

Letters to the Editor: Corning article leaves misconception

Jan 12, 2016

The recent article regarding Corning Inc. moving its headquarters from Catawba County to Mecklenburg County and the state incentives which were involved in that decision has left a misconception.

It has routinely been the case through the years that state incentives are never used to induce a company to move a facility from one county to another county within the state.

As the president of the North Carolina Economic Developers Association, we monitor these matters and the following are the facts of what occurred:

- » The existing corporate headquarters in Hickory was in need of major renovations, likely exceeding the cost of a new headquarters facility.
- » The company looked for locations in Catawba County, other regional counties, in South Carolina, and also considered existing company facilities in other states
- » The company then considered whether or not to relocate the headquarters to Mecklenburg County or to South Carolina.
- » The North Carolina Department of Commerce offered incentives only for the new jobs which would be created and not for the 500 jobs which existed in Catawba County.
- » The Department of Commerce offered substantially more incentives for the company to stay in Catawba County than if it located in Mecklenburg County.
- » This assistance, along with other factors, caused the company to choose a location in Mecklenburg County versus moving to South Carolina.

The state's incentives programs are used in a common sense and effective way. This project was not a case of a misuse of those programs.

One can understand how some would see this as being a concern from the outside looking in. But when one looks at all the facts, it is clear that everything was done that could be done to keep the project in Catawba County, and when that was not possible, to keep it from moving to South Carolina.

Ernest Pearson,

President North Carolina Economic Developers Association

Obama's job creation indicative of positive terms in office

In a recent discussion with a Tea Party acquaintance, I reminded him that unemployment was down to 5 percent, and assuming no major economic downturns, Obama is on track to more than 10 million private sector jobs created during his two terms.

To him that wasn't good enough but could a Republican have done better recovering from the Great Recession? This prompted me to research job creation numbers for our past presidents.

Under Carter, private sector jobs created: 9,041 million, public sector 1.3 million.

Reagan for two terms: 14,717 million, public sector 1.4 million.

G. H. Bush: 1,510 million, public sector 1.1 million.

Clinton for two terms: 20,957 million, public sector 1.9 million.

George Bush two terms: loss of 463,000, public sector 1.7million.

Obama through 32 months of second term: 8,944 million, public sector loss of 634,000.

Given the jobs created over the last several months, Obama will most likely exceed 10 million. If he had had the luxury of public sector growth as all his predecessors, we would have another 1.5 million people employed.

When I hear we are worse off today than we were when Obama took office, I have to ask if you are from China, Greece, Italy or Spain. I also find it interesting how limited government Republicans relied so heavily on public sector employment for job creation.

Regardless of these facts, Obama will always be “Obummer” to many in the Tea Party. The historians will judge Obama just as they judge Carter and the others and the numbers will, no doubt, influence that judgment.

The much maligned Jimmy Carter had 9 million jobs created during his four years, better than Reagan’s first term in office. The hate Obama crowd will never give Obama any credit. They will argue that Republicans could have done better.

I guess we will never know but what we do know is that the historical facts don’t support their case.

David Turman

Hickory

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