

McClellan's Economic Recovery Plan

Summary

1. The COVID-19 crisis has impacted the economy in every corner of Virginia, from cities to suburbs to rural communities. The pandemic has amplified the existing vulnerabilities and inequities for workers and businesses across Virginia. Those vulnerabilities and inequities have shown us that a one size fits all recovery plan will not work; Virginia needs a comprehensive plan that addresses these challenges head-on and revitalizes the economy in every community of the Commonwealth. As we rebuild from COVID-19, we must not rebuild the economy of the past, but build the economy of the future.
2. Jenn McClellan's Economic Recovery Plan will rebuild Virginia for the future with an equitable and inclusive economy that leaves no one behind. McClellan's Economic Recovery Plan is designed to work in parallel with Joe Biden's Build Back Better agenda to make Virginia the #1 state for both business and workers. Jenn's plan directly addresses the unique challenges and inequities exposed by the COVID-19 crisis, with investments in impacted communities and small businesses.
3. The first step to rebuilding the economy is continuing to stabilize the COVID-19 health crisis. Stabilizing the economy requires a holistic approach that prevents Virginia from going back to the same broken system. McClellan will coordinate with the federal and local governments, and the private and non-profit sector to ensure employers and workers have the necessary resources, supplies, and guidance to reopen and stay open safely until the health crisis is over. Jenn will stabilize the child care industry, work which began with her 2021 legislation¹ and increase child care quality, affordability, and access for all families as outlined in her [Universal Child Care & Early Learning Plan](#) released in January.²
4. In the legislature, Jenn has led and passed initiatives to grow new Virginia jobs and industries including: creating benefit corporations to make Virginia a hub of social entrepreneurship; removing red tape for local craft breweries; enabling them to create jobs; and passing the Virginia Clean Economy Act to make Virginia a national leader in the clean energy sector by creating thousands of clean energy jobs across the Commonwealth. She also fought to extend worker protections through measures such as the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights, the Pregnant Worker Fairness Act, the Virginia Values Act, raising the minimum wage, expanding unemployment insurance, and establishing paid family and medical leave. **Jenn will build on this experience to ensure that the economy is more fair, more resilient, and more equitable for workers and businesses.**
5. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated emerging trends, particularly the growing online marketplace. Businesses that were prepared for the digital wave fared better — and in some cases thrived — while others suffered greatly or closed forever. Since COVID-19 began, 27% of Virginia's small businesses have closed.³ Minority and women owned small businesses experienced heightened problems during the pandemic due to existing structural networking disadvantages and access to

¹ [SB 1316](#), Virginia's Legislative Information System, 2021.

² McClellan for Governor, [Universal Child Care & Early Learning Plan](#), Jan. 2021.

³ Virginia Economic Development Partnership, [COVID and Business Closures in Virginia](#), Dec. 2020.

capital.⁴ As governor, Jenn will create a COVID Long-Term Effects Small Business Loan, enabling Virginia small business owners to apply for a low-interest 30-year loan that allows for reinvestment in their business without red tape and with the potential for loan forgiveness. Jenn will also increase funding to help small businesses with access to capital through increased funding partnerships with entities like the Virginia Community Capital Bank. She will increase funding to the Virginia Community Development Financial Institutions Fund by \$2.5 million per year for a period of five years to enable small and micro-businesses to gain access to navigation tools and support for applying for loans, business plan development, financial management, strategic planning, and organizational development — helping small business owners meet challenges during and after the pandemic's end. And she will direct her administration to comprehensively study what laws and tax structures need to be updated to help make Small, Women, and Minority (SWaM) owned businesses, especially brick and mortar, more competitive.

6. Under Jenn's administration, economic development plans will prioritize stabilizing and growing Virginia's small, women, and minority owned businesses. And any incentives to businesses moving to Virginia must pass a litmus test of what's good for our communities, focusing funds on job creation and community investment. Jenn also will create greater transparency and accountability with the Commonwealth's Development Opportunity Fund (COF) — requiring the COF to expand its reporting procedures.
7. Workers are still reeling from the effects of COVID-19. Despite Virginia's unemployment rate falling to 5.3%, there are 193,900 fewer Virginians employed this year than last year.⁵ Women of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.⁶ Latina and Black women currently have an unemployment rate of 9.1% and 8.4%, respectively, while white women have an unemployment rate of 5.7%.⁷ Asian American and Pacific Islander women have an unemployment rate of 16.4%.⁸ As governor, Jenn will invest in Virginia's workforce and strengthen workplace protections by: establishing a paid family and medical leave program, and paid sick leave; building on the 2021 legislation to extend and modernize the unemployment system by allowing phone and email communication to become standard, require more timely responses from employers contesting workers' claims, more leeway to forgive overpayments, and ensure gig workers can opt into unemployment insurance; expediting the transition to \$15 minimum wage; allowing 500,000 Virginia gig workers access to unemployment benefits; removing barriers to collective bargaining, including for public employees, and requiring those who benefit from a collective bargaining agreement or union representation in a grievance process to contribute to the cost for the service; combatting wage theft and worker misclassification; and enacting universal child care by 2025 to help Virginia parents return to work and employ 80,000 more early childhood educators. Since caregiving jobs are the fastest growing workforce in the nation, Jenn believes that it is important that these new jobs are good jobs.
8. Jenn will also invest in making Virginia a national hub for clean energy job growth, building on the success of the Virginia Clean Economy Act with further action to expand deployment of solar and wind technology and invest in clean vehicles while creating green jobs and democratizing clean energy access by eliminating solar and wind tariffs. Jenn will build on the work to connect every corner of the Commonwealth by continuing efforts to develop high-speed rail infrastructure. She will also invest in strengthening Virginia's agricultural industry, supporting the mental and economic health of the Commonwealth's farmers, growing the multi-modal transportation system through Virginia's ports, and expanding broadband access by investing a minimum of \$50 million annually in the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI).
9. As governor, Jenn will work with the Biden-Harris Administration to rebuild our economy for today and the future. The future under Jenn's Administration is a Commonwealth that prioritizes the health, happiness, and safety of our workers with thriving businesses that harness new technology and clean energy. Jenn recognizes the symbiotic, but often unbalanced, relationships between workers and

4 BBC Research and Consulting, [2020 Disparity Study: Commonwealth of Virginia](#), Final Report, Jan. 2021, Pg. 270-71.

5 Virginia Employment Commission, [The Virginia unemployment rate fell to 5.3 percent in January while total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 14,100](#), March 2021.

6 Bleiweis, Robin. [The Economic Status of Asian American and Pacific Islander Women](#), The Center for American Progress, March 4, 2021.

7 Kurtz, Annalyn. [The US economy lost 140,000 jobs in December. All of them were held by women](#), CNN Business, Jan. 8, 2021.

8 Bleiweis, Robin. [The Economic Status of Asian American and Pacific Islander Women](#), The Center for American Progress, March 4, 2021.

businesses. That is why she will ensure that workers and businesses have the support to manage trends that have already begun to affect Virginia’s economy. Jenn’s recovery plan will help workers and businesses balance the ever-shrinking line between work and home life, remove inequities in our economic systems, rebuild safety nets, encourage growth and protection for workers and businesses so no Virginian is left behind.

I. Rebuilding the Economy for Now & the Future

A. Accelerated Market Trends: Innovation & Technology

COVID-19 has accelerated the need for innovation and technology in our economy. The pandemic has created more inequity among businesses and workers. The businesses with an existing digital presence had more opportunity to grow while businesses without a digital presence were left vulnerable to the digital divide.⁹ People-facing industries like hospitality, brick and mortar retail, restaurants, child care, recreation, and event spaces have suffered some of the greatest losses in the face of limited in-person activities to stay safe. As businesses have navigated the pandemic, workers have also faced growing challenges that have often required them to choose between staying safe and getting paid. Technological innovations have also presented challenges, including displacing workers as the evolving field of gig-oriented work based apps expand.

As governor, Jenn will work with the Biden-Harris Administration to implement the Build Back Better Recovery Plan to help support Virginia businesses and workers through COVID-19 relief funding and long-term investment in rebuilding our economy better for everyone.¹⁰ Jenn will also increase funding to help SWaM businesses, with access to capital through increased funding partnerships with entities like the Virginia Community Capital Bank.

COVID-19 has made clear that Virginia’s small business community needs more technical assistance and resources. Jenn will increase funding and support for programs like Capital Region Small Business Development Centers, which provides a network for small business expertise, technical resources, and support.¹¹ Jenn’s plan will enable small and micro-businesses to gain access to capital while receiving navigation tools and support for applying for loans, business plan development, financial management, strategic planning, and organizational development. This effort will also include helping businesses with innovative strategies around online marketing and sales.

Jenn has a record of changing laws to help small businesses succeed through innovation. In 2012, she introduced the law that allowed small craft breweries to set up shop in larger breweries, so they could rent brewing equipment instead of buying it outright.¹² This opened the door to over 150 craft breweries across Virginia to open their businesses.¹³ In 2011, Jenn introduced and passed legislation that set up the Benefit Corporation option in Virginia, which allowed entrepreneurs to open businesses that modeled a benefit to the community.¹⁴ When Jenn visited a small business owner in Alexandria, she learned the business was losing customers to neighboring states that were not bound by strict wine licensure laws. Small businesses across the Commonwealth have benefited from more flexibility with ABC laws during COVID-19. Jenn will make more permanent as an effort to help SWaM businesses increase their competition on the market.

As governor, Jenn will continue to problem solve with legislation that allows entrepreneurs to innovate and grow their businesses in a way that prepares them for the ever-changing economy. In today’s economy, consumers are interacting with larger national online businesses that have very little to no connection to their local community. On day one, Jenn will direct her administration to comprehensively study

⁹ Mattioli, Dana. [Big Tech Companies Reap Gains as Covid-19 Fuels Shift in Demand](#), The Wall Street Journal, Oct. 2020.

¹⁰ Democratic National Committee, [Build Back Better: Joe Biden’s Jobs and Economic Recovery Plan for Working Families](#).

¹¹ [Capitol Region Small Business Development Center](#).

¹² Virginia Is For Lovers, [Virginia Craft Beer Map](#), Accessed March 18, 2021; Rasnick, Cassidy. [Virginia is now home to over 100 craft breweries](#), Craftbeer.com, Jan. 22, 2015; Garabelli, Veronica and Sabbath, Jessica. [Despite increased competition, Virginia’s craft brewers see room to grow](#), Virginia Business, June 29, 2018.

¹³ [HB 359](#), Virginia’s Legislative Information System, 2012.

¹⁴ [HB 2358](#), Virginia’s Legislative Information System, 2011; Connect VA, [Nonprofit Trends: The Rise of the B Corps Movement](#), June 23, 2016.

what laws and tax structures need to be updated to help make SWaM owned businesses, especially brick and mortar, more competitive.

B. Small, Women, and Minority (SWaM) Owned Businesses – Stabilization, Support, and Growth

Jenn recognizes that Virginians of all backgrounds should have the chance to start, sustain, and grow businesses — no matter the size of their business, gender, or racial background. Jenn wants to expand who is eligible for the SWaM classifications — advocating to include LGBTQ+ business owners in the program. COVID-19 has particularly and negatively affected SWaM owned businesses in Virginia and across the nation. 27% of Virginia small businesses have closed since the beginning of the pandemic.¹⁵ Over the last year, one report cited that 41% of Black-owned businesses, 32% of Latino-owned businesses, 26% of Asian American and Pacific Islander owned businesses, and 25% of women-owned businesses had closed as a result of the pandemic.¹⁶ Jenn wants to ensure that SWaM businesses are supported during and after COVID-19.

Jenn knows that even after the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, small businesses will face challenges from its effects. That is why she is proposing the COVID Long-Term Effects Small Business Loan. Through this program, Virginia small business owners could apply for a low-interest, 30-year loan that allows for reinvestment in their business without red tape and with the potential for loan forgiveness. This rescue measure is forward-thinking and will serve as a bedrock for businesses to invest in their infrastructure needs.

During the 2021 General Assembly Session, Jenn helped create the Virginia Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI) — a resource that enables Virginia community financial institutions to allocate funds that support, stabilize, and grow small and micro-businesses across Virginia through loans, grants, and forgivable loans.¹⁷ Jenn will expand the CDFI to create long-term technical and crisis support to SWaM and micro-businesses in the Commonwealth, increasing the CDFI budget by \$2.5 million per year for a period of five years to accommodate small businesses owners as they meet challenges during and after the pandemic's end.

To adapt SWaM businesses to the digital-based market, Jenn will help these businesses harness cutting edge technology to fight and recover from the ongoing economic effects of COVID-19.

Jenn has heard from SWaM businesses across the Commonwealth about their desire to offer benefits to their workers, but have experienced challenges doing so. As governor, Jenn will set-up a state administered benefits system to provide paid family leave without the burden of operating those programs falling on the small business. She will also set aside a portion of the CDFI funding so that SWaM owned businesses and micro-businesses in Virginia can pull down supplemental grant funding to help offset some of the financial challenges that come with offering paid family leave and sick leave to their workers. In 2020, Jenn passed legislation that established the Virginia Health Benefit Exchange, which will allow qualified employers to buy more affordable health insurance plans for their employees and reduce some of the administrative burden to those qualified employers and provide gig workers more affordable health care plans by July 1, 2023.¹⁸

Readjusting the Commonwealth's business priorities so that they work for all Virginians is important. Under Jenn's administration, economic development plans will prioritize stabilizing and growing Virginia's small, women, and minority owned businesses. And any incentives to businesses moving to Virginia must pass a litmus test of what's good for our communities, focusing funds on job creation and community investment. Jenn will create greater transparency and accountability with the Commonwealth's Development Opportunity Fund (COF) — requiring the COF to expand its reporting procedures. This additional transparency will also prevent and protect taxpayers from losing money on investments to create jobs that never materialize. Jenn will also update the Virginia procurement process, specifically

¹⁵ Virginia Economic Development Partnership, [COVID and Business Closures in Virginia](#), Dec. 2020.

¹⁶ National Bureau of Economic Research, [The Impact of COVID-19 on Small Business Owners: Evidence of Early-Stage Losses from the April 2020 Current Population Survey](#), Roanoke Times, June 2020.

¹⁷ [HB 1800](#), Virginia's Legislative Information System, Conference Report, Feb. 25, 2021, Pg. 45-46.

¹⁸ [SB 732](#), Virginia's Legislative Information System, 2020.

creating a more efficient and equitable process for SWaM businesses by creating subcategories for types of SWaM businesses.

Jenn will encourage small business ownership to Virginia's next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators. During the 2021 session, Jenn introduced a budget amendment to create a pilot program in Hampton Roads called the Small Business Assistance & Youth Entrepreneurship Program.¹⁹ As governor, Jenn will bring entrepreneurship to the classroom — providing school-age children with hands-on job experience and mentorship through partnerships with local entrepreneurs and businesses — all for class credit.

C. Workers & Families

As a working mother of 2, Jenn knows how hard it is to find quality, affordable child care. An equitable economy means more opportunities for workers and families. Child care is an essential element of a successful economy and is one of the fastest growing workforces in the nation. As governor, Jenn will ensure that every family with a child, from birth to 4 years old, will have access to affordable quality child care. Jenn's [Universal Child Care & Early Learning Plan](#) ensures that families can get back to work and will create more than 80,000 jobs for early childhood educators where they are paid and valued for the critical work they are doing to care for Virginia's most valuable asset for our future, our children.

Jenn knows the care economy is a critical part of the larger economy and is fighting to protect the workers who have often been overlooked for the integral role they play. Nearly every woman on her mother's side of the family was a domestic worker, making these issues personal for Jenn. Her work passing the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights made Virginia the first state in the South to extend worker protections to domestic workers (including home care workers) by providing them protections under the Minimum Wage Act, the Virginia Human Rights Act, and Virginia's workplace health and safety laws. She also co-sponsored legislation to provide paid sick leave to home care workers. The fight to protect domestic and home care workers has proven just how much work there is to do in Virginia simply to raise awareness of the value of care and domestic workers, and their working conditions. As governor, Jenn will continue to be a champion for the care workforce.

Jenn's [K-12 Equitable Education & Investment Plan](#) will make sure that Virginia students are prepared for the modern workforce. With her plan, Virginia's students will have the work-ready competencies needed to succeed in the 21st century by expanding available opportunities such as expanding access to dual-enrollment programs and providing training, support, and funding for technical education, including working with union apprenticeship programs. This will to prepare students who wish to enter the workforce immediately after graduating high school. Her plan will expand career and technical education classes, and trade school options to diversify and strengthen Virginia's workforce pipeline.

Jenn will accelerate the arrival of the \$15 minimum wage — working quickly to provide workers with more economic freedom. When workers fall on hard times, Jenn will make sure that there is a safety net to fall back on. She will extend unemployment insurance and modernize the unemployment system to make it more worker friendly by building upon 2021 legislation she co-sponsored to update the unemployment system.²⁰ She will begin by allowing phone and email communication to become standard, require more timely responses from employers contesting workers' claims, and provide more leeway to forgive overpayments. Jenn will ensure gig workers can opt into unemployment insurance. In modernizing the unemployment system, Jenn will change laws to keep up with today's modern worker and the gig economy. By expanding the safety net to include gig workers, Jenn's plan could benefit over 500,000 gig workers in Virginia.²¹

As the daughter of a third generation educator and the granddaughter of a carpenter, Jenn has seen firsthand the benefits that come to workers and their families from union organizing. Virginia has made gains on workers' rights and protections, but there is still work to be done. As governor, Jenn will continue to

¹⁹ [VCCS - Small Business Assistance & Youth Entrepreneurship Pilot Program , Budget Item 223 #2s, 2021.](#)

²⁰ [HB 2040](#), Virginia's Legislative Information System, 2021.

²¹ Siegel, A. [Virginia's Huge Unemployment Numbers Likely to Get "Huger" \(Gig Economy Edition\)](#), Blue Virginia, April 10, 2020.

expand worker protections. She will do this by removing barriers to effective union organizing, strengthen collective bargaining — including public employees — while ensure all employees that benefit from a collective bargaining agreement or union representation in grievance processes contribute to the costs of those benefits.

Housing access and affordability is vital to a productive economy. That is why Jenn will take a comprehensive approach to addressing Virginia’s affordable housing and eviction crisis. She will make certain a statewide rent relief program is on-going and will invest \$108 million annually into this fund. She will also establish a statewide housing voucher program and will increase funding for home ownership programs including creating a new funding stream and eligibility standard for first-time home buyers. This new fund will specifically target historically disadvantaged communities — enabling families and individuals to qualify for housing grants for first-time home ownership. Under the Home Ownership Fund, families will not only have stable housing, but will begin to build intergenerational wealth for their children and grandchildren while enriching the Commonwealth.

D. The Clean & Modern Economy

The future economy has to be a clean economy that harnesses technology, reduces greenhouse gasses, and mitigates harms to the environment and communities. As governor, Jenn will continue to break down existing barriers, maintaining Virginia’s status as a 100% Clean Energy state. In 2020, she passed the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA), making Virginia the first state in the South with a 100% Clean Energy Standard. The VCEA is unleashing clean energy in Virginia and is estimated to create an average of 13,000 new jobs a year in an industry that continues to grow.²²

Jenn also passed the Solar Freedom Act. The combination of the VCEA and Solar Freedom Act helped unharness solar production in Virginia.²³ Recently an analysis done by Solar Energy Industries Association found that more than 1.4 gigawatts of solar power is generated in Virginia in 2020, which resulted in Virginia moving from 19 to number 4 in the nation for solar production.²⁴

As the next governor of Virginia, Jenn will have the opportunity to foster growth under the VCEA and Solar Freedom Act. She will prioritize reducing barriers to cultivate wind and solar power in Virginia — eliminating wind and solar tariffs that set back the democratization of the energy industry and lifting caps barriers to entry for distributed solar including continuing to raise the caps on solar net metering and PPAs. She will also work with local government partners on programs like solar in schools. Jenn will be the governor who recruits new clean energy businesses to the Commonwealth that will drive the jobs of the future while building the carbon-free electric grid. She will also build on the progress made by Virginia joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative by ensuring Virginia invests proceeds received as a result are invested in programs that help with the transition to the clean economy.

A clean and modern economy will require clean and renewable transportation. Currently in Virginia, vehicle emissions contribute 45% of the Commonwealth’s carbon dioxide pollution.²⁵ In the 2021 General Assembly Session, Jenn worked to help create a low- and zero-emission car standard and continue to modernize Virginia’s transportation system to 100% clean and renewable energy so that Virginia becomes a national leader in electric vehicles.²⁶ With 7.5 million vehicles registered in Virginia, the typical passenger car emits approximately 28 pounds of carbon dioxide per day. The Clean Car Standard was a great first step, but there is still more work to be done.

As governor, Jenn will build on the work to connect every corner of the Commonwealth by continuing efforts to develop high-speed rail infrastructure. High speed rail development will engage the innovative minds of Virginia’s tech sector while creating thousands of skilled jobs in rural and urban areas across the Commonwealth. With modern high speed rail, more Virginians will have access to 21st century tech-

²² [Virginia Clean Economy Act](#).

²³ [SB 710](#), Virginia’s Legislative Information System, 2020.

²⁴ Vogelsong, Sarah. [Report ranks Virginia fourth among states for 2020 solar installations](#), Virginia Mercury, March 16, 2021.

²⁵ Lewis, Lena, et al. [Curbing Vehicle Pollution](#), Virginia Conservation Network, Accessed March 18, 2021.

²⁶ [HB 1965](#), Virginia’s Legislative Information System, 2021.

nology with speedy access to education, jobs, health care, and other essential items.

In order to build a modern economy that works for everyone, bridging the digital divide is essential. As governor, Jenn will begin by working identifying underserved and unserved areas through legislation passed in 2021, then working with those localities to address their unique service access barriers — paying particular attention to local density and geographical barriers. Closing the digital divide will require both infrastructure and service coupled with a commitment to invest state dollars into building broadband infrastructure and providing the service through authorities, public-private partnerships, and local governments. As governor, Jenn’s budget will prioritize grant funding to unserved and underserved communities across the Commonwealth, and she will invest a minimum of \$50 million annually in the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI). She will build upon 2021 legislation that removed requirements that limit grants to localities partnering with private providers and will ease restrictions that limit municipal authorities’ ability to serve unserved or underserved areas. She will also work with the federal government to expand programs that address broadband affordability.

E. Agriculture, Forestry & The Port

As governor, Jenn will lead a modern, healthy, bountiful, and equitable Commonwealth. She wants to honor and preserve Virginia’s rich agricultural, forestry, and maritime heritage — continuing the legacy for the next generation of Virginians as the effects of global climate change are tackled.

With COVID-19, the importance of securing Virginia’s agricultural supply chains has never been greater. Jenn is committed to ensuring that Virginia’s agricultural and forestry consumer supply chains are connected from farm and forest to table. By advocating for the latest supply chain technologies and analytics, Jenn believes in communicating with those at all stations of the supply chain — developing common sense solutions and combining existing and innovative methods. Building on 2020 legislation to reform Virginia’s Heirs Property Law, she will also work to help farmers preserve land from forced sales and clear title to access more federal loan programs.

To modernize Virginia’s economy, Jenn is ready to work collaboratively with President Joe Biden’s Build Back Better “Buy American Plan” to increase the speed of supply chains for Virginia goods, using the cleanest and greenest methods possible. Virginia is home to the third largest port in the nation — providing a home for the supply chain operations for numerous Fortune 500 companies.²⁷

Jenn believes that growing the multi-modal transportation system through Virginia’s ports will maximize efficiency to maritime commerce while benefiting our environment by reducing the shipping carbon footprint.²⁸ As rising sea levels become an added challenge for Virginia’s ports, Jenn will ensure that Virginia is promoting climate-friendly practices at Virginia ports that also stimulate commerce through infrastructure investment for the ports and their surrounding communities.

Jenn established the Virginia Food Access Investment Fund (VFAIF) grant program in 2020 to ensure that the Commonwealth’s local food systems are equitable for all Virginians. By investing in retailers who address food access issues, the VFAIF increases access to fresh food while mitigating the harmful effects of food deserts throughout Virginia.²⁹ The VFAIF also invests in Black, Indigenous, and minority-owned businesses — offering grants and providing greater access to capital to open food retail businesses that help underserved communities. Through food justice, Jenn is ensuring that food insecure communities are well-fed and empowered.

COVID-19 has further increased the need to fight against food insecurity. As of 2020, the number of food insecure Virginians rose to a staggering 22.5% of the population.³⁰ That is why Jenn is dedicated to bringing food security to more Virginians through programs like the VFAIF while advocating for increased and hassle-free access to and participation in SNAP and WIC programs.

²⁷ Virginia Economic Development Partnership, [Virginia’s key industries are poised for growth to ensure success for future generations](#), Accessed March 18, 2021.

²⁸ Virginia Performs, [Multimodal Transportation](#), Accessed March 18, 2021.

²⁹ [HB 1509](#), Virginia’s Legislative Information System, 2020; Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Resources, [Virginia Food Access Investment Fund Grants](#), Accessed March 18, 2021.

³⁰ Virginia Department of Social Services, [Food Security in Virginia](#), Accessed March 18, 2021.

Jenn wants to advocate for those who grow Virginia's food — not just those who eat it. She believes that supporting our farmers' mental and economic health is vital to ensure a healthy and plentiful Commonwealth. To combat the challenges of 21st century agriculture, Jenn supports raising the farmers' minimum wage and investing more in the Reduce Farmer Stress program — which provides mental health and health care services to Virginia's farmers, fishers, and foresters in an era that has been challenging for agriculture. To alleviate some of the challenges faced by our agricultural community, Jenn supports and will help grow the use of increased access to smart technology to help connect farmers to their customers more efficiently.

Conclusion

Over the last year, Virginia has persevered in the face of some of the steepest health, socio-emotional and economic challenges in history. Despite our present difficulties, Jenn is looking forward — ready to lead the Commonwealth's economy on its road to recovery. Jenn's proven track record in the General Assembly and her commitment to innovative solutions for the Commonwealth will bring Virginia's economy back better than before.

By prioritizing equity and access for all, Jenn will lead Virginia to economic stability, security, and growth — with greater access to small business resources, better paying jobs, worker protections, early child care and education, food resources, mental health services, and championing clean energy and technology throughout the Commonwealth. Jenn's plan will be sure to make Virginia the top state in the nation for workers and businesses. As governor, Jenn will create an economy that is good for the planet and leaves no one behind.