

# Capitol Contact

## Virginia General Assembly

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Tuesday, June 21, 2022

### **Governor Ceremonially Signs Budget Bills Following June 17 General Assembly Action on Gubernatorial Amendments**



Governor Youngkin ceremonially signed the caboose and biennium budget bills on June 21, concluding a months-long process of negotiations to craft the spending packages. Prior to the Governor's final action on the budgets, the General Assembly met on June

17 to consider the 38 amendments proposed by the Governor to the budget bills passed by the legislature on June 1; the legislature accepted most of the Governor's amendments and returned the bills to the Governor for final action.

The General Assembly accepted 28 of the Governor's amendments and rejected 10. The Governor did not propose further changes to the grocery tax, leaving in place the elimination of the state portion of the tax (and preservation of the 1 percent local option portion) that was included in the conference report. A summary of the legislature's actions on the Governor's amendments of interest to local governments follows below:

- Accepted language to expand the types of higher-education entities that may apply to form college partnership laboratory schools, but rejected a proposal that would have provided for the distribution of state per-pupil K-12 funding for students enrolled at college partnership laboratory schools to the college partnership laboratory schools. This language also would have allowed the Board of Education to disburse to the college partnership laboratory school an amount equal to the local funding that the school would receive, based upon its average daily membership. VACo has traditionally opposed efforts to remove local authority to establish alternative schools from local school boards and divert public SOQ funds away from public schools.
- Rejected the proposed suspension of taxes on the wholesale distribution of gasoline and diesel fuel for three months (from July 1 through September 30, 2022) and capping of future increases at 2 percent per year.
- Approved the proposed additional \$2 million per year to expand the Early Reading Specialists initiative (which supports school divisions in funding one reading specialist per school in schools that rank lowest statewide on the third grade reading Standards of Learning assessment) to fund additional reading specialists or reading coaches or to support school personnel in attaining licensure requirements for endorsement as a reading specialist.
- Approved the addition of language and funding to provide the \$1000 bonus that was included in the conference report for SOQ-recognized instructional and support personnel to instructional and support positions at Academic Year Governor's Schools and Regional Alternative Education Programs (this action corrects an inadvertent omission in the conference report).
- Approved the proposed addition of \$4.4 million GF in FY 2023 and \$291,060 NGF in FY 2023 to support efforts to address the lack of placements for high-acuity children in foster care. This funding would support the development of

partnerships between local departments of social services to increase capacity to approve kinship caregivers and recruit and train locally-approved foster parents; support an enhanced treatment foster care pilot program that would provide stipends for foster families caring for high-acuity children; support additional coordination, recruitment, and training for foster care agencies; and support initiatives of the Safe and Sound Task Force, including community-based treatments, support for kinship, foster, and adoptive families, and trauma-informed care for children in foster care who are displaced, or at risk of becoming displaced.

- Accepted the proposed addition of \$2 million in FY 2024 for a \$3000 salary increase for probation and parole officers in the Department of Juvenile Justice, as well as the proposed addition of \$2.2 million in FY 2024 for compensation actions for juvenile correctional center staff.
- Approved proposed language allowing a medical cannabis facility to operate at both its former and new locations when it is changing locations.
- Approved the proposed addition of \$2.4 million per year for additional security positions at state mental health hospitals.
- Approved changes to the eligibility requirements for the earned-sentence credit structure that was developed in legislation passed in the 2020 summer special session.
- Rejected language that would have created a rebuttable presumption against bail for certain criminal offenses.

The General Assembly is scheduled to return on September 7.

**VACo Contact:** [VACo Legislative Team](#)