

VACo Legislative Team



James D. Campbell, CAE
Executive Director
804.343.2500
jcampbell@vaco.org



Dean A. Lynch, CAE
Deputy Executive Director
804.343.2511
dlynch@vaco.org



**Phyllis A. Errico,
Esq., CAE**
General Counsel
804.343.2509
perrico@vaco.org



Larry J. Land, CAE
Director of
Policy Development
804.343.2504
lland@vaco.org



B.R. "Beau" Blevins, III
Director of
Intergovernmental Affairs
804.343.2503
bblevins@vaco.org



Erik C. Johnston
Director of
Government Affairs
804.343.2506
ejohnston@vaco.org



**Virginia Association
of Counties**
1207 East Main Street
Richmond, Va. 23219
804.788.6652

2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Virginia Association of Counties

1207 E. Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219
Ph. (804) 788-6652
www.vaco.org

VACo 2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Land Use/Growth Management Tools

VACo supports maintaining local authority to plan and regulate land use and opposes any legislation that weakens these key local responsibilities. VACo supports legislation that grants localities additional tools to adequately meet increasing needs for public services driven by new development without burdening current residents with the cost of new growth through increased real estate taxes.

Workforce Development

VACo supports state efforts to fund, encourage and facilitate local and regional efforts to convene and facilitate cooperation between the business community and other numerous stakeholders involved in Virginia's workforce investment system. VACo supports applying credit recognition and state incentives for both certification, training or qualified credentialing and credit course hours.

EDUCATION

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, 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 2013 local school divisions spent \$3.55 billion above required local effort.

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.

ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

Water Quality Improvement Funding

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

FINANCE

Local Finances

VACo supports the authority of county governments to levy and collect revenue from local business taxes. VACo requests county government representation on all study or legislative commissions that impact local government revenues or services. VACo opposes mandated new or expanded funding requirements on counties.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Broadband

VACo urges the Commonwealth and the Federal Government to assist communities in their efforts to deploy universal affordable access to broadband for all areas, particularly in underserved and rural areas while preserving local land use, permitting, fees and other local authority.

Ethics Reform

VACo supports common sense efforts to strengthen Virginia's public ethics and conflicts of interest laws. VACo also supports efforts to make sure current and future changes to these laws are applicable and practical at the local level.

HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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 fully fund localities for state mandated human services and provide the necessary program flexibility to enable localities to provide comprehensive and case-tailored services.

TRANSPORTATION

Devolution of Secondary Roads

VACo opposes legislative or administrative initiatives that transfer to counties the responsibility for the construction, maintenance or operation of new and existing roads.

Local-State Transportation Funding and Cooperation

VACo remains concerned about the lack of secondary and urban construction funding. Due to legislative changes in 2012, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has the authority to allocate up to \$500 million to priority projects before funds are provided to the construction fund. It is imperative that each region receive its share of this funding. Secondary and urban road programs are not expected to receive new funds until FY 2017.