



Dear Friend,

As Suzanne and I reflect on our four incredible years of service to the people of Virginia, we are humbled by the widespread recognition of the transformative impact the Youngkin Administration and our tremendous staff had on the Commonwealth.

From the Wall Street Journal and National Review, to the Washington Post, the national lookback at “The Youngkin Years” has affirmed our efforts.

Serving as Governor and First Lady of our beloved Commonwealth was the honor and privilege of our lives. We are blessed to have so many committed supporters like you whose prayers, well-wishes, and steadfast partnership helped make The Youngkin Years a real renaissance for Virginia.

As we remain involved and active in initiatives important to both of us, Suzanne and I hope that you will stay on this journey with us as we begin this new chapter of our lives.

In the meantime, I hope you’ll enjoy the positive commentary below on our time as Governor and First Lady of Virginia from across the media spectrum.

God bless you and may God always bless the United States of America.

In Service,

Glenn Youngkin

ICYMI: The Youngkin Years Receive Widespread Praise

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Youngkin's Strong Virginia Legacy

Can a Republican Governor make a difference in a state dominated by a Democratic Legislature and left-leaning voters? Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin has done it in his single term, and he's leaving his Democratic successor with a strong economy and fiscal gusher.

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The commonwealth has had four consecutive years of surpluses, collectively totaling \$9.7 billion.

...

Virginia rose to third from 14th among states with a AAA credit rating for rainy-day fund balances as a share of general fund expenditures.

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Mr. Youngkin has delivered \$9 billion in tax relief in addition to the surpluses.

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Meanwhile, the state's economy has prospered as the Governor has welcomed companies and data centers. The state says it has secured more than \$156 billion in investment commitments.

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Since January 2022, nonfarm payroll employment has increased by 264,000, creating a broader tax base. Year-to-date growth in withholding taxes as of October was 8.6% because of wage growth.

...

Mr. Youngkin has also made strides in education, growing lab schools that are akin to charters (which are effectively barred in the state) with math proficiency rising

19.6% for students in third to eighth grades.

...

The Governor managed this despite Democratic control of at least one house of the Legislature for all four years.

The Washington Post

Virginia's New Governor is Rolling Back the State's Higher Ed Wins

Virginia's outgoing governor, Republican Glenn Youngkin, can boast one of the most successful conservative initiatives of the last decade. He and his team acted boldly on higher education policy, and they did so in a responsible, methodical way. That story offers a model of how today's right-of-center leaders can advance a reform agenda even in these polarized times.

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Yet Youngkin's recently inaugurated successor, Democrat Abigail Spanberger, has moved quickly to roll back his efforts.

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Despite Spanberger's rhetoric, these moves are a reaction to Youngkin's highly effective higher-ed reform effort. Though he came into office on a wave of public frustration about K-12 schooling, Youngkin and his team dedicated significant energy to the state's public colleges and universities. While many recent conservative leaders have focused largely on DEI and free-speech issues, Youngkin had a more expansive agenda, aiming to reduce costs, improve the return on investment, address mental-health concerns, encourage innovation, and more.

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The understated process Youngkin used was as important as the agenda itself. He didn't launch a public-relations war against Virginia's public schools. Instead, he clearly articulated his administration's priorities and appointed board members aligned with that agenda. He regularly met with college presidents. His team

worked with institutions to set performance goals and track progress.

NATIONAL REVIEW

Youngkin's 'Common Sense' Legacy in Virginia

Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin retired last Saturday, constrained by term limits to just four years in office. But his single term was easily one of the most successful of any governor in recent memory.

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What is perhaps most remarkable is that Democrats controlled at least one house of the legislature during his entire tenure, blocking his boldest proposals. But in response, Youngkin thwarted many of the legislature's big government moves. He issued over 400 vetoes, including to legislation that would have set a \$15 minimum wage.

...

Today, the state's unemployment rate is 3.5 percent, compared to 4.4 percent nationally. While governors don't create jobs, they can create a climate where businesses and employers can flourish. Youngkin's policies brought in more than \$157 billion in business investment — a larger number than the previous six administrations combined. The number of employed people increased by nearly 270,000, with many new jobs in the manufacturing, science, and technology sectors.

...

A real accelerant for the job growth was Youngkin's war on unnecessary regulation. Regulations were streamlined by 35 percent, delivering \$1.4 billion in annual savings and reducing the cost of building a home by an average of \$24,000.

...

On taxes, Youngkin cut them by \$9 billion, including the state's hated grocery tax. But the state didn't fall into deficit as a result. The economic growth the tax cuts spurred allowed Youngkin to leave incoming Governor Abigail Spanberger (D.) with a healthy \$2 billion surplus.

...

Four out of five graduates now leave high school with a credential or certification of some kind. While the legislature blocked his efforts to expand school choice, Youngkin created lab schools with local universities that created more opportunities to align students' academic work with workforce needs.

...

On energy, Youngkin argued that the state's policies were designed for a stagnant economy, not a growing one. Once in office, he adopted an all-of-the-above energy strategy, which promoted new natural gas and nuclear generation. Later, he dropped out of the regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and ended the Virginia Clean Economy Act.

...

On crime, Youngkin presided over a 59 percent reduction in fatal fentanyl overdoses and a 30 percent drop in murders.

...

Youngkin is especially proud of how well Virginia fared in a "Vote With Your Feet" report on which states are attracting new residents. He told me last summer that "for the first time in ten years, more people moved to Virginia than moved away to the other 49 states. Common sense works."

Anyone who believes in smaller and smarter government should hope for more common sense from Youngkin in his next foray into public life.

The Virginian-Pilot

Youngkin's Commitment to Mental Health Reform Delivered Results

Gov. Glenn Youngkin, like the governors who preceded him, inherited a tattered mental health system that did not meet the pressing needs of commonwealth residents. Though Virginia made welcome progress on this issue in the last decade, the services available were inadequate and too frequently resulted in the worst

outcomes.

The Republican governor may not have entered office championing a determined focus on improving mental health services, but he embraced that challenge and did not waiver from it. As a result, his successor — and the public — will be on firmer footing as a result of his administration’s laudable efforts.

Like other states, Virginia has struggled throughout its history to strike a proper balance for providing mental health services for its residents. It cycled over the years through institutionalization (effectively criminalization), hospitalization and what could be charitably described as social integration before developing a network of community-based organizations to provide services to those who need them.

Those organizations, known as Community Service Boards, were intended to be a single point of entry for mental health services, but varied considerably from one to the next. Some served one locality while others handled as many as 10 communities. Funding was uneven and gaps were evident, but reform wasn’t a priority in Richmond.

...

Acute concerns about youth mental health were on the rise, Virginia still couldn’t assure those in need of timely access, and the quality of services still varied from one end of the commonwealth to the other.

In December 2022, the governor announced his “Right Help, Right Now” plan, a three-year blueprint to bolster access and affordability of services, improve crisis care, expand substance abuse treatment care and reduce the burden on law enforcement, who too often were tasked with dealing with those who slipped through the cracks.

...

His ambitious hopes for improving mental health care in Virginia depended on additional funding — some \$230 million in the first year alone — and lawmakers, to their credit, answered the call.

Last month, the governor marked three years of that effort, and the progress is undeniable. Mobile crisis teams respond to the new 988 mental health hotline, ensuring help comes quickly throughout Virginia. Law enforcement officers spend

far less time dealing with issues involving mental health. More communities enjoy access to expanded services, and have the money to pay for them. Overdose deaths have declined, and more young Virginians have the support they need to handle challenges.

As when Youngkin entered office, there is still much to do. But the commonwealth is in a far better place than when he was elected, and the “Right Help, Right Now” plan was key to that progress.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Glenn Youngkin, a Sunny Politician in a Stormy Age

Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s term ended last weekend, on Jan. 17. By most observable measures Mr. Youngkin’s time in office was a success: He exits with a hefty budget surplus, a strong economy and a roughly 50% job-approval rating—impressive for a Republican in a mostly Democratic state. Virginia’s Constitution limits the governor to one term, Thomas Jefferson having feared an ascendant executive.

...

Before he ran for office in 2021, he was with the Carlyle Group, a private-equity company, for 25 years. Yet he successfully capitalized on the cultural issues that resonated the most with the public. In office, he issued an executive order banning boys from girls sports and locker rooms, and he signed a law regulating sexually explicit books in school libraries.

...

Mr. Youngkin projects the sort of sunny buoyancy one rarely encounters in American politicians in the 2020s. He faults his opponents, or “the left,” in tones that sound by today’s standards almost complimentary. His criticisms of Democrats tend to include the depersonalized terms “policy choices” and “policy decisions.” Perhaps for that reason, the most vicious attacks on Mr. Youngkin usually come off as comically misplaced.

...

“I find that things don’t get so divisive when you stick to talking about the substance of an issue,” Mr. Youngkin says. We sit on plush midcentury modern armchairs. I slouch in my seat; he, for almost the whole hourlong conversation, sits on the edge of his. “When we’re talking about the substance of the policy and not political gesturing,” he says, “you can get things done.”

...

Mr. Youngkin can reasonably claim to have had a winning record in his only term in elected office. His achievements range from the major (\$9 billion in tax cuts, together with the budget surplus) to the workaday (DMV wait times down, math learning scores recouped from pandemic-era deficits).

...

He continues: “I think the one thing I’ve really learned is that in government, you can do it.” I’m not sure he registers my look of surprise.

Later he reminds me that he is a creature of the private sector. “I always laugh when politicians say, ‘I created X thousand jobs as governor,’ or whatever. I didn’t create any jobs,” Mr. Youngkin says, pointing at himself. “I facilitated and was part of a formula for creating jobs. Companies hire the people, they pay them, and they take all the risks.”

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On economic development, Mr. Youngkin several times uses the verb “compete,” in the sense that Virginia must compete against other Southeastern states for capital investment.

...

I ask about “affordability,” the word Democrats appear to think justifies an array of spending programs and economic interventions. Mr. Youngkin’s answer reminds me that the descriptors I’ve heard applied to him—“policy guy,” “policy wonk”—have some truth. He begins by pointing out, as you would expect, that inflation, another term for a deficit in affordability, rose dramatically under Joe Biden. Then a short lesson in micro- and macroeconomics: Oil and other energy prices are already way down. “But grocery prices are something that we need to continue to drive down. Although there’s been substantial progress, eggs and all of the basic fruits and vegetables, we see challenges with meat, bananas, coffee.”

Eggs? Bananas? I’m momentarily reminded of the daughter of a British

greengrocer, Margaret Thatcher, who, early in her political career, established her economic credentials by the simple expedient of knowing the price of butter.

...

Voters under 50 or so can't remember a Republican president who could explain basic economic realities.

...

He's talked a lot about things government can do. Are there things it can't do? "Government tries to do so much," he answers, "and then it does it ineffectively. And when you combine ambition and ineffectiveness, you end up with failure and disappointment. And how about limiting government to the things we can do and should do?"

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