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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**BIC's New Energy Committee Denounces Bloomberg Plans**

**Charleston, W.Va.** — Energy industry leaders from the West Virginia Business & Industry Council joined Gov. Jim Justice Monday to decry an anti-coal and natural gas campaign promoted by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

“We will not stand idly by while out-of-touch New York liberals try to decimate the West Virginia economy with no thought or concern about what this could do to our people and our energy security in the United States,” said BIC Chairman Chris Hamilton. “At BIC, we have created a special new committee focused on uniting West Virginia’s energy interests to create a cohesive development approach, and there is no greater rallying cry for our efforts than to unite against Mayor Bloomberg’s incredibly dangerous pledge.”

Last week, Bloomberg pledged \$500 million to try to eliminate coal-fired power plants and to curtail gas-powered plants.

Justice denounced Bloomberg’s plans in a press conference Monday that brought together top leaders in West Virginia’s energy industry. Hamilton was joined by West Virginia Coal Association President Bill Raney, Sammy Gray of First Energy, West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association Executive Director Anne Blankenship and Independent Oil and Gas Association Executive Director Charlie Burd.

“What we’re here about today is one thing, and that’s Michael Bloomberg and his \$500 million to lobby against coal-fired power plants plus natural gas,” Justice said, adding that Bloomberg’s plans would be catastrophic to the state of West Virginia. “We cannot afford this level of attack on us.”

BIC will be convening meetings with leaders in various components of West Virginia’s energy industry in the coming weeks and months with the goal of facilitating a cohesive energy plan for West Virginia.

For additional information, contact Chris Hamilton at (304) 342-4153.

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The West Virginia Business & Industry Council’s membership includes trade associations and businesses from 26 separate industry classifications, representing some 400,000 workers in West Virginia. The organization’s goal is to enhance the business climate in West Virginia, and its members have been working to that end for more than three decades. Visit [www.wvbic.org](http://www.wvbic.org) for more information.