

ICYMI: Governor Carney op-ed in The News Journal: “Innovation is Delaware’s path to jobs and prosperity”

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Sunday published an op-ed in The News Journal titled, “Innovation is Delaware’s path to jobs and prosperity.” In the op-ed, Governor Carney outlines what his administration is doing differently to transition Delaware’s economy, to keep the state competitive, and to make sure Delaware is positioned to create good-paying jobs.

Below is the text from Governor Carney’s op-ed:

[CARNEY: “Innovation is Delaware’s path to jobs and prosperity”](#)
By Gov. John Carney

Incyte near Alapocas. Avalanche Industries in Selbyville. Fair Square Financial in Wilmington. ILC Dover in Frederica.

These Delaware-based companies all have this in common: they are relying on innovation to compete in their industries, and create jobs right here in our state.

And that’s something we need more of.

It’s no secret that Delaware’s economy has undergone a period of significant transition.

Since 1990, the percentage of Delaware’s economy consisting of manufacturing jobs has been cut in half.

DuPont now employs fewer than 6,000 people in Delaware, down from more than 30,000.

Automobile manufacturing plants closed in Newport and Newark, and the steel mill in Claymont was shuttered, eliminating job opportunities that existed for generations of Delawareans.

These losses have been difficult for many in our state.

But the bottom line is this: Delaware's economy has changed and we must change with it.

Our economy has become more entrepreneurial and small-business driven. Innovative companies demand higher-skilled workers, and we're competing not just with other states, but with other countries, for jobs and talent.

We must do things differently to ensure that Delaware remains a leading state to do business, and create good-paying jobs.

Here's what my administration is doing to help:

Earlier this year, we partnered with DuPont and the University of Delaware to create the Delaware Innovation Space. This is a nonprofit that offers what many start-ups cannot afford on their own: state-of-the-art laboratories, premium lab equipment, and quality office space.

It uses the campus at DuPont's Experimental Station near Wilmington. This is the same research campus where Delaware scientists invented Nylon and Kevlar – inventions that powered the company, and supported good-paying Delaware jobs for generations. Delaware entrepreneurs at the Innovation Space now have access to business and scientific leaders at the Experimental Station, mentoring programs, hands-on support and education to help them grow, thrive, and create jobs.

We believe this has the possibility to be transformational for companies housed at the Innovation Space. But we also believe this kind of partnership – one that draws on our state's economic strengths to support new business and job growth – ought to serve as a model for how we improve Delaware's

economy.

Last week, I visited the Innovation Space, and signed paperwork creating the Delaware Prosperity Partnership – a public-private partnership that will lead business marketing efforts for the state. The Partnership will focus on attracting early-stage and technology-focused businesses, recruitment of large employers, and expansion of international business opportunities for Delaware companies.

The Partnership is the centerpiece of our new economic development strategy to position our state to lead in a 21st century economy.

I am personally committed to this effort.

I will chair the Board of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership. The Partnership's directors will include members of the business community in all three counties, and it will be run day-to-day by a chief executive officer and a full-time staff.

It will work with employers and Delaware educators to make sure we're training our students to do the jobs Delaware employers need to fill. The University of Delaware, Delaware Tech, Delaware State University, and other leaders in education, have an important role in preparing Delawareans for the workforce, and positioning Delaware's economy to succeed.

Government, of course, will continue to play an important role in economic development. Within the Department of State, we have created the new Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism that will focus on supporting Delaware's small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Division leaders will provide guidance to small business owners on how to navigate local, state and federal laws and regulations. They will help small businesses identify local incubator programs, financing programs, networking events, and other resources.

And the division will improve the state's outreach to women, minority and veteran-owned businesses. These businesses are crucial to empowering entrepreneurs and creating economic opportunities in diverse communities.

Importantly, this new state government division also will continue to provide oversight of taxpayer-funded programs that provide incentives for businesses to create new jobs in Delaware, and re-locate here.

We operate in a competitive environment, and it is important that we do not allow other states to out-compete Delaware for jobs. But oversight of these taxpayer-funded incentives belongs in government, and that will not change under our new plan.

This month, I am traveling our state to listen to Delaware's business leaders on a Jobs & Economy Tour. Alongside members of the General Assembly, I have begun a series of roundtables with small business owners. Already we've heard the importance of addressing balanced tax and spending policies and addressing rising healthcare costs for businesses.

We also will tour innovative businesses to learn what has made them successful, and see how we can contribute to their success. I visited The Mill in Wilmington this week. I plan to tour companies like Avalanche Industries in Selbyville.

And we'll visit the pharmaceutical company Incyte – a real Delaware success story. The company grew out of its space at the DuPont Experimental Station and, later this year, will move hundreds of employees into a renovated headquarters at Augustine Cut-off.

We intend to continue building on this momentum.

We recognize that our economy has fundamentally changed, and we must be willing to adapt to keep pace with changing times. As I said when I took office in January, we can no longer

expect any single industry or company to be responsible for Delaware's economic stability, let alone our future.

We are working hard to transition Delaware's economy, to keep our state competitive, and to make sure we are positioned to create good-paying jobs. This has to be our top priority.

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