor’s Office, and I look forward to the great opportunity of putting those ideas to work.

**Question 2: Identifying problems in process.** Our governor should be able to quickly identify problems in the systems that enable the Governor to take action. What’s a major problem that keeps West Virginia’s Governor from getting innovative things done and what do you plan to do to address the issue? Where do you predict that serious problems are likely to occur?

**Answer:** Government is often slow to adapt to changes in community needs. Often duplication or pseudo-duplication of services are created when government must react. As

Governor, I would be proactive in identifying community needs on an on-going basis and insure that agency resources inventoried and prepared to be best deployed.

**Question 3: Solve a real problem that you will face.** Because we need to understand your ability to solve the problems you will face in this job, we would like to know how you will go about solving a real problem that will be on your desk on your first day. Please walk us through the broad steps that you would take in order to address the need for energy diversity and the need to reinvigorate communities that are struggling with loss of jobs.

**Answer:** The solutions to our state's issues must and will come from our people. As Governor, I will solicit and listen to our people about the issues they face in their respective communities. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to addressing job creation and energy diversity in West Virginia, because the answers depend heavily on the resources that exist in our respective communities. However, as Governor, I will insure that all appropriate state resources are used to help our communities the people within them. Of course, we will need to continually monitor these efforts with an eye toward sharing best practices with each other community.

**Question 4: Forecast the evolution of this job.** Because our jobs and the world of work is constantly changing and evolving, it's widely accepted that being forward-looking is critical to success. So please project or forecast at least five different ways that Governor's job will likely change and evolve over the next three years as a result of business changes, technology changes, and a faster, more innovative environment.

**Answer:**

[1] As technology changes, the Governor's Office will interact with citizens in a different way. Social media, agency websites, and smart technologies, will play an even more important role in communicating what is going on in government and in allowing people to transact their business with the state.

[2] West Virginia is at a crossroads, and the governor will be tasked with deciding whether to continue the current course or be a trailblazer by taking innovative steps. The old way

is not working; the new governor will have to set us on a new path forward. If elected, I will examine what is working for other communities in this country and adapt and innovate new practices based on what can be gleaned.

[3] Keeping and attracting creative and innovative talent in West Virginia will require the governor to lead the way in improving the quality of life in our communities. It makes sense that people want to live where they feel welcome, have opportunities to use their skills, and enjoy their surroundings. We already have the ingredients, and the governor will be called upon to act more locally—investing in building and helping clean up local communities to make them more attractive to people.

[4] Also, as technology changes, the way crime is detected and prevented will have to change. The new governor will need to invest in cutting-edge computer technologies for our law enforcement to fight computer hacking and online scams, which threaten all of our personal and financial information. We must acknowledge that much of the crime we fight no longer occurs in the streets, but through largely anonymous computer activity.

[5] Lastly, as the state pulls itself up by its bootstraps, the role of the governor should include being a broker for positive, progressive changes. As governor, I will not be reactionary; I will be an agent for the positive change we desperately need. The Governor's Office should be front-and-center in encouraging entrepreneurial enterprise and economic development.

**Question 5: Forecast the evolution of our state's economic opportunities.** How will economic trends, innovation, and technology impact the WV business landscape over the next 3 to 5 years? How will you prepare WV for those changes so innovation jobs are created in our state?

**Answer:** It is no secret that West Virginia's economy, job market, public education, and public health is in real trouble. In fact, it is a grim truth. Our coal mines are shutting down,

leaving our mining communities stranded in abject poverty while the coal barons run out of West Virginia head-over-heels with their bags of money. According to recent reports, West Virginia has the highest rate of drug overdose deaths in the entire country, and prescription and opioid drug abuse touch every community in the state—leaving behind devastated lives and families. Education budgets have been cut, further perpetuating the cycle of sending our young graduates into work and college environments they are wholly unprepared for, thus limiting their employment opportunities and earning capacity. Those who do succeed and benefit from our great educational institutions could continue to leave our state in droves in search of opportunities not available here. We cannot take it anymore.

[1] The decline of the coal industry is real, and we must do what we can *now* to limit the devastation that is gripping all of our mining communities. The federal government recently announced that it will provide nearly \$66M in economic and workforce funds to help boost these communities, but it certainly cannot cure everything. New job training and continued education is crucial. [2] The oil and natural gas industry in this state is taking off, but low gas prices continue to force companies to limit production—leaving wells to sit idle. This industry provides good-paying jobs, but many of these jobs go to out-of-state workers who have advanced education and skill. There is no reason why West Virginians cannot meet the demand for these jobs in our own state. We must make our workers in demand, and we can do that through training. [3] West Virginia is also home to a high concentration of chemical manufacturers, which bring nearly 13,000 jobs to the state. The industry will continue to provide cutting-edge innovation in polymer research and manufacturing, as well as high-paying jobs. [4] Alternative energy sources will become prominent over the next years. Already, WVU is at the forefront of research. The school’s National Research Center for Alternative Fuels, Engines and Emissions

conducts cutting-edge research to improve vehicle performance and reduce emissions. Wind power is an area where West Virginia has huge potential. Students looking for careers in “green jobs” have a bright future, as the state’s community and technical college system helps students gain an edge in these fields. [5] Tourism can continue to grow from what is currently a \$5.1 billion dollar industry supporting 46,000 jobs. Every dollar invested in tourism yields seven in return. If we make the appropriate investments, West Virginia will continue to attract people from all over the country and world.

**Question 6: Show us how you would be a continuous learning expert.** Rapid learning is essential in our fast moving global economy and in understanding how to keep our citizens healthy. Tell us how as Governor you will maintain the knowledge to improve public health and wellness. Then describe your approach to addressing our health crisis, potentially creating a model reflecting cutting edge healthcare innovation.

**Answer:** Improving our state’s overall health and quality of life will require constant study and learning, and there is no magic equation or formula to make all things perfect. But I will do whatever I can to truly make West Virginia almost heaven. People continually fail to understand that we must be healthy before we can move forward as a state. Promotion of healthy lifestyles must start with our children. The physical and mental health of our children must be priority. Very little learning can occur without a child being physically and mentally ready to learn. That’s why, as Governor, I would insure that each school has on site physical and mental healthcare available.

We certainly must also focus on getting and keeping adult West Virginians healthy, getting them back to work, and improving the overall quality of life in our local communities. Accomplishing this mission will require learning and adopting new strategies and solutions to combat our problems. As I said before, following the old path will not work. Innovation and new

ideas are key. United States Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis coined the phrase “laboratories of democracy” to describe how communities all over the country develop unique and innovative ideas to address complex problems. West Virginians stand to benefit from learning how other communities—most especially from within West Virginia—deal with similar problems and successfully improve their communities. I will examine and innovate those ideas by relying on empirical data to ensure they are workable.

**Question 7: Show us your adaptability when dramatic change is required.** Automation, robotics, and machine learning are transforming industries from health care to energy. Self-driving cars, fully robotic manufacturing, and AI personal assistants are being used in industry today. These technologies, along with other innovations, tend to eliminate more jobs than they create. Explain how you will help West Virginia enter the new information age.

**Answer:** We must begin, today, thinking about every tomorrow. The future of West Virginia that we build depends entirely upon the success of our schools, universities and teachers.

As governor, I want to free and empower our pre-school, K12 and college teachers, to connect with every one of their students and unlock each student’s potential. Curiosity, creativity and imagination must to be central to the school experience. We must pay teachers commensurate with the importance of their work.

If we could accurately predict the future, the task of schooling our population to succeed in that future would be relatively simple work. The challenges of accelerating change have made that impossible. In the agrarian age, teaching the skills necessary for plowing and planting required little more than show and tell. The industrial age brought complexities but the methodologies required little modification. Throughout the 20th century, we taught school with the confidence that the skills needed for the future could be predicted with near accuracy. Today the abilities needed to succeed in an unknowable future can only be mastered by teaching the

student how to learn--- not what to learn. We can't teach what we don't know. We must free our teachers, at all levels, to make school a place where the love of learning and critical thinking are valued, nourished and recognized.

I would also remove some of the disincentives to seeking higher education. I would freeze tuition at all public colleges and universities. I would further consider a sort of "G I Bill" for coal miners laid off in the past two years. This would take the form of free tuition and fees. The number of coal miners laid off in that period is substantial but not so large as to be of great consequence in terms of cost when spread across all of our public colleges and universities.

The only way we will have a West Virginia where our people will choose to stay in the West Virginia and raise their families is to teach them how to make their own future.

**Question 8: Show us how you innovate.** Ultimately, our Create WV community is focused on innovation. Therefore, we need to know if our future governor has the will and capability to innovate. We would like you to select a single important area within the role of Governor of the State of West Virginia and walk us through the steps as to how you might innovate in that role during your first year.

**Answer:** Businesses will not come to West Virginia unless we have an educated and creative workforce. Innovating our public education system is crucial to a prosperous state where businesses want to invest and people want to live. We want to keep the excellent teachers we have from going to neighboring states where salaries are higher, but we also want to incentivize those who would want to become teachers, but cannot afford the currently-low salaries. We should empower teachers by paying them more and expecting excellent results. Better educated children will grow up to be innovators themselves—becoming entrepreneurs and job creators devoted to improving the communities where they grew up.

**Question 9: List and rank your job motivators.** We want our next governor to be motivated to lead innovation in the Mountain State. Reflecting on your career so far, please list the top five

factors that you have found that best motivate you on the job. Please list them in the descending order of importance to you.

**Answer:**

[5] I am motivated to improve public education and infrastructure.

[4] I am motivated to get people back to work and get drugs off the streets.

[3] I am motivated to make West Virginia safe by being tough on crime and supporting our dedicated members of law enforcement.

[2] Hard work motivates me. Doing a good job and doing the right thing is rarely easy, but the results are often life-changing. If given the opportunity, I know my future hard work will change West Virginia for the better.

[1] I grew up in West Virginia. My family lives here. The biggest motivator for me is helping to make West Virginia a better place for my family and my community.

**Question 10: List and rank the capabilities that you bring to the job.** It's important to fully understand your strengths and how they match the requirements for the job. So, given the four important categories of knowledge, experience, education, and skills, can you please list in descending order what you have found to be your strongest five capabilities that will make you a top performer for this job?

**Answer:**

[5] I am a quick study.

[4] I have convened and encouraged collaboration between and among stakeholders.

[3] I learn from mistakes and do not allow perfect to be the enemy of good.

[2] I actively listen.

[1] I am able to engage in and apply big-picture thinking—shifting from a case-by-case view to one focused on the effects the Governor's office can have if devoted to solving community problems.