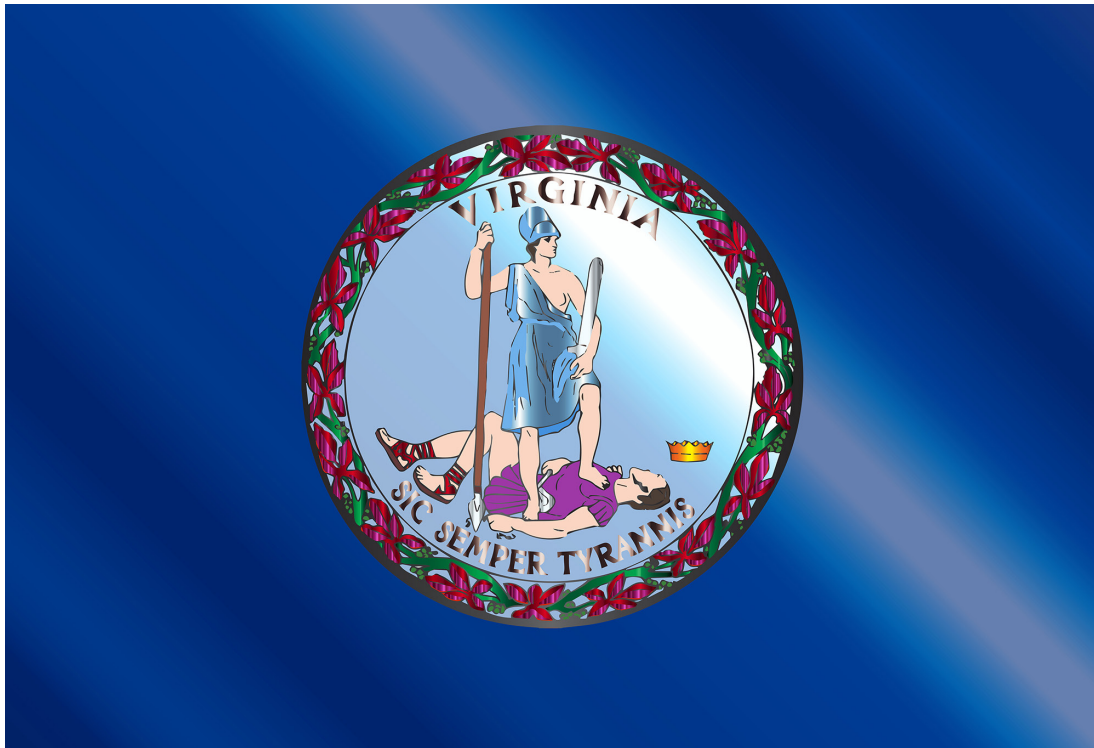


VACo's Report on the House and Senate Budgets



On February 24, the House and Senate debated and passed their respective versions of the budgets for the upcoming biennium as well as amendments to the current biennium budget (the “caboose” budget). The House approved its budget by a vote of 74-25, and the Senate passed its version by a vote of 31-9. The budgets now move to the opposite chambers and will ultimately be placed in conference.

Following is an overview of the major elements of both proposed budgets of importance to counties. VACo appreciates its members’ advocacy for our budget requests and will continue to advocate for local government priorities as the budget process continues.

[Read VACo's Report on the
House and Senate Budgets](#)



Premier Partner Spotlight

Blue Line Solutions



Blue Line Solutions

VACo's newest Premier Partner, Blue Line Solutions, offers a TrueBlue Highway Safety Program that can be implemented in School Zones and Construction Zones, where data has shown that drivers are unaware that their driving behavior is not in alignment with public safety. A key element of this program - drivers are first educated through several media outlets, that their driving patterns through these zones need to change to keep their communities safe. The education has had a profound and positive effect on driving behavior. To learn more about the public safety benefits of this program, please join VACo Executive Director, Dean Lynch, and Blue Line Solutions' Founder & CEO, Mark Hutchinson, as they dive into the data and the results.

Please contact Greg Hogston for more information: ghogston@bluelinesolutions.org or 276.759.8064 or visit <https://bluelinesolutions.org>.

Watch the [Premier Partner Video](#)

Marijuana bill passes Senate; prospects uncertain in House



Legislation setting up a regulatory framework for marijuana sales passed the Senate last week on a 21-18 vote. The bill was heard in a subcommittee of House General Laws yesterday evening, which opted to defer action on the bill to a future meeting. The House did not take up any House legislation on the subject before crossover, so yesterday's hearing was the first in the House this session.

Legislation in 2021 legalized simple possession of marijuana for adults and growing and harvesting of up to four plants in a household, but many provisions governing the retail market for marijuana required reenactment by the 2022 General Assembly in order to take effect. [SB 391 \(Ebbin\)](#) re-enacts many provisions and also makes some significant changes to the 2021 law.

Key provisions of SB 391 as passed by the Senate:

- Sets out provisions for the granting of marijuana cultivation facility licenses, marijuana manufacturing facility licenses, marijuana testing facility licenses, marijuana wholesaler facility licenses, and retail marijuana store licenses. In general, no person may be granted a license in more than one category, although the Board of Directors of the Cannabis Control Authority may allow vertical integration by regulation for certain small businesses.
- Retains the tax structure adopted in 2021, with a state tax of 21 percent levied on the sale of any retail marijuana, retail marijuana products, marijuana paraphernalia sold by a retail marijuana store, non-retail marijuana, and non-retail marijuana products, as well as an optional 3 percent local tax, to be imposed by ordinance, and levied in addition to any applicable local retail sales and use tax or meals tax.
- Revises the 2021 provisions allowing the governing body of a locality to petition the circuit court for a referendum on the question of whether retail marijuana stores should be prohibited in the locality to allow for a referendum on whether "marijuana establishments" should be prohibited (the bill defines a "marijuana establishment" as "a marijuana cultivation facility, a marijuana

testing facility, a marijuana manufacturing facility, a marijuana wholesaler, or a retail marijuana store”). As in the 2021 legislation, language authorizing the initial referendum takes effect July 1, 2022, and requires the referendum to be held by December 31, 2022.

- Revises language governing referenda to provide that when a town holds a referendum on the question of prohibiting marijuana establishments, the town shall be treated as being separate and apart from its county, and that when a referendum is held in a county, any town located within the county is also to be treated as being separate and apart from the county.
- While the bill retains 2021 language specifying local authority to regulate marijuana businesses in accordance with local zoning and land use requirements and business license requirements, it includes new language barring a locality from adopting any local ordinance, zoning requirement, land use requirement, or business license requirement that regulates marijuana establishments unless the ordinance or requirement applies with equal force and effect to “similarly situated businesses.”
- Removes language from the 2021 bill that allowed localities to regulate the hours during which retail marijuana and marijuana products may be sold; instead prohibits retail marijuana stores from selling retail marijuana, retail marijuana products, immature marijuana plants, or marijuana seeds between the hours of 9 p.m. and 8 a.m.
- Similar to existing language dealing with a pharmaceutical processor granted a retail license, adds language allowing an industrial hemp processor granted a retail marijuana store license to conduct retail sales at its registered industrial hemp processing facility and at up to two additional retail establishments upon request. If the existing pharmaceutical processor or industrial hemp processor is located within 1000 feet of a public or private elementary or secondary school, the processor may exercise its retail privileges at another location that is within a 10-mile radius and has been approved by the Cannabis Control Board.
- The bill directs the Board of Directors of the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority to promulgate regulations by January 1, 2023 (although regulations shall not be adopted prior to July 1, 2022), and the provisions governing various types of licensure for different types of marijuana businesses take effect on the same date.
- The bill authorizes the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority to start accepting applications for licenses on January 1, 2023, and to give preference to qualified social equity applicants (as determined by regulations promulgated by the Authority’s Board of Directors) between January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024. Language directs the Authority to ensure geographic dispersion in the issuance of retail marijuana store licenses by periodically reassessing the issuance of licenses at specified intervals.
- Most other provisions of the bill take effect January 1, 2024. However, the bill also provides for pharmaceutical processors and industrial hemp processors registered with the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services to sell cannabis products to adults (under the supervision of the Board of Pharmacy), beginning September 15, 2022. Pharmaceutical processors must pay a one-time \$6 million fee and industrial hemp processors must pay a one-time \$500,000 fee to the Department of Taxation prior to engaging in retail sales. The 21 percent state tax and the 3 percent local option excise tax would apply to these sales. These transitional provisions expire when the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority notifies the Division of Legislative Services that pharmaceutical processors and industrial hemp processors are eligible to apply for licenses to cultivate, manufacture, wholesale, or sell marijuana at retail.

Visit Accomack County and the Accomack County Courthouse



Location: 23316 Courthouse Avenue / Front Street

Built: 1899 – 1901

Style: Romanesque Revival and Victorian

Architect: B F Smith Fireproof Construction Company

Contractor: B F Smith Fireproof Construction Company

Description: The building faces south and is a two-story red colored brick and concrete structure. The building is located on landscaped grounds in the center of Accomac. The south front has a projecting brick porch on the first story with recessed entrance and balcony on the second story. The second story has five long arched windows and above is parapet with two small arched windows. On the center of the roof is a large square bell tower with an open section at the top and a steep green colored roof. There is a cross gable in the center and the roof is hipped. The building houses the County Circuit Court and County Juvenile Court of the 2A Judicial Circuit. During construction, George R. Nock was the supervisor. On the west side of the courthouse is the old Clerk's Office constructed of red colored brick in 1887. The building was reconstructed in 1968. The architect was J. Linwood Walker and the contractor was Joseph S. Floyd Corporation.

SOURCE: [American Courthouses](#) | [Courthouses.co](#)

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 AND SATURDAY, APRIL 30 | OMNI RICHMOND HOTEL

VACo COUNTY SUPERVISORS' FORUM

NAME _____

TITLE _____ EMAIL _____

COUNTY/ORGANIZATION _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

NAME ON CARD _____

Hotel Reservation Details: Lodging costs are not covered in the registration fee. The Forum is held at the Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Room rates start at \$145 (single room occupancy). To reserve a hotel room, call 804.344.7000 by April 5, 2022, with this code: **VACo Supervisors Meeting-One Day Chair** or reserve a room at this [Omni Richmond Hotel link](#).

Fax completed registration form with credit card information to 804.788.0083

Or please make check payable to VACo. Mail check and completed registration form to 1207 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219

[Click here](#) to register online

Registration Fee

\$350 if you need Supervisors' Manual

\$275 if you already have Supervisors' Manual

\$175 Guest

If you would like to purchase the [Supervisors' Manual](#) before the Forum, please contact Valerie Russell at vrussell@vaco.org.

Refund Policy: Requests for registration refunds are honored if received by April 8, 2022. Substitutions are allowed in the event a supervisor is unable to attend. For more information, call VACo at 804.788.6652.



Crosswalk Design Workgroup Releases Report



[HB 1841](#), introduced by Delegate Mark Keam, was enacted into law pursuant to the 2021 Special Session of the Virginia General Assembly (see Chapter 130 of the Acts of Assembly, 2021 Special Session 1). The legislation directs the Commissioner of Highways or his designee to convene a Working Group (WG) comprised of relevant stakeholders to determine if there should be model policies for the design and installation of crosswalks in Virginia and if so, to identify recommendations for such model policies. As previously [reported](#), VACo worked to make the bill friendlier to local governments and was a participant in the subsequent workgroup. The House Bill 1841 Working Group report has now been published. It can be found on the Virginia Department of Transportation ([VDOT's website](#)) under 2021 studies and reports, or can be downloaded directly by clicking [here](#). The report is also published on the Virginia [Legislative Information System](#) (search for 2021 reports by the Commissioner of Highways).

VDOT owns, operates, and maintains most roads in counties, except for Arlington and Henrico Counties. Note that this makes VDOT somewhat unique among state DOTs because in most other states, secondary roads and subdivision streets are maintained at the local level. In Arlington and Henrico Counties, secondary roads are maintained by the County while primary roadways and interstates are maintained by VDOT. Some counties in densely populated parts of the state have a county-level DOT even though they do not own their roadways. These county DOTs work closely with VDOT to design, fund, and implement improvements on VDOT roadways, but VDOT remains the ultimate decision-making authority and is responsible for ongoing maintenance. There are a small number of exceptions to this, such as some VDOT districts assigning installation and maintenance responsibilities for some county-requested pedestrian crossing improvements, such as Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

A transportation agency's decisions are based on its available resources, business practices, and location context, which can vary significantly across agencies. VDOT operates the third-largest state-maintained highway system in the country with 57,867 miles of state-maintained roadways in its network. As stated previously, Henrico County (1,279 miles) and Arlington County (359 miles) maintain their own roads.

VACo thanks Delegate Keam, VDOT, and the other participants of the workgroup for their efforts to develop model policy for crosswalk design and implementation that preserves local control and flexibility in this area where appropriate.

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

Grocery Tax Legislation Advances



House and Senate versions of legislation to eliminate or reduce the tax on food for human consumption and personal hygiene products are moving towards conference committees. The Senate bill, [SB 451 \(Boysko\)](#), was heard in the House Finance Committee this week, and conformed to the House bill ([HB 90 \(McNamara\)](#)), with one important amendment.

As reported by the House Finance Committee on February 23, SB 451 now includes the following provisions:

- Eliminates the tax on groceries (food for human consumption and essential personal hygiene products) entirely (both the 1.5 percent state portion and the 1 percent local option), effective July 1, 2022.
- As a replacement for the revenue loss from the 1 percent local option, it would provide for a distribution to cities and counties that would be derived from 0.182 percent of the unrestricted General Fund portion of state sales and use tax. This figure was derived from the Department of Taxation's estimate of the amount of funding needed to cover local losses associated with the removal of sales taxes on groceries. The Department's estimates of losses for each locality (based on an analysis of sales by each dealer) may be found at [this link](#). The bill labels this payment a "supplemental school payment," terminology that continues to concern VACo. The local option sales tax revenue, although much of it may be used for school needs, is local general fund revenue. Labeling these funds as a school payment is likely to create conflict in the future between governing bodies and school divisions.
 - Beginning on July 1, 2022, and before July 1, 2024, this payment will be based on each city and county's estimated average share of monthly distributions of the local option sales tax that is attributable to grocery sales between February 2020 and December 2021.
 - Beginning July 1, 2024, this payment would be based on each city and county's pro rata share of local option sales and use tax collections.
 - Beginning October 1, 2025, the Department of Taxation is directed to make an annual review of the distributions beginning July 1, 2024, and make any necessary adjustments in accordance with its authority to correct errors in sales tax distributions.
- As the House version was passed by the House on February 15, the bill did not replace the school-age population distribution in statute, instead restoring local losses through the Appropriation Act. VACo has advocated for a permanent replacement of revenue rather than relying on a pledge to keep localities whole in future budgets. In a helpful move, the bill was amended on February 23 to embed revenue replacement for the school-age population distribution in the Code by increasing the 1 percent school age population distribution to 1.182 percent.

SB 451, as amended, is now on the House floor. After it passes the House in its amended form, it will return to the Senate. HB 90 is before the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and is expected to be heard next week; the bill will likely be conformed to the Senate's version, which would move the bills further towards a conference committee to resolve differences between the two approaches.

Testimonial: Peace of Mind & Financial Security With cashVest®

Livingston County, NY Administrator Ian Coyle discusses the benefits of partnering with three+one® and maximizing resources with cashvest®.

As a FinTech tool for public entities, the peace of mind and financial security provided by our liquidity management and data are critical. Yet as a people-first firm also dedicated to our relationships and supporting local communities, three+one® is equally proud to share the experiences of our partners in benefitting from the cashvest® platform.

[Hear directly](#) from your public finance colleague as Livingston County, NY Administrator Ian Coyle discusses the benefits of partnering with three+one® and maximizing resources with cashvest®.



Hanover County hires Kerri O'Brien as Director of Communications and Community Engagement



Hanover County Administrator John A. Budesky recently announced the appointment of Kerri O'Brien, former WRIC-TV Investigative Reporter and Anchor, as Director of Communications and Community Engagement for Hanover County.

O'Brien officially begins her new role March 1.

O'Brien is an Edward R. Murrow and Emmy award-winning journalist. "We are excited to add Kerri to our team," Budesky said. "Communication and citizen engagement are a primary focus of the Board of Supervisors and Kerri will greatly enhance our efforts going forward."

Welcome aboard Kerri!

Government Relations Advocate



The Virginia Association of Counties seeks a dynamic individual with experience and interest in government relations advocacy. Knowledge of local, state, and federal government process including legislative, executive, and regulatory processes preferred. Strong analytical, oral advocacy and writing skills and a willingness to cover various subject matters required. Problem-solving skills to define issues and collect relevant information to recommend policy solutions important. A proven ability to conceptualize, interpret and articulate positions or ideas.

Experience in government affairs and public policy analysis and processes desired. Preference for local or state government relation experience or understanding of local government operations and policies particularly within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Knowledge of environmental, human services, education, administration of government, land use, tax, finance, and transportation issues helpful. Flexibility and ability to work under time constraints and deadlines, and to perform multiple tasks required.

Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with course work that includes public administration, political science, communications, policy analysis or a related field preferred. Please provide resume, writing sample references and salary requirements to Virginia Association of Counties, 1207 East Main Street Richmond, VA, 23219 or vrussell@vaco.org by April 1, 2022.

What you learn today can create a better tomorrow



Your financial future is in your hands, so get the insights, guidance and educational materials you need to make the most of your deferred compensation plan.

To learn more, you can now meet virtually with your Nationwide® Retirement Specialist at our next event.

This material is not a recommendation to buy or sell a financial product or to adopt an investment strategy. Investors should discuss their specific situation with their financial professional.



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Selmon Robinson, CRC
540-505-4406
robins26@nationwide.com



Join us for a webinar on Tax-Efficient Retirement Income

March 2, 2022 from 12:30 to 1:30 PM

Nationwide in partnership with the Virginia Association of Counties bring you another informative webinar presented by Roberta Eckert, VP of the Nationwide Retirement Institute, on Tax-Efficient Retirement Income.

This webinar provides insight into how taxes can impact retirement plans. Gain insight into common concerns and planning for a sustainable retirement income through a better understanding of tax-flexibility, tax bracket placement and combinations of income and sequencing strategies.

Follow up the webinar by scheduling an individual appointment with Lynn or Selmon.



To register for the webinar, scan this code or visit <https://bit.ly/NRS-VACo>.

NRM-10010M1.4 (11/21)



Nationwide®

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Congratulations!

We honor our Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program Graduates at Board of Supervisors Meetings



VACo's Karie Walker honored Amelia County Supervisor Joseph Easter for his graduation from the Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program. Congratulations Supervisor Easter!

Congratulations!

We honor our Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program Graduates



VACo honored graduates of the Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program during the 87th Annual Conference. Pictured are several of the 18 graduates for 2021. Congratulations Certified Supervisors!



SurveyNavigator®

Visit our [Virginia SurveyNavigator® website](#)

What is SurveyNavigator®?

- In partnership with VACo, Baker Tilly will be conducting annual online enrollment and training for SurveyNavigator®, the online salary and benefits data service available exclusively to county members that participate in the program.
- SurveyNavigator® is a cooperative venture in which those who contribute their organization's compensation and benefits data can download the data that others put in, providing valuable salary comparison information.
- Current participants will receive a refresher training on how to update the pay and benefits data for the current fiscal year so that information will be available in time for next year's budget preparations. Annual updates will keep the data fresh and renewal updates are planned in August of each year.
- We encourage all administrators and human resources professionals to investigate the system by joining one of our webinars to discover how easy the system is to use.



Upcoming SurveyNavigator® webinars

Wed., March 2, 2022
2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET

Wed., April 6, 2022
1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET

Connect with us today to explore SurveyNavigator® and RSVP to one of our webinars with a public sector talent management specialist!

Jama McClung
Senior Consultant, Public Sector Advisory
jama.mcclung@bakertilly.com or e-solutions@bakertilly.com

Baker Tilly US, LLP, is a VACo Premier Partner and one of the nation's leading advisory CPA firms. Our specialized public sector practice offers a wide variety of local government consulting services, including compensation and classification studies, executive search, performance optimization and other areas of human capital management. Contact [Jada Kent](#) or [Anne Lewis](#) to learn more about how our organizational specialists can help you recruit, reward, deploy and manage employees to achieve your goals.

Chesterfield County Names New General Services Director



John H. Neal Jr. has been hired as Chesterfield's General Services director.

Neal succeeds Clay Bowles, who was appointed deputy county administrator for community operations in December.

The Department of General Services maintains and repairs county government facilities and manages new construction, renovations and major facility maintenance projects. It also maintains the county's vehicle fleet, emergency communications system and security systems at all county buildings. The department oversees environmental stewardship and sustainability efforts, operates the Richmond Executive-Chesterfield County Airport and the county's two citizen waste drop-off facilities.

Neal, a 1989 Virginia Tech graduate, spent nearly 15 years in various managerial positions with the Virginia Department of Transportation before a brief stint in the private sector. He was hired as capital projects manager for the city of Richmond in 2007, then accepted a position as Henrico County's assistant director of General Services in 2012. He was promoted to director 16 months later.

"I am honored and excited to have been selected as Chesterfield's director of General Services," Neal said. "I look forward to working with the employees and citizens of Chesterfield County to continue providing outstanding service and support."

Chuck Johnston Honored with 2021 “Wingate Mackay-Smith Clarke County Land Conservation Award”



Former Clarke County Planning Director Charles “Chuck” Johnston accepts the 2021 “Wingate Mackay-Smith Clarke County Land Conservation Award” – a unique handcrafted birdhouse – from Easement Authority Specialist Alison Teetor and the award’s namesake Winkie Mackay-Smith, who holds the perpetual plaque to which Johnston’s name has been added.

The presentation was made during the Clarke County Conservation Easement Authority’s February 11 meeting, where Johnston was recognized for the work he did more than 20 years ago that established the county’s successful Conservation Easement Purchase Program.

Charles “Chuck” Johnston, who was Clarke County’s Planning Director for 22 years, recently returned to accept the 2021 “Wingate Mackay-Smith Clarke County Land Conservation Award” for work he did years ago that continues to support property owners who want to preserve their land and protect it from future development. The award was presented by the county’s Conservation Easement Authority on February 11.

In the early 2000s, Johnston began designing the county’s Conservation Easement Purchase Program (CEP Program) that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 2002. The CEP Program helps fund the preservation of land with significant agricultural, natural, scenic, and historic resources.

As the CEP program begins its 20th year in 2022, the Conservation Easement Authority wanted to recognize Johnston as the staff person who largely developed the CEP Program. He researched conservation easements, established criteria for acceptance, and wrote the Code sections for the creation of the Conservation Easement Authority that oversees the CEP Program.

Johnston left Clarke County in late 2011. Today, he is director of Community Planning and Building Department for the City of Fredericksburg, VA.

In 2012, Governor Bob McDonnell honored the Clarke County Conservation Easement Authority with an Environmental Excellence Award. The Conservation Easement Authority received the award for its successful efforts to protect and preserve land and for filling an important niche by enabling landowners who might not meet the criteria of other programs to place smaller parcels of land in easement.

Easements are voluntary agreements negotiated between landowners and public agencies in which the landowners agree to place specific restrictions on the use and development of their property in exchange for payment and various income and estate tax benefits. The Clarke County Conservation Easement Authority recorded its first easement in 2003.

When CEP Program properties are included with other conservation holdings, such as those held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, about 25 percent — 26,790 acres — of Clarke County open space is permanently protected, and hundreds of dwelling unit rights have been retired as of January 2022.

Clarke County also maintains a sliding scale zoning policy that preserves large tracts of land by permitting fewer dwelling unit rights per acre for larger existing parcels.

In 2015, the Conservation Easement Authority established the Wingate Mackay-Smith Clarke County Land Conservation Award to honor individuals, groups, and organizations for their significant contributions to the preservation and protection of open spaces in Clarke County. The annual award also draws attention to the need for land conservation and the role easements play in preserving natural and historic resources.

For more information about conservation easements, contact Clarke County Easement Ago to clarkelandconservation.org.

Capitol Contact

Virginia General Assembly

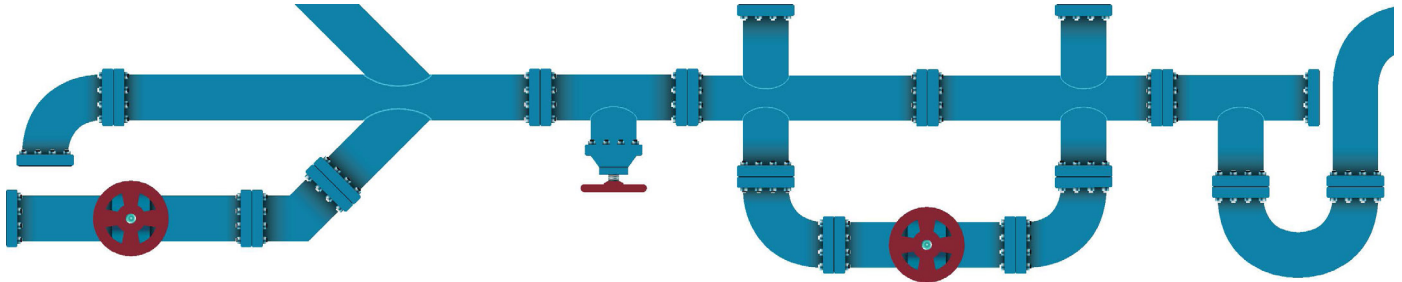
Virginia Association of Counties • 1207 E. Main Street, Suite 300 • Richmond, VA 23219
www.vaco.org • 804.788.6652

The 2022 General Assembly session began last week as legislators deliberated on many issues of critical importance to local government, including the state budget, broadband, education funding, economic development, public safety, taxes and other policy matters. VACo will continually provide updates during the session through [Capitol Contact](#). VACo Members - To ensure that you are receiving Capitol Contact, please send [Gage Harter](#) your best email address.

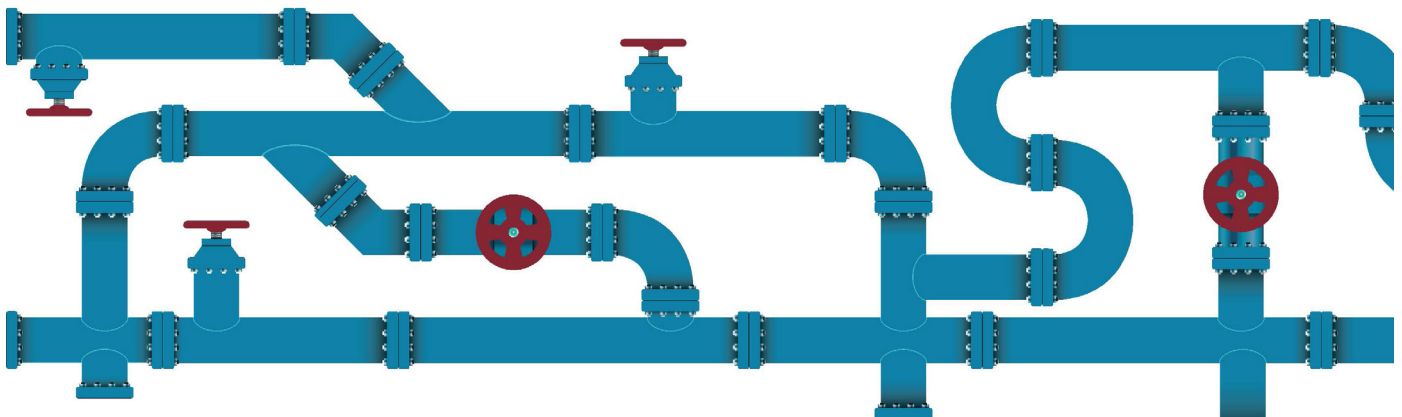
- January 11, 2022: [Treasury Releases Final Rule for Fiscal Recovery Fund Implementation](#)
- January 13, 2022: [2022 General Assembly Convenes](#)
- January 18, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [Local Financing Authority for School Capital Construction to be Heard Tomorrow – Call Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee Members to Support](#)
- January 18, 2022: [Legislation Would Restrict County Taxing Authority](#)
- January 20, 2022: [Bills Would Impose Restrictions on Local Budget Process](#)
- January 25, 2022: [School Construction Bill Passes Senate with Bipartisan Support](#)
- January 27, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [School Construction Bill to be Heard Tomorrow Morning – Call House Finance Subcommittee Members to Support the Bills](#)
- January 27, 2022: [Grocery Tax Elimination under Consideration](#)
- January 28, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [Several Bills Limiting County Taxing Authority to be Heard Monday – Contact Your Legislators to Oppose](#)
- January 28, 2022: [Several Bills Limiting County Taxing Authority to be Heard Monday](#)
- January 31, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [Bill Placing Restrictions on County Budget Process to be Heard Tomorrow – Please Contact Legislators to Oppose](#)
- February 1, 2022: [Problematic Bills Fail to Move Forward](#)
- February 3, 2022: [VACo Legislative Day Bulletin](#)
- February 8, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [Grocery Tax Legislation to be Considered in Senate Finance and Appropriations Again This Week – Contact Legislators TODAY!](#)
- February 8, 2022: [Grocery Tax Legislation to be Considered in Senate Finance and Appropriations Again This Week](#)
- February 9, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [Bill placing restrictions on local budget process to be heard tomorrow in House Finance – please call legislators to oppose](#)
- February 10, 2022: [Oppose Statewide Expanded Disclosure Requirements in Land Use Proceedings Bill that would Prevent Local Elected Officials from Voting in Certain Situations](#)
- February 15, 2022: [Grocery Tax Bills Move Forward in Different Forms](#)
- February 17, 2022: [The Status of School Construction Legislation Post Crossover](#)
- February 21, 2022: [Money Committees Report Budgets](#)
- February 22, 2022: [Bill to Address Impacts to Farm and Forest Land Due to Large Scale Solar Projects Passes House](#)
- February 23, 2022: **CAPITOL CONTACT ALERT!** [School Financing Bills to be Heard Friday Morning – Call House Finance Committee Members to Support the Bills](#)
- February 24, 2022: [Grocery Tax Legislation Advances](#)

Draper Aden Associates Releases Annual Water and Wastewater Rate Report

By Adrianna Dimperio and Rebecca Naurath | Draper Aden Associates



The 33rd Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report 2021



Understanding water and wastewater rate trends is crucial for public utilities and municipalities, including counties, across Virginia. The Commonwealth boasts more than 250 public providers of water and wastewater services that are active in every size and type of community. This variety can make it difficult for providers to effectively analyze statewide trends and set benchmarks when considering their rates. Are your water and wastewater rates in line with similar communities? Perhaps those rates are lower than average, meaning that your community could be losing revenue. Similarly, when municipalities and water and wastewater providers consider rate changes it's vital that they provide context for proposed rates.

That's why Draper Aden Associates has produced the Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate report for

[More on Next Page](#)

more than three decades. These reports are essential resources for public utilities and are eagerly anticipated. The [2021 edition](#) of the report was released in November 2021.

Similar to previous years, the firm collaborated with the Virginia Association of Counties to conduct the water and wastewater rate survey.

The two most significant findings from the 2021 survey are related to rate changes. First, the average water rate across the Commonwealth increased by 3.3 percent in 2021 and the average sewer rate increased by 4.3 percent. The water rate increase was slightly lower than previous years and the wastewater rate was slightly higher. Since 2011, water rates have increased by approximately 3.5 percent per year and wastewater rates have increased by approximately 3.9 percent per year. These increases occurred across a control group of representative utilities that allows the report to extrapolate trends across the state.

Second, 48 percent of respondents reported a water rate increase in 2021 while 47 percent of respondents increased sewer rates in 2021. Thus, approximately half of all providers raised rates.

The most significant opportunity on the horizon for public utilities is funding related to the American Rescue Plan Act (APRA). These funds offer potential transformational resources for public utilities. For example, this money would allow public utilities to invest in water and wastewater infrastructure projects. Additionally, these funds could offset the need for higher rates and capital recovery charges in 2022. Creating a strategy to leverage these funds will be critical for public utilities. A recent [ARPA Q&A for utilities](#) offers helpful resources.

The [33rd Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report](#) was produced by Draper Aden Associates in collaboration with leading trade associations that support municipalities and utilities, including the Virginia Association of Counties. The 2021 Virginia Water and Wastewater Report and previous reports are [available for download](#) on the Draper Aden website.

**Adrianna Dimperio is the Utilities Division Manager and Rebecca Naurath is a Project Engineer with Draper Aden Associates, an engineering, surveying, and environmental services firm in the Mid-Atlantic. They are the primary authors of the annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report. Adrianna can be contacted at adimperio@daa.com and Rebecca can be contacted at rnaurath@daa.com.*

The Local Government Advisory Committee is pleased to host

Wandering Virginia's Waterways

**Deadline to
register is
March 4**

FREE
of charge

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JOIN US FOR A BUS TOUR: NEXT GENERATION AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES TO FOSTER A RESILIENT RURAL ECONOMY

When: Thursday, March 31 - Friday, April 1, 2022

Where: Meet in Richmond and travel to the Lower Eastern Shore

- Experience a two-day peer-to peer learning exchange focused on next generation agricultural practices.
- Discover the Barrier Islands Center, enjoy a stop at the Chatham Winery, explore the Volgenau Virginia Coast Reserve on land and by boat at the Brownsville Preserve
- Connect with invited local and state leaders including State Senator Linwood Louis and State Delegate Rob Blossom



Photo courtesy of the Barrier Island Center

[CLICK HERE FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION](#)



Leadership Development That Works

The Professional Development Academy is a transformational leadership program that has proven to be the most scalable, cost effective, and efficient way to make your leaders better. - General Colin Powell

Register today for the 2022 NACo Leadership Academy Dates

Visit naco.org/skills to register

Acknowledging State Graduates from NACo Leadership Academy

Eighteen Virginia County staff members participated in the NACo Leadership Academy, a 12-week online program that empowers front-line county government employees with fundamental leadership skills. Across the country, 4,500 county employees participated.

Virginia County staff to complete the Academy are:

- **Timothy Heck**, Assistant Director, Campbell County
- **William "Billy" Ferguson**, Director of Public Safety, Franklin County
- **Kenneth Parker**, Programs Coordinator, Greensville County
- **Jamie Orrison**, Recreation Enterprise Manager, Prince William County
- **Vernon Payne**, Sports Services Manager, Prince William County
- **Sara Wheeler**, Division Manager, Prince William County
- **Jennifer Chitwood**, Technical Services Supervisor, Roanoke County
- **Bill Dingus**, Director of Public Works, Scott County
- **Shenandra Usher**, Assistant CFO for Operations, Albemarle County
- **Tara Smith**, Senior Library Assistant, Youth Services, Roanoke County
- **Sherry Bowman**, Division Manager, Prince William County
- **Grace Boone**, Director General and Capital Services Department, James City County
- **Paul Santay**, Director of Citizen and Community Development, Stafford County
- **Betsy Strawderman**, Deputy Director, Prince William County
- **Roderick Burton**, Director of Information Technology, Albemarle County
- **Hashim Taylor**, Recreation Program Manager, Prince William County

Congratulations to all these individuals who completed the program. To learn more about the Academy, [visit the NACo website here](https://naco.org/skills). Enrollment is now open for 2022.

Interested in the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management?



Attend an info session. Get your questions answered.

During these info sessions, we will review the benefits and opportunities available through the local government program; course requirements, and the connection to our MPA program (electives and course substitutions).

- **March 15, 2022:** 12pm-1pm | Register to attend: [Click here](#)
- **April 12, 2022:** 12pm-1pm | Register to attend: [Click here](#)
- **May 10, 2022:** 12pm-1pm | Register to attend: [Click here](#)

About the Program

The Virginia Tech Center for Public Administration and Policy (CPAP), in partnership with the Virginia Local Government Management Association, offers a graduate [certificate program in local government management](#) that provides the next generation of local government managers and leaders with the tools to advance their careers and to provide exceptional leadership within the communities where they work.

The central goal of the program is to offer graduate-level training in local government management that both prepares pre-career students for capable public service at the local level and enhances the capacities of existing local government employees who aspire to be town, city, or county managers or assistant/deputy managers, department directors or others.

For more information, please contact Stephanie Davis, sddavis@vt.edu or 804-980-5549.



Celebrate Your County's Most Innovative Programs

2022 NACo Achievement Awards

Applications are now open for the National Association of Counties (NACo) [2022 Achievement Awards](#). Please join us in celebrating 52 years of county innovation by applying today.

Since 1970, the NACo Achievement Awards have recognized outstanding county government programs and services. Through a non-competitive application process, noteworthy programs receive awards in 18 categories that cover a vast range of county responsibilities. By participating, your county can earn national recognition.

NACo will highlight the 18 “best of category” winners, as well as feature all winners in NACo materials and online. We also provide a customizable press release for you to share the good news with the media and residents.

We encourage all counties, parishes and boroughs to apply.

EARLY BIRD APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 4, 2022 (save \$25 off the application fee)

REGULAR APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31, 2022

For more information, please review the Achievement Awards [online brochure](#), or email awards@naco.org with any questions.

[APPLY TODAY](#)

VACo and VML Host Webinar on Opioid Litigation Settlement and Opioid Abatement Fund



VACo along with VML hosted representatives from the Office of the Attorney General, local government attorneys, and law firms involved in litigation with opioid manufacturers and distributors for a webinar on October 25 to inform localities about participation in the \$26 billion national settlement with Janssen (a manufacturer of opioids) and several opioid distributors. Virginia stands to receive approximately \$530 million over the course of the settlement period, with the exact amount dependent on participation by local governments. Local governments must join the settlement by January 2, 2022, to receive funds; participation requires a locality to adopt resolutions approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth and entering into the settlement agreement.

Under the terms of the settlement, 15 percent of the funds will be distributed to participating localities and are not restricted in their use, 15 percent will be distributed to participating localities for abatement purposes, 15 percent will remain with the Commonwealth, and 55 percent will be deposited to the Opioid Abatement Fund, which was established in the 2021 legislative session.

The Opioid Abatement Fund, which will be administered by the Opioid Abatement Authority, will divide its funds as follows: 15 percent to participating localities, 35 percent to participating localities' regional partnerships, 15 percent to state agencies, and 35 percent for any of the preceding purposes or for administrative expenses. The statute creating the Authority states that its purpose is "to abate and remediate the opioid epidemic in the Commonwealth through financial support from the Fund, in the form of grants, donations, or other assistance, for efforts to treat, prevent, and reduce opioid use disorder and the misuse of opioids in the Commonwealth." The Honorable James Holland, Chair of the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, serves on the Board of Directors of the Authority.

A recording of the October 25 webinar as well as the slide presentation and sample resolutions to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and participation in the settlement may be found on VACo's website at this link: <https://www.vaco.org/legislative/virginia-opioid-abatement-information/>.

VACo Contacts: [Katie Boyle](#) and [Phyllis A. Errico, Esq., CAE](#)



VACo Supervisors' Forum

Friday, April 29, 2022 and Saturday, April 30, 2022
Omni Richmond Hotel

New initiative will help counties improve public safety, enhance justice systems

Apply now: National Association of Counties will select five additional participants this spring

Arlington, VA (February 4, 2022) - The National Association of Counties (NACo) selected five counties to participate in a new program that will help improve public safety, enhance justice systems, and save taxpayers money. This spring, they'll select five more. There is no cost for counties to apply or participate in the program called *Convening County, Court & Justice Leaders: A Framework for Cross-System Collaboration Initiative*.

Participating counties will evaluate how to best invest American Rescue Plan funds in their communities to support partnerships across different government branches. They'll benefit from a full year of expert consulting which will help them create ways for courts and other justice system elements to work together. First, they'll identify and prioritize local needs and review available resources. Then, they'll work on developing evidence-based strategies to address those challenges by improving policies, practices and programs. The initiative concludes with a written implementation plan that addresses each county's unique justice-related and public safety priorities. Counties will be able to showcase their efforts and outcomes in a nationally disseminated toolkit.

Criminal justice expert Tara Kunkel is one of the project leaders. She has served as a drug court administrator, probation officer, and criminal justice planner. As founder of Rulo Strategies and a former Senior Policy Advisor to the U.S. Department of Justice, Kunkel is well known for helping government agencies and departments collaborate. "I just love facilitating connections. By bringing together courts, jails, substance abuse providers, public health officials, and other stakeholders, we can make a real difference for justice-involved individuals and their communities all while saving taxpayers money."

NACo launched the initiative with its partners at [Rulo Strategies](#) and [Praxis Consulting](#). Funding comes from the [State Justice Institute](#).

More Counties are Invited to Participate

NACo will select five more participants by the spring. Counties interested in participating should apply at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/countyandcourts>. The deadline is February 11 at 5pm eastern. Counties with application questions should contact NACo Justice Program Manager Elynn Lee at elee@naco.org.

Maintaining safe and secure communities is one of the most important functions of county governments. Effective collaboration between the county, the local court system, justice system partners and community-based organizations can increase public safety, improve communities and make it easier for people to access the services and supports they need to thrive. Courts also have a vested interest in developing relationships with county officials. "SJI is pleased to support this opportunity to enhance a collaborative and sustainable relationship between county leaders, judges and justice stakeholders," said Jonathan Mattiello, Executive Director of the State Justice Institute (SJI).

[READ MORE](#)

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A Tailored Cybersecurity Program for VACo members



Carlton Harris CTO of EEC will join Dean Lynch Executive Director of VACo in this month's premier partner spotlight to discuss how VACo members can take advantage of our tailored cybersecurity program to make cybersecurity services more accessible. This program will feature:

01 Cyber Hygiene Assessment

A complementary cyber hygiene assessment program for members to identify gaps in their cybersecurity program and strategize methods for closing those gaps.

02 Informative Training

A series of joint training sessions scheduled throughout the year to registered members. Sessions will also include training collateral for combating common threats and best practices.

03 Special Membership Pricing

A catalog of discounted pricing to VACo members.
(Ability to leverage GSA schedule for ease of procurement.)



Carlton Harris CTO of EEC

View this VACo Premier Partner Spotlight Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnmFDYlHKoI>



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With the release of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funds, local governments have the opportunity to address the economic fallout and unequal impact of COVID-19. This is an incredible opportunity to increase trust in local government and tell your community's story of recovery. The Berkley Group can help your community develop a roadmap to maximize return on investment and take the pressure off of managing all aspects of the funds and projects by offering the following services:

- Community Engagement;
- Strategic Planning;
- Capital Improvement Planning;
- Project Management; and
- Program Administration.

Take this time to reimagine your community - building a strong and socially equitable foundation for the future.



Darren K. Coffey, AICP | Director of Strategic Partnerships
434-981-2026 | www.bgllc.net

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Questions? Call 804.788.6652.



The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. The cost is \$50 per ad for non-VACo members. VACo publishes the ad on its website and mobile app as well as the upcoming County Connections issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Valerie Russell](mailto:Valerie.Russell@vacounty.org).


Virginia Association of Counties
**GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS ADVOCATE** | VACo
| Posted February 24



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COMMUNITY SERVICES** | Prince
William County | Posted February 24


**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER/LIFE SCIENCES** | Prince
William County | Posted February 24



**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
& CODE COMPLIANCE** | City of
Williamsburg | Posted February 23


**COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR** | Pittsylvania
County | Posted February 23



**ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT (CD) – SCHEDULER** |
Hanover County | Posted February 23


**DIRECTOR OF ELECTION/
REGISTRAR** | New Kent County
| Posted February 22


TEACHER JOB FAIR |
Fauquier County | Posted February 22



TAX TECHNICIAN
I | Montgomery County | Posted
February 22



UTILITY FIELD AGENT
(CD) | Hanover County | Posted
February 22



UTILITY OPERATOR (CD)
- DOSWELL WATER TREATMENT
PLANT | Hanover County | Posted
February 22


REAL ESTATE ASSESSOR |
Prince George County | Posted
February 22



**UTILITIES PROJECT
MANAGER** | Town of Leesburg
| Posted February 22



**PARAMEDIC FULL
TIME (MULTIPLE OPENINGS)** |
Montgomery County | Posted
February 22


ASSISTANT CITY CLERK |
City of Suffolk | Posted February 18


**CREW SUPERVISOR
FOR TRAFFIC SIGNS & PAVEMENT
MARKINGS** | City of Harrisonburg
| Posted February 18


**EMERGENCY MEDICAL
TECHNICIAN/EMT (PART TIME)**
MULTIPLE OPENINGS | Montgomery
County | Posted February 17


**PARAMEDIC (PART
TIME) MULTIPLE OPENINGS** |
Montgomery County | Posted
February 17


PARK MANAGER | City of
Williamsburg | Posted February 17


**CODE ENFORCEMENT
OFFICER** | Campbell County | Posted
February 16


BUILDING OFFICIAL |
Campbell County | Posted February 16


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George Washington Regional
Commission | Posted February 16


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RESOURCES** | Shenandoah County
| Posted February 16



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COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER | NRV Emergency Communications Regional Authority | Posted February 16



ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST-BUDGET | Chesterfield County | Posted February 15



WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CHIEF OPERATOR | City of Fredericksburg | Posted February 15



PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST | Hanover County | Posted February 15



DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | Rockingham County | Posted February 14



PSYCHIATRIST | Hanover County | Posted February 14



PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER | Hanover County | Posted February 14



CREW MEMBER | City of Harrisonburg | Posted February 14



PARK MAINTENANCE LABORER | City of Harrisonburg | Posted February 14



PARK GROUNDS MAINTENANCE LABORER | City of Harrisonburg | Posted February 14



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DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | Prince William County | Posted February 14



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EDUCATION

Our educational programs offer County leaders and staff opportunities to become more effective in their communities.



MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Some of VACo's best moments are when members convene and work to improve communities all over the Commonwealth.



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Our business development opportunities offer savings and innovative approaches to delivering services at the County level.

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VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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