In West Virginia, we are plagued by a serious problem that is affecting our state. We train and educate young men and women, and then they leave the state for other job opportunities. To stop this, we need to bring more engineering companies into the state so that these men and women quit leaving the state for better opportunities. So, we need to ask ourselves, what is the best way to make West Virginia more attractive to businesses and what is the best way to bring those businesses in?

One of the biggest problems that West Virginia has is the conditions of our infrastructure. Fixing the problems with our infrastructure will not only help bring in more businesses into the state but it will create new jobs because we will have to hire people to help fix the infrastructure. Fixing the roads in need of repair, which costs motorist $515 per year (Infrastructure in West Virginia), would be a first good step in starting this process. Some of the other problems with West Virginia, according to Infrastructure in West Virginia, are

While the nation’s infrastructure earned a “D+” in the 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, West Virginia faces infrastructure challenges of its own. For example, driving on roads in need of repair in West Virginia costs each driver $515 per year, and 17.3% of bridges are rated structurally deficient. Drinking water needs in West Virginia are an estimated $1.16 billion, and wastewater needs total $3.26 billion. 285 dams are considered to be high-hazard potential. The state’s schools have an estimated capital expenditure gap of $265
million. This deteriorating infrastructure impedes West Virginia’s ability to compete in an increasingly global marketplace. Success in a 21st century economy requires serious, sustained leadership on infrastructure investment at all levels of government. Delaying these investments only escalates the cost and risks of an aging infrastructure system, an option that the country, West Virginia, and families can no longer afford.

One problem with making these repairs is finding the money to pay those who are doing the work. Steps are already being taken to come up with the financial backing needed to make the repairs. In June 2017, Rep. Evan Jenkins made an announcement saying his work on the House Appropriations Committee has helped secure full funding for the FAST Act, the landmark five-year highway bill that will reinvest in West Virginia’s infrastructure (Boothe). Governor Jim Justice has also started taking steps to create more revenue. According to Boothe in “$45 Billion in Federal Funding Announced for West Virginia's Infrastructure.” Governor Justice signed House Bill 1006, which will raise $140 million more a year. These changes include:

On July 1, the cost of gasoline rose by 3 1/2 cents a gallon, bringing in about $60 million a year; the tax on purchasing a motor vehicle will increase from 5 percent to 6 percent and will raise $40 million a year; vehicle registration fees will increase from $28.50 to $50, raking in an extra $28 million annually; and several other DMV fee hikes will bring in another $12 million a year.

After making these change, the state of West Virginia will start to appear more attractive to engineering businesses and hopefully bring them in. After then, we can start keeping people in the state instead of them leaving.
Works Cited
