



## *Rural Caucus*

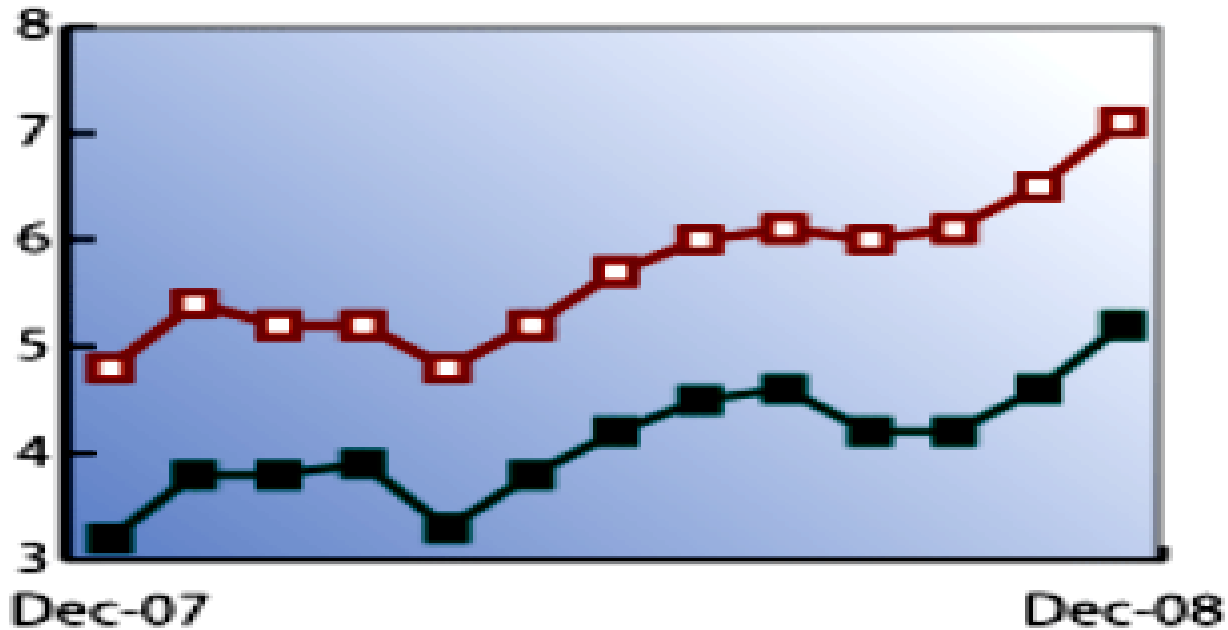
February 23, 2009

**Patrick O. Gottschalk**

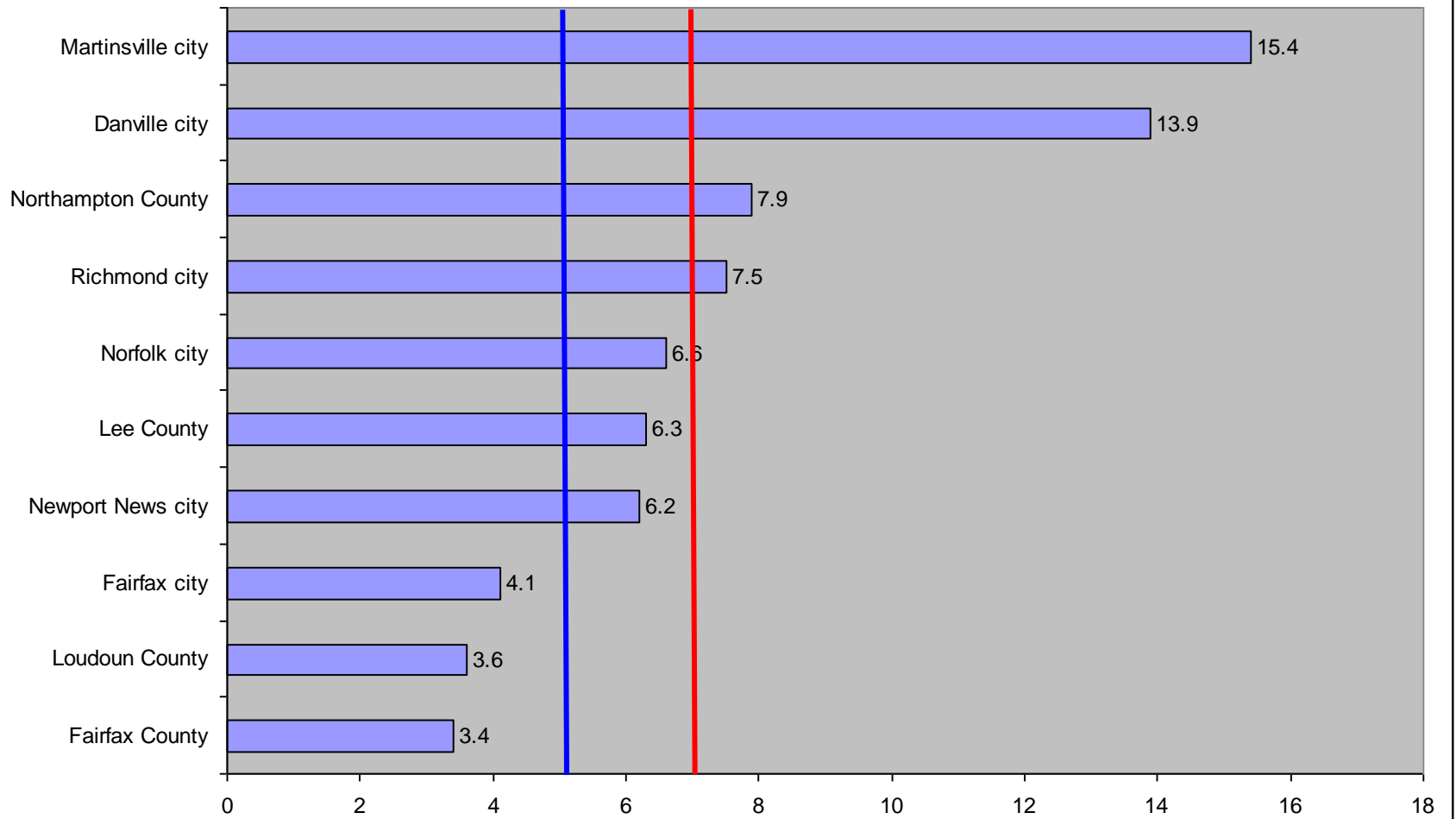
Secretary of Commerce & Trade

The current recession officially began in December, 2007

	<b>Dec-08</b>	<b>Nov-08</b>	<b>Dec-07</b>
■ <b>Virginia</b>	5.2%	4.6%	3.2%
□ <b>United States</b>	7.1%	6.5%	4.8%



Unemployment Rate - December 2008



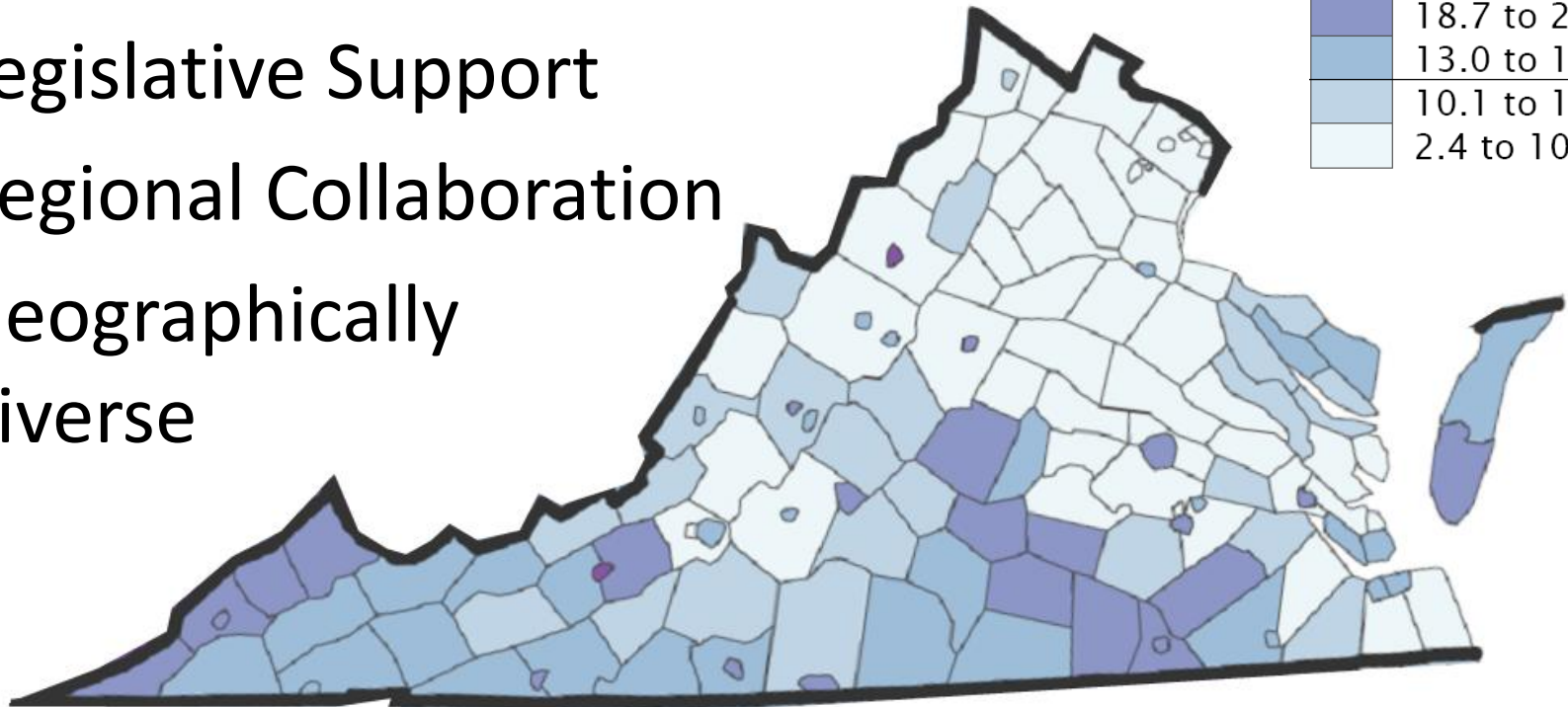
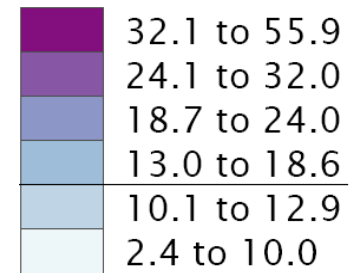
# Rural and Urban Virginia

- **Population in (7.7 million)**  
1.1 million                      6.6 million
- **Income (\$49,636)**  
\$31,350                              \$51,919
- **Poverty Rate (9.9%)**  
14.9%                                9.1%
- **Completing College (29.5%)**  
13.1%                                32.6%
- **Number of Jobs (4,859,015)**  
553,177                                4,305,838

# Rural Plan

- Comprehensive
- Key Stakeholders
- Legislative Support
- Regional Collaboration
- Geographically diverse

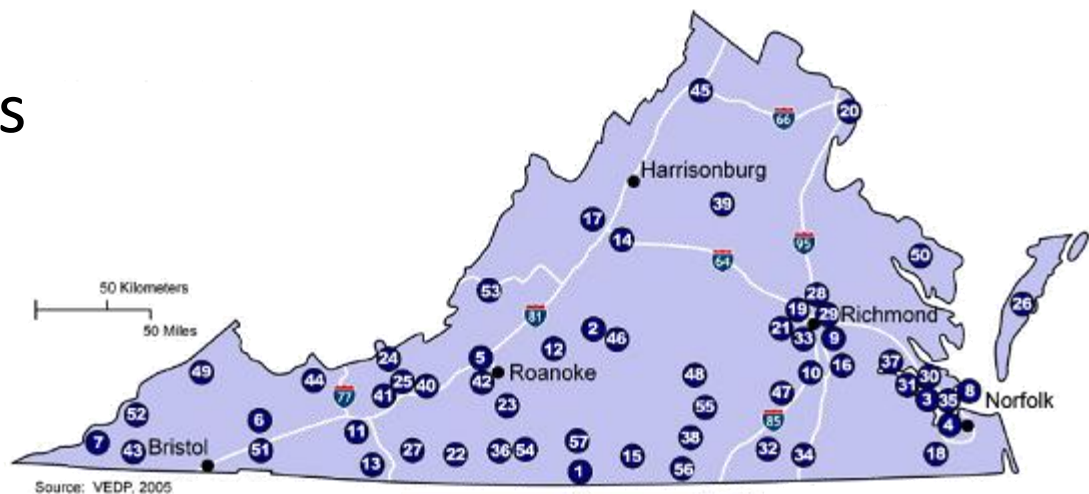
Poverty  
by county





# Economic Development

- Governor's Opportunity Fund
  - 2/3rds to Rural
- Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund
- VJIP
  - 55% in Rural Areas
- Enterprise Zones
  - Mainly Rural



# Economic Development Strategic Plan

- Goal IV: Enhance Economic Development Efforts in Virginia's Distressed Areas to Help Reduce Economic Disparity and to Promote Opportunity for All Virginia's Regions
  - Economic Development Focus to Emphasize Lower Cost of Doing Business in Rural and Distressed Areas
  - Majority of Prospect Visits Occur in Distressed Communities in this Administration (56% of Visits in FY08)
  - Major Employment and Investment Act (Megaprojects)
  - Broadband - Access to the Global Economy
  - Major Deals – Goodyear (Danville), Orbital (Northampton County), Merck, Coors, SRI (Rockingham County)
- Goal V: Emphasize Regional Cooperation in Economic, Workforce, and Tourism Development
  - Swedwood North America (Pittsylvania County/Danville)
  - Gates Corporation (Washington/Smyth Counties)
  - Heartwood Artisan Center
  - Crooked Road / Round the Mountain

## Renew Virginia

- Energy
- Environment
- Every Corner of the Commonwealth
  - Rural Well Positioned for New Manufacturing
    - Solar, Wind, Etc.
  - Biofuels – Mecklenburg County, Lee County
- Tobacco Commission Investments
  - 5 Energy Research and Development Centers
  - \$100 million for Energy Research and Development



## Conclusions:

- Special Attention Must be Paid to Rural Areas
- Incentives Must Continue to be Focused on Rural Areas
- New Administration Must Embrace and Invest in Rural Virginia
- Rural Center and Rural Caucus are Crucial to Maintaining the Emphasis on Rural Economic Development