

Governors Kick Off Annual Meeting with Focus on Job Creation and Economic Development

Governor Markell, Vice Chair of the National Governors Association (NGA), is meeting with governors across the country for the NGA's Annual Meeting. Here is [the release](#) issued by the NGA or you may view the full text below.

✘ **WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA**—As governors gathered today in Williamsburg, Virginia, job creation and economic growth remained at the forefront of their agendas. **National Governors Association (NGA) Chair Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman, NGA Vice Chair Delaware Gov. Jack Markell and Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell** welcomed a bipartisan group of their colleagues for the association's 104th Annual Meeting.

“As we kick off this year's Annual Meeting, I welcome our nation's governors to the Commonwealth of Virginia,” said **Gov. McDonnell**. “In addition to the business sessions planned for us this weekend, I hope my fellow governors and their families will enjoy the events that showcase Colonial Williamsburg and have the opportunity to explore all that Virginia has to offer.”

The meeting will highlight Gov. Heineman's initiative, [Growing State Economies](#), which focuses on providing governors and other state policymakers with better policy options to assess the economic environment in their state and strategies to foster business growth. “Economic growth is key to our success as governors, and now, more than ever, job creation and economic growth are top priorities for every state,” **Gov.**

Heineman noted.

“Growing State Economies provides ideas and options to help states recover from the national economic slowdown and to implement policies that will help states foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the coming years,” **Gov. Heineman** said. “We want to help the private sector grow and create new job opportunities for our citizens. High growth businesses are one of the driving forces of the modern global economy, a primary source of job creation, prosperity and economic competitiveness.”

As part of his initiative, **Gov. Heineman** delivered several products to governors. The first report, entitled [*A Policy Framework*](#), highlights six issues and activities that can be refined to improve the conditions for job creation. The second is a [*Twelve Actions*](#) report and accompanying pocket card that aims to provide governors and other state policymakers with better policy direction and strategies for business growth. Additionally, each governor received an individualized state economic profile of their state.

Gov. Heineman also highlighted several successes as NGA Chair, which included: streamlining NGA policy to focus on governors’ priorities; preserving the Air National Guard from disproportionate and damaging reductions; assisting states with the implementation of the nationwide broadband network dedicated to public safety communications; and coordinating a year-long prescription drug abuse project.

Gov. Markell, who will become chair of NGA on Sunday, reiterated the importance of bringing governors together to look for solutions to common challenges.

“Governors are having to figure out ways to keep people working together. Not just because they – like the families they serve – have to balance their budgets. They’ve got to make sure our kids have the tools they need to succeed and

help strong teachers prepare kids to win against growing international competition. We must find ways to get people who need jobs back to work and improve opportunity for the majority of people who are working,” **Gov. Markell** said. “The meeting’s agenda should provide for some lively discussions on those and other topics. Hopefully, they’re done with the mindset that which party or place an idea comes from can matter much less than where an idea can take you when implemented well.”

Highlights of the meeting include:

- A session with Jim Collins, author and management educator, who will share his perspective on defining great leadership;
- A meeting of the Education and Workforce Committee to examine the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and former Education Secretary Margaret Spellings;
- Saturday meetings of the Economic Development and Commerce (EDC), the Health and Human Services Committee (HHS), the Natural Resources Committee (NR) and the Special Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety (HSPS); and
- A concluding session on Sunday morning when governors will discuss how to support entrepreneurial activity and hear from Steve Blank, author of *The Startup Owner’s Manual* and consulting professor at Stanford and U.C. Berkeley

The meeting runs through Sunday, July 15.

For up to date coverage of the 2012 Annual Meeting, follow us on Twitter @NatlGovsAssoc and like us on Facebook.