

MICHIGAN GOVERNOR HOLDING ECONOMIC SUMMIT



Next week, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder will be hosting an **economic** summit that will focus on regional collaboration and figuring out ways to drive future growth in the area, according to Michigan Live.

"This is a working summit," Snyder told MLive on Friday. "This isn't just a summit where you come and listen to a bunch of speakers, have lunch and leave. We help set the stage with some general framework, but then a lot of hard work goes on to come out with real output and real product in terms of saying 'This is what the private sector needs.'"

Snyder will speak at the event and so will the CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan, Dough Rothwell and economist Paul Traub.

"We're focusing as a state to say the jurisdiction that does the best job matching supply to talent will have a strong strategic advantage over other parts of the country or the world, and I want us to be a leader in this, because it's critical to a bright future and having more and better jobs for everyone," Snyder said.

Snyder has worked on creating jobs by making the state more competitive for job creators using regulatory reform and eliminating the state business tax. Despite jobs being created since the economy plunged in 2009, the state is still 45th in the country with an unemployment rate of 8.9 percent.

If you examine the state's online jobs portal, there are more than 63,000 available jobs posted. If each of these jobs is filled, the state's unemployment rate could drop by 1.5 percent. Experts believe that there is a gap between the current skill of the workforce in Michigan and the type of jobs available in the state.

The National Skills Coalition said that as of 2009, close to half of the jobs in the state were middle-skill jobs that required more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The Coalition said that less than 45 percent of state **workers** had the appropriate training necessary for jobs. "This gap will continue without new investments," according to a report.

"Employers need people with more specialized skills, particularly when they start, than what they used to require," Snyder said. "For example, you're going in now where if you're a skilled trade person you need a specialized skill to run a certain piece of machinery or equipment, or you need a certain kind of engineer, and we need to help make that connection."

"I don't walk away from the auto industry, because it's making a resurgence," Snyder said. "Manufacturing is still important, in my view, but we do need to continue to expand. I think we are growing the right kind of jobs relative to the rest of the country."

The 2013 Governor's Economic Summit is scheduled for March 18 and 19 at the Cobo Center in Detroit.