



MARYLAND — Baltimore-based Under Armour will open a 1.3 million-square-foot distribution facility in Baltimore County in the location of the former Sparrows Point steel mill. (See “Red Skies and Blue Collars,” *Econ Focus*, First Quarter 2013.) The facility will focus on Under Armour’s e-commerce business, which the company said grew 44 percent in the second quarter of 2016. Under Armour said the facility will employ about 1,000 people and will be the company’s fourth distribution center in the United States. It is expected to open in the summer of 2018.



NORTH CAROLINA — In August, the state Supreme Court ruled that Carthage, N.C., had unlawfully charged residential homebuilders “impact fees” for water and sewer systems in developments. In Carthage, the approval of land for subdivisions led to immediate charges for water and sewer expansion even if the builder never connected to the system. If the fees were not paid, Carthage would refuse building permits. The court ruled that state law “clearly fails to empower the Town to impose impact fees for future services.”



SOUTH CAROLINA — The aerospace industry contributed \$19 billion to the state’s economy in 2016, a \$2 billion increase from 2014, according to an economic impact study sponsored by the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness. The study, conducted by University of South Carolina economist Joseph Von Nessen, found that the aerospace cluster contributed 100,000 jobs, paying an average salary of \$70,000, 69 percent higher than the state average. The study said aerospace companies with fewer than 500 employees plan to grow their workforce by 31 percent by the end of 2017.



VIRGINIA — Sales of Virginia wine reached a record high this year, according to figures from the Virginia Wine Marketing Office, with 6.6 million bottles sold in FY 2016. This is a 6 percent increase over FY 2015 and a 34 percent jump since 2010. Sales at the state’s 285 wineries — Virginia ranks fifth nationally in number of wineries and grape production — grew 7.3 percent. The sale of Virginia cider also increased, up 52 percent over FY 2015. In 2012, the wine and cider industries contributed an estimated \$750 million annually to the state economy.



WASHINGTON, D.C. — In an attempt to streamline regulatory processes for D.C. businesses, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs launched in August the D.C. Business Center, a website that allows businesses to apply for a basic license, renew a license, and submit documentation and payments, among other tasks. The site uses a licensing wizard to tell prospective business owners what licenses and supporting documentation are required to start their business in the District. The site focuses on the kinds of basic licenses most frequently issued, such as those for restaurants, single-family rentals, and contractors.



WEST VIRGINIA — Towns hit hard by coal industry layoffs will receive help in the form of federal grants aimed at stimulating economic development. The POWER Initiative involves 10 federal agencies granting \$38.8 million to 29 economic and workforce development projects spread among several Appalachian states, including West Virginia. Fifteen of the selected projects are in West Virginia, including two that span multiple states. Officials estimate the grants will create or retain 3,400 jobs.