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## What Matters: Jobs

The economy of our mountains is changing quickly.

We must pursue our vision and create a strong, dynamic, and broad-based economy, well-stocked with locally-owned, locally grown enterprises. The result will be a sustainable economy, flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities that a changing world provides. Such an economy will provide security and opportunity for us all.

To do this, we have to invest in our schools, our community colleges, and our universities. These public entities develop the skilled, talented workforce that creates the leadership for our future.

We must focus on recruitment and retention of business and industry, as well as encouraging the development of locally grown businesses through entrepreneurship training, micro-loans, and small business development centers. In our rural economy, it is critical we support small business development by funding organizations such as the Golden Leaf Foundation, the NC Rural Center, the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, NC Real, and other innovative small business development initiatives.

We must establish our place in the emerging health care economy: the Mountains are naturally an attractive place to retire, and our region should be a leader in North Carolina with the new NC Center of Health and Aging.

Construction is one of our strongest industries here in the Mountains, and I strongly support equity building housing and quality development, while insisting our growth be smart and responsible, protecting clean air, clean water and natural beauty—assets we all share and benefit from.

We should encourage high quality heritage tourism, emphasizing mountain hospitality and our authentic regional character.

My record as your senator and my continuing efforts as a Board Member on Advantage West attest to my commitment to the vision of building a strong job-creating economy essential to a promising future here in the Mountains for ourselves and our children.



*Construction jobs are essential for Western North Carolina.*



*Making a difference.*