While West Virginia is usually perceived only as an energy state, there are many other industries that have the ability to flourish here. Industries like automotive manufacturing, aerospace engineering, and building materials with facilities here are proof that we are not only an energy state. With the skills and knowledge of WV engineers paired with WV’s geographic advantages, industries such as biomedical and environmental engineering would also do well here. Individually, these industries would do well here for certain reasons. On a broader scale, WV has characteristics that would benefit them all.

Our engineers can work with the State Legislature and local Chambers of Commerce to bring other industries to WV. They can use examples of successful ventures, like aerospace engineering, for reference.

Biomedical engineers design and build medical equipment, and they teach doctors and nurses how to use it. Unique to WV, coal miners and other factory workers suffer from ergonomic health problems. When in need of medical treatment like prosthetics, physical therapy, and joint surgery, many people in my area go straight to Ohio to seek it. If more biomedical jobs are brought to WV, residents won’t have to leave the state for this type of medical care. Elderly people in secluded areas of WV need a reliable place to get specialized treatment, which is currently only available in big cities. Biomedical engineers would help design the facilities, build equipment, and mass-produce products that would help meet the needs of West Virginians.
Environmental engineering is the process of sustaining and improving the environment to protect people, animals, and habitats. In WV, these engineers could work to find alternate, cleaner sources of energy. Even though coal and natural gas are abundant here and have employed and provided electricity to many, mining them has had a negative impact on WV’s landscape. Energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines would be a good investment in many parts of WV.

West Virginia has aspects that would benefit all of these industries. Our abundant energy supplies make WV an ideal location for companies. The electricity rates here are 33% lower than the national average, and business costs are 14% lower. WV’s interstates, airports, rivers, and railroads are great for transportation. Engineers are involved in energy distribution, infrastructure, and business, so they understand and can explain how it will be advantageous for industries to locate here.
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