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LAND TAXATION IS THE KEY TO ECONOMIC SUCCESS

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<https://www.wvgazette.com/opinion/letter-landtaxation-is-the-key-to-economic-success-gazette/article/71cffa8d-d2ca-551d-ae61-2df5521565bb.html>

by Carl Shaw, Mt. Zion, WV

Appalachia misses coal mining jobs. There are many other types of employment — growing food, manufacturing clothing, building homes, factories, stores, appliances. Experiences in several jurisdictions show that jobs can be created through the simple reform of taxing land higher. Sales, building and income taxation is a penalty for having produced, and plays NO role in economic development. These taxes on labor and capital produce nothing but government income.

Land taxation, on the other hand, collects the rent of land, which is a social creation and which encourages owners to seek highest and best use, thereby generating jobs. Why doesn't our Legislature look at higher land taxation as a way to improve our economy?

New Hampshire collects about 40 percent of the land rent (highest in nation) and has our nation's lowest poverty rate. Fairhope, Alabama, taxes ALL of the rent of their land, encourages massive population gain (10,000 since 1980) by people who go there finding jobs. Denmark taxes 50 percent of the land rent, has Europe's best economy. British Columbia uses North America's highest land taxation and attracts a steady stream of immigrants from around the world. Southfield, Michigan, in the 1960's, slightly increased land taxation and more than doubled its population in 10 years.

Seventeen out of 20 Jefferson County tax districts collect 94 percent or more of the land, causing Jefferson County to lead West Virginia in median household income at \$66,205, lowest unemployment and gains in population. <<