



# Memo

To: Green enthusiasts and business leaders  
From: Robert J. Smith, III  
Date: 12/15/2008  
Re: Renew Virginia &c.

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The Renew Virginia initiative, propounded by Governor Timothy M. Kaine late last week, signifies an important budgetary victory in Virginia. Facing an approximated \$3 billion shortfall for this fiscal year in the Commonwealth, tax incentives would have been more selective than usual and program cuts may ensue based on Virginia’s hierarchy of needs, as determined by the legislature and the Governor -- separately but mutually.

As consequence of the Renew Virginia initiative, green development and growth will be the primary focus of the vision and, consequently, our budget. This means a number of things for small and large businesses alike that serve green interests. First, laws that could ultimately inhibit growth, such as zoning restrictions and taxes on potential corporate investors, will need to be put under the legislative microscope and adjusted through amendment, revision or erasure and new implementation of an updated law. For an overall effect on Virginia’s economy, green growth cannot be expected in the form of an overnight delivery but must have preparations that encourage its growth. Enabling residents and small businesses (i.e. starting from the bottom and moving upward) to afford changeover, from the most basic steps of changing energy habits to the most complex involving retrofitting HVAC systems inside shops and restaurants, deals with affordability. Beating the rising costs associated with standardized energy and inefficient fixtures, ones not concurrent with modern technological and structural abilities, involves being able to make the change.

A vision for the state budget simply means that Governor Kaine will be unlikely to sign any other major legislative act that supersedes the interests of the tenets of the program. The implications of this will become clearer in the next few weeks as the Office of the Governor releases more specific information on the Renew Virginia initiative. Small businesses are already making use of what was once considered scraps and refuse. The idea of efficiency is sewn and leaves the door open for innovators to reformat Virginia's cities, structures and way of life.

