

MAIL LETTERS to the editor to *The Dominion Post*, 1251 Earl L. Core Road, Morgantown, WV 26505. Email letters to opinion@dominionpost.com. Include your name and phone number for confirmation purposes. Letters should not exceed 300 words.

GO WV does not represent working folks' best interest

On Feb. 15, *The Dominion Post* published a full-page ad from an organization called GO WV, which claimed to have a "workers agenda" that called for a right-to-work law, abandoning prevailing wage and tort reform and repealing cap and trade. I wonder how many workers they asked about this agenda?

The workers I know come from families that struggled for generations to raise wages to a prevailing livable rate, win a fair say at the workplace through collective bargaining, demand employers be held accountable for unsafe workplaces and provide a healthy environment for their descendants. Those were values that captured the imagination of most people who work for a living and others who understood that a healthy society strives to raise the standard of living of all its members.

Today, we find ourselves inundated with messages that fair wages, unions, safe workplaces are driving businesses away from our state. The Don Blankenships will

go elsewhere if they can't kill and maim workers here.

If we want to understand why so many of our children have to leave the state to find good-paying jobs with a future, let's begin by understanding why our state is not competitive. It actually has little to do with decent wages and working conditions and far more to do with a state unwilling to make investments in infrastructure and development of its human capital.

Why? Because the resource extractors who operate in our state have never paid a fair share of the taxes. For more than a century, they shipped the timber, coal, gas and oil out for use elsewhere and paid less tax per value of their property than the hard-scrabble farmers trying to eke out a living. Meanwhile, they held on to a disproportionate share of the land, preventing other sorts of development.

GO WV should tell us the names of the workers who have signed on to its agenda, and tell us who is providing the funds to run a full-page ad claiming to speak for working families.

Stop playing on the fears of many West Virginians who have seen their children leave because a corporate agenda has left them with no options and discuss meaningful solutions for the state's position near the bottom of the nation in so many categories.

Ken Fones-Wolf
Morgantown