

RESUME:

DISCUSSION OF VACO LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

It is Staff's recommendation that the Board have a summary of legislative positions to present at the VACO Annual Meeting for the VACo 2017 Legislative Program adopted at the VACO Annual Meeting on November 14, 2017.

# **VACo's Preliminary 2018 Legislative Program**



**October 3, 2017**

1                   **2018 Draft Legislative Program**  
2                   **Virginia Association of Counties**

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39 **VACo's 2018 Overarching Legislative Priority Position**

40  
41 **Increase Education Funding**

42 To assure each child in Virginia a quality education necessary for his or her success,  
43 VACo calls upon the Governor and General Assembly to fully fund the Standards of  
44 Quality as recommended by the Board of Education, where these recommendations  
45 coincide with prevailing local practice, as well as the Standards of Accreditation.

46  
47 The provision of a quality education for all Virginia's children is the most important  
48 function of state and local government. The infusion of K-12 funding provided in the  
49 2016 General Assembly session and the additional dollars supplied in 2017 were steps in  
50 the right direction toward restoring the state's partnership with localities in fulfilling  
51 this critical mission. However, when adjusted for inflation, state direct aid per-pupil  
52 spending on public education in FY 2018 is less than funding levels in FY 2006. With  
53 increased educational mandates, increased numbers of students, and state policy  
54 changes that decreased education funding, local school divisions have had to eliminate  
55 important academic programs, cut instructional and support staff, and increase class  
56 sizes, despite strong local efforts to improve efficiencies in public education.

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58 VACo looks forward to working with the Governor and General Assembly to address  
59 these serious challenges facing public education in our Commonwealth.  
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61 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND**  
62 **PLANNING**

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64 **Priorities**

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66 **Broadband**

67 VACo urges the Commonwealth and the Federal Government to assist  
68 communities in their efforts to deploy universal affordable access to broadband  
69 for all areas, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Additionally, VACo  
70 opposes mandates that limit or restrict local land use authority for the siting of  
71 telecommunications infrastructure or result in a negative fiscal impact to county  
72 budgets.

73  
74 **Land Use/Growth Management Tools**

75 VACo supports maintaining local authority to plan and regulate land use and  
76 opposes any legislation that weakens these key local responsibilities.

77  
78 VACo supports legislation that grants localities additional tools to adequately  
79 meet increasing needs for public services driven by new development without  
80 burdening current residents with the cost of new growth through increased real  
81 estate taxes. Such additional tools may include broad impact fee authority for all  
82 counties, and adequate public facilities provisions in subdivision ordinances.

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84 **Proffers**

85 VACo supports changes to the conditional zoning law to allow greater flexibility  
86 in the process for determining impacts to be addressed when considering an  
87 application for development.

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89 **Enhanced Coordination between Workforce System and K14**  
90 **Education**

91 VACo supports changes in curriculum and funding that will increase the number  
92 students leaving the K14 system with workforce ready credentials.

93  
94 VACo also supports innovative models for schools to give academic credit for  
95 students that earn industry workforce skills through certifications, or licensure  
96 from an approved education or training provider.

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98 **Regulation of Home-based Businesses**

99 VACo opposes any legislation that limits or restricts local authority to regulate  
100 home-based businesses, including short term rentals regardless of whether  
101 services or goods are purchased through an online hosting platform  
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**Positions**

**Affordable and Workforce Housing**

VACo supports maintaining federal and state funding and appropriate incentives to assist localities in fostering affordable housing, as well as workforce housing for employees such as teachers and first responders.

**Economic Development**

VACo supports economic development policies and programs that bolster local and regional development efforts by maintaining state funding and granting additional funding and authority to promote local and regional initiatives. This includes the provision of adequate funding for the Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID); the Commonwealth Opportunity Fund; and the operations of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). VACo also supports state funding for Virginia’s planning district commissions, which play a key role in addressing regional challenges.

**Impacts of Federal and Military Facilities**

VACo supports maintaining federal and state funding and technical assistance to mitigate the impacts on counties affected by federal budget cuts and to sustain current and future federal facilities in Virginia. VACo supports state and local partnerships to work to prevent encroachment and non-compatible land uses next to military installations. VACo also supports workforce training and retraining for programs that support Defense activities in Virginia.

**Maintain Public Sector Role in Onsite Sewer Program**

VACo supports an onsite sewage program at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) that protects public health and the environment in all regions of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth should give special focus to addressing the challenge of failing septic systems and allow localities authority to develop and implement policies that support the state’s program. VACo supports the private sector providing onsite sewage system design, installation and repair services, as long as the services can be provided at affordable rates and in a timely manner, and as long as VDH continues to provide these direct services as well.

**Siting of Transmission Lines**

VACo supports requiring utilities to seek input from localities and property owners before any actions to construct, modify or enlarge transmission facilities.

# EDUCATION

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## Priority

### **Education Funding**

VACo urges the General Assembly to provide full state funding for public education, including the Standards of Quality (SOQ) as recommended by the Board of Education, where these recommendations coincide with prevailing local practice; targeted incentive programs; capital and maintenance support; and teacher salaries. Full state funding should be achieved without reduction to other parts of state public education budgets or to other core services. The state must recognize that in FY 2016 local school divisions spent approximately \$3.9 billion above required local effort. VACo opposes proposals to divert state or local education funds from local school divisions. Major proposed changes to high school graduation standards will require additional resources to implement and those costs must be allocated fairly between the state and localities.

VACo supports the current practice whereby all year-end funds appropriated to the school divisions by the locality revert to the locality, retaining discretion with the governing body to evaluate and approve the reallocation of year-end fund balances.

## Positions

### **Composite Index Appeal process**

VACo supports legislation that would establish an appeals process for local governments to challenge computation of the Local Composite Index.

### **Composite Index, Use Value**

VACo supports legislation to adjust the calculation of the Local Composite Index for public school funding by directing the Department of Education to adjust its funding calculations for the local ability to pay by using the use-value assessment of real property, instead of the true value, in localities that have adopted use-value taxation.

### **Charter Schools**

VACo opposes legislation that provides authority for the State Board of Education to establish charter schools.

### **Early Childhood**

VACo supports efforts to increase at-risk children's access to high-quality, enriching learning environments, including flexibility for localities participating in the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Head Start.

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**Funding Support Personnel**

In addition to meeting its obligations to fully fund instructional staff, the Commonwealth should meet its obligation to fully fund the support side of K-12. Since 2009, Virginia has implemented sizable structural budget cuts to K-12, particularly in the area of support, costing localities more than \$1.7 billion per biennium statewide. VACo supports full restoration of these cuts, including elimination of the funding cap on support positions, and full reinstatement of the Cost of Competing (COCA) for support staff. Adequate state funding for support staff and operations is critically important for the operation of any school system.

**Library System**

VACo supports maintaining the level of funding of financial aid to the library system at levels budgeted for FY 2018.

**School Safety**

VACo supports funding to improve school security, including but not limited to funding that would serve as an incentive for local school divisions to hire School Resource Officers (SROs) to assure the protection of Virginia’s school children.

**Special Education Regional Tuition Reimbursement Program**

If a new model for distribution of funding for special education students with intense support needs is implemented, such a model should be phased in gradually, with state dollars provided to enable school divisions that would otherwise experience reductions in funding to continue to meet federal maintenance of effort requirements.



## ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

### Priority

#### **Water Quality Improvement Funding**

VACo supports effective partnerships among and across all levels of government to improve water quality.

VACo urges state and federal agencies to consider impacts on local governments of any initiatives intended to reduce loadings of pollutants into state waters from both point and non-point sources. In order for comprehensive, watershed-wide water quality improvement strategies to be effective, major and reliable forms of financial and technical assistance from federal and state governments will be necessary. VACo supports the goal of improved water quality, but will oppose provisions of any strategy that penalizes local governments by withdrawing current forms of financial assistance or imposing monitoring, management or similar requirements on localities without providing sufficient resources to accomplish those processes. VACo opposes the imposition of a state fee, tax or surcharge on water, sewer, solid waste or any service provided by a local government or authority.

### Positions

#### **Aquifer protection**

VACo supports initiatives by the state to assure adoption of actions to reduce high chloride concentrations and loss of artesian head pressure in Virginia's aquifers. VACo also requests that the Commonwealth conduct a review of regulations, and promote education to promote reclamation of water on a local level for industrial and irrigation uses to offset future demands on all ground and surface water used for human consumption in the Commonwealth.

#### **Biosolids**

VACo contends that the land application of exceptional quality and Class B biosolids, when conducted properly, provides important benefits to the public and Virginia's agricultural sector. To reduce risks that might occur because of improper land application, VACo supports an effective statewide program and regulations governing land application of biosolids that protect the environment, public health and safety. VACo also supports the ability of local governments to monitor compliance with such regulations. To address concerns of neighboring property owners, VACo supports the ability of local governments to suggest amendments to biosolids permits as they are being considered by the Department of Environmental Quality.

#### **Dam safety**

VACo supports dam safety regulations that do not impose unreasonable costs on dam owners whose structures meet current safety standards. VACo encourages

271 DCR to institute reasonable calculations of probable maximum precipitation  
272 rainfall amounts that accurately identify at-risk structures and facilitate the most  
273 efficient targeting of scarce resources to the neediest structures. VACo supports  
274 programs that keep downstream owners and developers aware of potential  
275 inundation zones. VACo also supports sufficient state and federal funding for the  
276 repair and maintenance of dams.

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### 278 **Energy Efficiency**

279 VACo endorses initiatives among all levels of government to reduce dependence  
280 upon foreign sources of energy, to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and to  
281 improve energy efficiency. VACo supports production of renewable energy in  
282 Virginia through the implementation of Renewable Portfolio Standards. VACo  
283 also supports responsible policies that enable coal and natural gas extraction,  
284 processing and transport while protecting agriculture and water resources.

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### 286 **Invasive Species and noxious weeds**

287 VACo supports adequate funding to implement the Virginia Invasive Species  
288 Management Plan. The Plan identifies strategies to prevent and control damage  
289 caused by invasive species. VACo supports amendments to the definition of  
290 “noxious weeds” to enable a wider number of known invasive plants to be  
291 considered for regulation by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and  
292 Consumer Services (VDACS), with consideration of any commercial impacts to  
293 Virginia growers and retailers, so that sales and transport of designated invasive  
294 plants can be prohibited in a manner that helps protect parks and green spaces,  
295 with negligible impacts to Virginia’s nursery industry.

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### 297 **Hydraulic fracturing**

298 Advances in technology for the extraction of natural gas known as “hydraulic  
299 fracturing” has the potential to tap vast reserves in what are known as the  
300 Marcellus shale and Taylorsville Basin deposits. Concerns about how the process  
301 of hydraulic fracturing could impact both public and private groundwater  
302 supplies have been raised both regionally and nationally. VACo supports a state  
303 regulatory program that addresses these concerns while protecting the authority  
304 of local governments to regulate and/or ban this type of mining activity through  
305 their land use ordinances.

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307 Specifically, VACo supports a regulatory program with the following components:

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- 309 • A requirement for permit applicants to provide certification to the  
310 Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy that the activity and  
311 associated activities are consistent with applicable local ordinances;
- 312 • Authority for local governments to require documentation that all state  
313 requirements are met as a condition for local approval;
- 314 • Requirements for operators of hydraulic fracturing operations to  
315 demonstrate adequate financial assurance to ensure the availability of  
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- 318 adequate resources to correct any damages that could result from  
319 drilling operations;
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- 321 • Through a portion of permit fee revenues, establish a state fund to  
322 defray local costs that would be associated with the training of first  
323 responders as preparation for emergencies stemming from fracturing  
324 activities;
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- 326 • To assure continuity in protection of health and natural resources, that  
327 provisions in the Memorandum of Agreement between DMME and  
328 DEQ of August 12, 2014 be strengthened and perpetually  
329 institutionalized by statute or regulation; and
- 330
- 331 • VACo supports the disclosure of all chemicals and chemical mixes used  
332 in the “fracking” process prior to their use.
- 333

### 334 **Land Conservation**

335 VACo supports targeted initiatives to facilitate the protection of land for  
336 conservation purposes. VACo also supports a Purchase of Development Rights  
337 program that includes state funding for the Virginia Land Conservation  
338 Foundation, and that provides incentives for landowners at all income levels to  
339 participate in the program. Such programs preserve prime soils for food  
340 production and protect important forestal land and environmentally sensitive  
341 areas in the Commonwealth.

### 342 **Large utility projects (pipelines)**

343 VACo supports the provision of adequate direction and resources for the  
344 Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to improve monitoring and  
345 enforcement of Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater requirement by  
346 entities constructing large-scale utility projects. DEQ should conduct a review of  
347 the annual standards and specifications and construction general permit  
348 requirements for those projects to determine if they are providing adequate  
349 protection of water quality and natural resources.

350

### 351 **Non-point Source Pollution**

352 VACo supports a well-financed state program to address the problem of non-  
353 point source runoff from agricultural operations. The program should effectively  
354 encourage implementation of priority best management practices such as  
355 nutrient management planning, use of cover crops, continuous no-till farming  
356 and development of forested riparian buffers and livestock stream exclusion.

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### 358 **Southern Rivers Watershed**

359 VACo supports continued funding for the Southern Rivers Watershed  
360 Enhancement Program to improve water quality in non-Chesapeake Bay  
361 watersheds.

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### **Stormwater programs**

VACo supports adequate funding to enable local governments to meet ongoing costs associated with local stormwater management programs that became effective July 1, 2014. VACo believes it will be critical to evaluate the effectiveness of the fee structure in the Virginia Stormwater Management Permit regulations as the chief source of revenue for funding local stormwater management programs.

VACo strongly opposes any legislation by the 2017 General Assembly that would amend any or all components of the Stormwater Management Laws that don't fully satisfy the resource and funding needs of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to administer, enforce and maintain the Stormwater Management Laws. VACo further opposes any legislation that would be in conflict with HB 1173/SB 423 that passed the 2014 General Assembly and that would impose any additional mandates or financial burdens upon local governments. VACo supports legislation to correct the so-called "donut hole" problem that currently requires "opt out" local governments to enforce stormwater requirements for land disturbances between 2,500 square feet and 1 acre.

VACo also supports legislation to:

- Amend Section 62.1-44.15:48 of the Code of Virginia to remove the requirement that proceeds from penalties must be used only for purposes mandated under that section of the Code.
- Remove the requirement from the Construction General Permit that permittees must comply with Virginia's post construction standards for water quality.
- Amend Section 62.1-44.15:28 of the Code of Virginia to give localities the ability to waive the state's portion of the VSMP fees if a locality waiver policy has been implemented by a locality and approved by the Board. VACo also requests a new locality/state workload analysis to justify the state's portion from the stormwater permit fee. The new analysis should address long-term responsibilities placed on localities that previous studies ignored.
- Amend Virginia's Stormwater Management Law that would distribute a maximum of 10 percent of statewide stormwater fees revenue to the Virginia Stormwater Management Fund with the remaining 90 percent remaining with local governments.
- Amend Section 62.1-44.15:33 of the Code of Virginia to mandate that the State Water Control Board consider long-term maintenance costs of a Best Management practice when approving a local stormwater program.

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- Support the continued work by the General Assembly in looking for any and all options to make stormwater solutions more effective from a cost and water quality point of view.
- Supports innovative solutions to facilitate compliance with stormwater standards in a manner that would promote economic development while achieving water quality goals.

### **Onsite Wastewater Systems**

VACo supports legislation ensuring that potential buyers of real property are told about the type, size and maintenance requirements and associated costs of the wastewater systems on the property prior to the signing of the initial sales contract and the recordation of engineered systems plat and deed at the time of sale.

### **Uranium Mining**

VACo supports continuation of a moratorium on uranium mining and milling within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Virginia Cooperative Extension**

VACo supports sufficient funding for the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service.

### **Water Supply Planning**

VACo supports appropriations adequate to ensure full funding by the state for the ongoing development and implementation of state-mandated water supply plans.

# FINANCE

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## Priorities

### **Local Finance**

VACo supports the authority of county governments to levy and collect revenue from local business taxes.

### **Equal Taxing Authority**

VACo supports granting counties equal taxing authority to that enjoyed by cities and towns to enact local excise taxes without referendum, such as the authority to adopt a local meals tax without referendum and to levy and collect a tobacco tax.

## Positions

### **Funding for State Mandated Positions and Jails**

VACo urges the Commonwealth to meet its full funding obligations and provide flexibility in the use of state funds for compensation of constitutional officers and state-supported local employees.

VACo requests that jail per diem funding in the 2018-2020 biennial state budget be returned at least to 2010 levels, which were \$8 per day for local-responsible inmates and \$14 per day for state-responsible inmates. The current respective rates of \$4 and \$12 per day, respectively, are inadequate and represent an underfunded mandate on counties.

Additionally, VACo requests the state fully fund four quarters of per diem payments in the introduced budget and pay the medical costs of inmates using a cost-effective program jointly funded at the federal and state levels.

If the state mandates that mental health assessments be conducted for inmates of local and regional jails who appear to be suffering from mental illness, based on an initial screening, within 72 hours of that screening, the state must provide funding to support the necessary staffing to conduct such assessments.

VACo supports reinstating state payments (PILT) to counties that mitigate the impacts that state correctional and behavioral healthcare facilities on county revenue.

### **“Local Aid to the Commonwealth”**

VACo commends the Governor and the General Assembly for eliminating the “Local Aid to the Commonwealth” in the 2015 session of the General Assembly and opposes any reinstatement of this burden on local governments. Since 2009, local governments returned \$190 million in funding for state mandated services though through “Local Aid to the Commonwealth.”

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**Modernization of Communications and Sales Tax Structure**

VACo supports updating the Communications Sales and Use Tax (CSUT) to ensure that it reflects the modern telecommunications landscape, which has evolved since the CSUT took effect in January 2007. Similarly, VACo supports revising sales and use taxes to address modern patterns of consumption, such as online purchases.

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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## Positions

### **Collective Bargaining for Public Employees**

VACo opposes any effort to mandate collective bargaining for public employees.

### **Local Authority**

VACo supports relaxation of the Dillon Rule by granting and maintaining local authority and autonomy in matters including land use, revenue measures, procurement and other issues of local concern. VACo supports extending powers currently granted to some local governments to all local governments.

### **Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1)**

VACo supports the Commonwealth's transition to Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) in a way that does not unfairly burden localities, financially or otherwise. VACo only supports recalculations of current Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) funding that hold localities harmless.

### **Election Costs and Districts**

VACo supports legislation that would decrease the costs of elections to localities. These costs include primaries, voting equipment, personnel and voting places. Cost reduction solutions include requiring parties to pay for primary elections, having one date for primary elections, using printed ballots, establishing countywide voting places and other similar measures. The state should provide adequate funding to localities for optical scan and other voting equipment and registrar costs. VACo also supports legislation to minimize or eliminate Split Voting Precincts.

### **Ethics Reform**

VACo supports common sense efforts to strengthen Virginia's public ethics and conflicts of interest laws that are applicable and practical at the local level.

### **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

VACo opposes changes to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act that would impose additional burdens on localities.

### **Grievance Hearings**

VACo supports legislation authorizing localities to use an administrative hearing officer and existing grievance panels and procedures, and opposes the mandate of a three-member panel. VACo also supports providing immunity to local government employees, officers, volunteers, administrative hearing officers and panel members for claims arising out of participation in personnel grievance procedures.



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**Immigration Reform**

VACo supports federal legislation on immigration reform that (1) establishes a clear and understandable path to citizenship for those who are eligible; and (2) provides a funding stream sufficient to address the fiscal impact on state and local governments for any guest worker program and earned legalization program.

**Interoperability**

VACo supports the state’s goal that agencies and their representatives at the local, regional, state and federal levels be able to communicate using compatible systems to respond more effectively during day-to-day operations and major emergencies. Local governments require dedicated federal and state funding sources to achieve this goal.

**Public Notice, Public Hearing and Public Procurement**

VACo supports legislation to reduce required newspaper advertising for public notices, public hearings and public procurement including legislation to give localities the option to use electronic or other forms of notification as an alternative to newspaper advertising.

**Public Safety – Body Worn Cameras**

VACo supports maintaining the ability for local governments to adopt policies and practices regarding body worn cameras that reflect local needs and fiscal realities.

**Sovereign Immunity**

VACo opposes any substantive change in local governments’ present defense of sovereign immunity. VACo opposes bringing counties under the Virginia Tort Claims Act.

**Increased funding for Local Law Enforcement**

VACo supports efforts to increase funding for local law enforcement entities so that recruitment and retention efforts are not adversely affected by raises to state law enforcement salaries. VACo also supports increasing state funding for police departments through “599” Aid to Localities which is designed to provide state funding in localities with police departments.

**Unfunded Mandates**

VACo opposes unfunded mandates and shifting of fiscal responsibility from the state to localities for existing programs by the Commonwealth. When funding for a mandated program is altered, the mandate should be suspended until full funding is restored. When legislation with a cost to localities is passed by the General Assembly, the cost should be borne by the Commonwealth, and the legislation should contain a sunset clause providing that the mandate is not binding on localities until funding by the Commonwealth is provided.

# HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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## Priority

### **Health and Human Resources Funding**

VACo supports transparent state policies and funding to ensure the Commonwealth's at-risk families have access to high quality and appropriate services. The Commonwealth should provide full funding to localities for state-mandated human services and provide the necessary program flexibility to enable localities to provide comprehensive and case-tailored services.

## Positions

### **Aging/Long-Term Care**

VACo supports efforts that allow seniors to remain at home in a safe and secure environment. VACo urges the General Assembly to provide sufficient funding for companion services, in-home services and home delivered meals.

### **Behavioral Healthcare**

VACo supports continued funding by the Commonwealth sufficient to allow Community Services Boards (CSBs) to meet adequately the charge of providing services through a community-based system of care. State support for CSBs must be adequate to enable CSBs to provide the additional services mandated by the General Assembly to be phased in over the next several years. Realignment of the behavioral health funding structure to incentivize community-based treatment rather than use of state hospitals will require additional state dollars and must not rely on local funding to backfill unanticipated costs for hospitalization.

### **Children's Services Act**

VACo supports monitoring the implementation of policies by the State Executive Council that provide guidelines for public participation in its process of developing and adopting policy. VACo supports equitable cost-sharing between the state and localities for the costs involved in the placements of children in residential treatment facilities for non-educational reasons. VACo opposes proposals to limit state participation in funding services for children and youth who are mandated to be provided with special education and foster care services. VACo supports enhancing the ability of local school divisions to serve children with disabilities in their neighborhood schools.

### **Early Intervention**

VACo supports sustainable funding for Part C Early Intervention, which is an entitlement program that provides services for Virginia's infants and toddlers. VACo also requests that the General Assembly address funding concerns by increasing state general funding. Underfunding this entitlement program puts pressure on local revenues to fill funding gaps for this mandated service.

652 **Emergency Medical Transportation**  
653 VACo supports policies to protect consumers who require air ambulance services.

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655 **Group Homes**  
656 VACo encourages the state to enforce appropriate regulation of group homes to  
657 ensure protection of residents' health and safety.

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659 **Healthcare**  
660 VACo supports continued state funding for offered dental care, school nurses and  
661 preventive services and maternal and child health programs through local health  
662 departments and local school systems. VACo encourages the state to prepare for  
663 emergency health services access to care and develop and fund incentives that  
664 would alleviate the nursing shortages felt in many communities.

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666 **Local EMS Involvement**  
667 VACo supports increased local involvement in state EMS planning to ensure  
668 statewide needs are met.

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670 **Prevention Services**  
671 VACo supports increased state general funding for startup costs associated with  
672 community-based service programs. VACo recognizes programs such as Healthy  
673 Families, Comprehensive Health Investment Project (CHIP) of Virginia, Smart  
674 Beginnings, and Resource Mothers as important models and requests that the  
675 General Assembly provide additional funding for these home-based activities.  
676 Reductions in prevention programs will put numerous youth at risk of high-end  
677 CSA placements.

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679 **Substance Abuse**  
680 Efforts to address substance dependency must be comprehensive and  
681 coordinated with localities. The state should develop and support evidence-based  
682 prevention initiatives and should continue to improve access to treatment.

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684 **Telehealth**  
685 VACo supports the use of electronic information and telecommunications  
686 technologies to support long-distance clinical health care, patient and  
687 professional health-related education, public health and health administration.  
688 Flexibility in the delivery of these services is essential in meeting the needs of  
689 residents.

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# TRANSPORTATION

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## Priorities

### **Local-State Transportation Funding and Cooperation**

VACo believes that the 2018 session of the General Assembly must confront the funding challenges facing Virginia's transportation systems. VACo appreciates the funding provided through HB 2313 (2013), which was a significant step towards addressing the transportation needs of the Commonwealth. However, it did not fully address the needs of Virginia's highway system, where more funding is needed in the immediate future for our roadways, especially secondary roads. VACo requests the General Assembly and the Governor take the actions necessary to restore funding for the Six-Year Secondary Road Plan to pre-recession levels, adjusted for inflation. This shortfall in transportation funding is evident by the fact that the amount of funding available for "Smart Scale" for the FY 2018-2023 SYIP was approximately 1/8 of the amount requested for proposed projects. Further, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has identified an average revenue gap of \$130 million annually over the next ten years for the Commonwealth's transit systems. Unless the 2018 General Assembly approves increased revenues for multimodal transportation needs that are separate, reliable and permanent, (including dedicated funding for Metro), Virginia will face a congestion and mobility crisis that will strangle economic growth, threaten public safety and negatively affect the quality of life of all residents.

VACo also believes it is important to closely monitor and evaluate the implementation of "Smart Scale" and all other processes employed in recent years for distributing transportation funds.

VACo is committed to the protection of local government authority to regulate land use. This authority must be recognized by Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) when evaluations are conducted to determine the consistency between local transportation plans and the Commonwealth's transportation priorities. VACo also opposes the reduction of local control that is associated with the CTB's process of designating Corridors of Statewide Significance.

### **Revenue Sharing**

VACo supports a revenue sharing program that will be funded at a minimum of \$150 million on an annual basis. Reducing funding for Revenue Sharing will discourage local governments from seeking non-VDOT sources of revenue to meet their transportation needs.

742 **Devolution of Secondary Roads**  
743 VACo opposes legislative or administrative initiatives that would transfer to  
744 counties the responsibility for the construction, maintenance or operation of new  
745 and existing roads.

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## 747 **Positions**

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### **Billboards**

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VACo supports a requirement that proposed billboards in the Virginia  
751 Department of Transportation's (VDOT) right of way conform to local zoning and  
752 other applicable ordinances and local approval processes.

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### **Highway Tolls**

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VACo opposes the installation of toll facilities on Virginia's interstate highways  
756 until the Commonwealth Transportation Board has thoroughly reviewed and  
757 assessed the components of a long-term capital improvement program, has  
758 identified and compared all available funding alternatives and has adopted a  
759 proposal that matches capital improvements with realistically available funding  
760 sources.

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### **Inter-Directional Signage Program**

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VACo supports a requirement that any signs installed under VDOT's Inter-  
764 Directional Sign Program, including the Tourist Oriented Directional Signs  
765 Program, conform to local ordinances, including any local approval processes.

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### **Maintenance Priorities**

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VACo supports a requirement imposed upon VDOT to implement a notification  
769 plan with the local governing body to establish maintenance priorities.

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### **Parking**

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VACo supports general authority for counties to adopt ordinances regulating,  
773 including prohibiting, the parking of boats, RVs, utility trailers, campers, etc. on  
774 subdivision streets.

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### **Rail Enhancement Fund**

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VACo supports authority for counties to approve Rail Enhancement Fund  
778 projects funded by the state and constructed within their jurisdictions.

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### **Railway Crossings**

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VACo supports efforts to safely improve mobility issues on roads that cross  
782 railway lines.

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### **Road Construction and Maintenance**

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VACo supports legislation that would prohibit VDOT from requiring localities to  
786 administer any transportation project without the consent of the local governing  
787 body.

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**Transportation Network Companies**

VACo supports state regulation of transportation network companies as needed to ensure proper safety, liability, cleanliness, insurance coverage, local revenue, consideration of access for disabled riders, and equitable service in communities. VACo also supports the option of continued regulation of taxi companies at the local level.

**Truck Size and Weight**

VACo strongly opposes any legislation that seeks to increase truck size or weight beyond the current federal standards, thereby stressing the capacity of the Commonwealth’s road systems and putting highways, roads and bridges at risk of increased damage or deterioration.

**Use of Transportation Tax Revenue**

VACo opposes taking any HB2313 transportation tax revenues for the use of non-transportation purposes.