

Capitol Contact

Virginia General Assembly

Virginia Association of Counties • 1207 E. Main Street, Suite 300 • Richmond, VA 23219
www.vaco.org • 804.788.6652



Wednesday, January 25, 2017

VACo Opposes Bills to Exempt Electrical Substations from Local Approval

Appalachian Power seeks to exempt “*any station, substation, transition station, and switchyard facilities*” associated with certain high voltage transmission lines from local planning and zoning review. Currently only the overhead transmission lines – when approved by the State Corporation Commission (SCC) – “shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements” of local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

This additional exemption from local approval would only apply to 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines. Appalachian Power utilizes 138 kV and 765 kV lines, while Dominion Virginia Power uses 115 kV, 230 kV and 500 kV lines.

[HB 1766 \(Habeeb\)](#) cleared the House of Delegates earlier this week on a vote of 67 to 30. [SB 1110 \(Stanley\)](#) will be voted on in [Senate Commerce & Labor Committee](#) on Monday, January 30.

Please contact your [Senator](#) to oppose this measure and let them know you support maintaining local authority to review and approve electrical substations for compliance with land use plans and ordinances.

[VACo Members – Share your thoughts on FlagPoll.](#)

VACo Contact: [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

Key Dates for 2017 General Assembly Session

- **January 11:** General Assembly convenes at noon. Prefiled legislation must be submitted by 10 a.m.; this is also the last day to file bills dealing

with the Virginia Retirement System or legislation creating or continuing a study.

- **January 13:** Budget amendments by General Assembly members must be submitted by 5 p.m.
- **January 20:** All bills must be filed by 3 p.m.
- **February 5:** The Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees must report their respective budgets.
- **February 7:** Crossover (deadline for legislation to pass its chamber of origin)
- **February 9:** Deadline for each chamber to complete work on its budget
- **February 20:** Deadline for committee action on legislation
- **February 25:** Scheduled adjournment *sine die*
- **April 5:** Reconvened session to consider the Governor's amendments and vetoes

Governor McAuliffe to speak at VACo County Government Day

This is our day to advocate for counties at the General Assembly. Join us at VACo County Government Day on Thursday, February 2! Registration opens at 11 a.m. and the event kicks off with a boxed lunch at noon. Our keynote speaker will be The Honorable Governor Terry McAuliffe who will address attendees on issues that affect counties.

VACo staff will provide legislative briefs before charging all present to meet with their General Assembly representatives that afternoon. For information on how to reach your representatives, see the [Virginia House of Delegates Member Listings](#) and the [Senate of Virginia](#) websites. Find information about VACo's positions in the [2017 Legislative Program](#), created by VACo Steering Committees, and adopted at our Annual Business Meeting. We will distribute our VACo County Government Day Bulletin at the event.

We encourage all counties to participate in the legislative process - hear briefs on the issues and make appointments to speak with your representatives that afternoon. The VACo County Government Day event should last no later than 1:30 p.m.

Register for [VACo County Government Day online](#) or by faxing in a [registration form](#) to 804.788.0083. Register early and show the state who's coming to town!

For rooming information, check out [our dedicated online room reservation page](#) or call 1.800.THE.OMNI and use code "VACo County Government Day" to unlock our special event rate. Omni Richmond is participating in the HUNGER program, which will provide one week of meals to a family of four for every online reservation. Consider reserving online to help a family during this season. Room Reservation cut off is 5 p.m. January 18. Room rate is not guaranteed after that date.

We are also introducing sponsorship opportunities for the February events. Check back soon, or contact [Amy Sales](#) for more information.

VACo Contact: [Amy Sales, CMP](#)