

JOE MANCHIN III, West Virginia's 34th governor, was born and raised in the small coal mining town of Farmington, W.Va., where he learned the value of commitment.

He inherited a head for business from his grandfather, who was an Italian immigrant and the town grocer. His grandmother was a virtual one-woman social services agency, who helped him discover his heart for people.

After attending West Virginia University on a football scholarship, he became a successful businessman. He was a state legislator from 1982–1996 and secretary of state in 200-2004.

As governor, Joe Manchin has improved our state's economic climate, while reducing West Virginia's long-term debt and lowering taxes for citizens and businesses. He is committed to making health care affordable and accessible, creating a seamless education system for our children, ensuring prescription drug assistance for our seniors and providing more support for our veterans.

Under his leadership, more than \$12.5 billion in business investments have been made in the state. West Virginia also led the nation in economic growth from May to August 2008. Working with the Legislature, he fixed the state's workers' compensation system, established the first comprehensive teacher pay package in more than 15 years, dramatically decreased the state's debt, slowed the growth of state government payroll, and strengthened ethics laws.

Gov. Manchin has proposed and approved millions of dollars in tax relief for West Virginia's citizens and businesses. He is known throughout the state as a team builder who encourages cooperation and values all input, and he has quickly become a leader on the national scene. He currently serves as chairman of the National Governors Association, chairman of the Southern States Energy Board, past president of the Council of State Governments, and a past chairman of the Democratic Governors Association and the Southern Governors' Association.