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Endorsements for McDonnell, Bolling, Shannon

By [Bristol Herald Courier Editorial Board](#)

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As voters prepare to make their choices Tuesday, we remind them of our endorsements for Virginia governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general.

For governor, this newspaper endorses Republican Bob McDonnell. We believe he has the strongest backing of the state's business community at a time when a lagging economy and the profound need for job creation top the list of Virginia's problems.

Transportation problems are high on the list, too, and Democrat Creigh Deeds suggests a bipartisan commission to study transportation needs. The idea is inclusive, but seems too slow for a state with enormous and mounting transportation needs. McDonnell has provided more specifics on plans to raise transportation money, although we acknowledge it is unlikely to raise the needed funding as he projects.

McDonnell has been able to snare the support of most major business organizations in Virginia, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Federation for Independent Business and the Virginia Realtors. And he's promised a sustained focus on business development needs in Southwest and Southside Virginia, areas that have historically lagged behind.

We do recognize Deeds' longtime advocacy for rural regions, particularly as an 18-year state senator from Bath County. Still, we believe McDonnell is the stronger candidate to bring new business to Virginia and strengthen the regions that need the help.

For lieutenant governor, we endorse incumbent Republican Bill Bolling, who has roots in the

coalfields region and a clear understanding of Virginia's rural challenges.

We've been most impressed by his 100 Ideas for the Future of Virginia tour. He traveled around the state to hear from Virginians about how to improve public safety, education and transportation needs. Of course, his aim is to put those plans into effect during a second term as lieutenant governor.

Democrat Jody Wagner, the former finance secretary under Democratic Gov. Mark Warner, is a capable candidate, but we believe Bolling has stronger ideas and more experience and deserves a chance to continue in this role.

For attorney general, we endorse Democrat Steve Shannon, a state delegate who represents Northern Virginia. Shannon has articulated a vision of the Attorney General's office that is best in line with the needs of residents of Southwest Virginia – from his ideas about addressing prescription drug abuse to developing contractual agreements that allow public universities and private businesses to partner on projects that would bring jobs to the region.

Shannon has a solid background in public safety, including experience as a prosecutor. Republican state Sen. Ken Cuccinelli, a private practice attorney who deserves respect for his advocacy for people with mental illness, does not have this prosecutorial experience.

And Cuccinelli, in interviews this week, declined to retract a comment he made to The Virginian-Pilot's editorial board, in which he refused to commit to established anti-discrimination policies in the AG's office, the same policies McDonnell did follow, for hiring and promotions. Cuccinelli's statements put him in the fringe of the Republican party and we believe his rhetoric indicates the possible social agenda he would have in higher office.

Shannon has outlined a broad platform as attorney general – to focus on combating drug addiction and finding alternative punishments for addicts, to prosecute people who are viewing child pornography or committing sexual crimes against children, to combat gang activity and to reduce predatory lending practices in Virginia.

For attorney general of Virginia, we want a person who has experience as a prosecutor and a broader agenda of public safety goals. We believe Shannon has that experience and we urge you to support him Tuesday.

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