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From the Atlanta Business Chronicle:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2018/12/24/viewpoint-economic-development-veteran-j-mac.html>

Viewpoint: Economic development veteran J. Mac Holladay's advice for Gov.-elect Brian Kemp

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Having lived through many transitions of governors in leading three state programs in economic development over the years, I have some advice for Georgia's new governor. The simple steps are also based on working across 34 states in these past few years and learning from others mistakes.

1. Leave the Georgia tax structure alone. We do not lose projects because of taxes, we lose them because of talent. Stay away from the Kansas disaster.
2. Insure the full funding of pre-K to 12 education. Upgrade our pre-K to the No. 1 program in the country, Alabama's First Class Program.
3. Make certain that the top jobs in community and economic development agencies are held by professionals not political appointees with no experience in the field.
4. Stay away from any Religious Freedom Legislation. North Carolina is still suffering from HB 2.
5. If you want to stop the closing of rural hospitals (which is a death knell for any community) and slow the increasing pressure on all our hospitals, allow Medicaid expansion now. It is a good fiscal and policy decision.
6. Rural Georgia needs two things first – free access to getting a two year degree or certificate (as HOPE did originally) for any high school graduate and access to high speed internet. The state must provide incentives as the market will never provide that last mile. Great examples of success are out there in other states.
7. Regionalism is the future of all economic progress. Go back to the past support for our second-tier cities as regional job centers and require multi-county cooperation. They are the hope for rural Georgia. Offer grant programs and move staff into the field away from Atlanta into Macon, Albany, Valdosta, Statesboro, Augusta, Savannah, Tifton, Rome, and Dalton.
8. There needs to be "need based" requirement added to HOPE. Challenge the lottery staff to provide a greater percentage of the total funds to education. They are far behind the stated goal of return.
9. Increase the state funding for the new ATL entity and allow them to do their job in consolidating the existing systems and leveraging all the resources available.
10. The quality of place is a top consideration for every project and entrepreneur. Enhancing the Main Street and small towns programs at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs is vital to assist communities in moving ahead.

BYRON E. SMALL
Georgia State Capitol Building