

Payback politics taking us nowhere but down

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Dave Sotak Opinion Page

Almost halfway through the legislative session and the “accomplishments to attract new business to West Virginia” have boiled down to passing bills that satisfy the political dysfunction that is the Legislature and not the interests of the people. Right to Work and prevailing wage are to the governor (who vetoed and lawmakers repassed). Concealed weapons without a permit has moved to the Senate.

Sen. Manchin hit it on the head in his article in the Beckley paper Feb. 6, that in all his time in the Legislature, eight years as governor and now as U.S. senator, he has never heard Right to Work cited by corporations courted to locate in West Virginia as a reason to come or go.

I was on the management team of a health center in Fayette County for 20 years that was a union shop, UMWA. Never did it keep us from adding services or expanding coverage. In fact, it added stability and jobs. On the issue of prevailing wage, we had government projects and what we got were contractors with laborers who knew their craft, remained through their piece of work and who were drug screened.

The concerns I saw that deterred physicians and businesses from relocating to Fayette County included the educational system, roads and dysfunctional state and local governments. This is the case for most outside firms considering relocation.

Our political system needs Independent party representation at the state and local level. Decisions made by the current two parties are personal, not professional. The Democrats ruled for too many years, but the payback politics currently under way serves no one. The Senate votes are 18-16 every time. Monkeys could do that and with far less rhetoric and cost.

Their next business-creating bill allows concealed weapons to be carried without a permit, and they are discussing the pros and cons of turnpike tolls. Regarding free range guns, it was best summarized by a lady interviewed on the street who stated, “You have to take a test to drive a car.”

What is everybody afraid of? West Virginians need to awaken soon and take control of our legislators. Give them your opinions before it’s too late.

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