

JLARC Meets to Review Reports on Community Services Boards, SOQ Funding Formulas, VRS, and other Items of Importance to Local Governments

JLARC

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMISSION

On December 12, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) [met](#) and received reports from Commission staff on a number of [items](#) of interest to local governments. These included an overview of Community Services Boards, Dual Enrollment program costs and funding, an interim report on SOQ funding formula review, the annual VRS oversight report, and other items.

Community Services Board Behavioral Health Services: JLARC staff's [report](#) does not recommend significant changes to the structure of the Community Services Board (CSB) system, but encourages the state to exercise more oversight of CSB performance, citing a lack of guiding expectations and effective accountability mechanisms. JLARC staff found that CSBs are serving an increasing number of clients with serious mental illness, and that CSBs struggle with recruiting and retaining staff, which hampers their ability to provide services in a timely manner. Uncompetitive salaries are a major factor in CSB workforce challenges, although burdensome administrative requirements are affecting workforce turnover as well. The report examined CSBs' role in the state's crisis system, noting that training for CSB staff conducting preadmission screenings could be improved, as could CSBs' discharge planning efforts. The report also points to the need for additional alternatives to hospitalization, encouraging additional investments in staff for existing residential crisis stabilization units with unused bed capacity, as well as support for the development and operations of additional residential crisis stabilization units.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN SOON

Thank you for participating in the 88th Annual Conference. Below is a link to the VACo Annual Conference recap webpage.

[VACo 88th Annual Conference Recap Webpage](#)

Also, please take a moment to share your thoughts on the Annual Conference.

[VACo 88th Annual Conference Evaluation Form](#)

Please let us know if you have any questions by contacting Valerie Russell at vrussell@vaco.org. We have a busy 2023 schedule planned so be on the look out for more info.

Take care and thank you again for all you do for Virginia's counties.

Jason D. Bellows Elected VACo President for 2022-2023



The membership of the Virginia Association of Counties elected Lancaster County Supervisor Jason D. Bellows as 2022-2023 President during VACo's 88th Annual Conference, which was held in Richmond. Bellows and other newly elected officers started their terms at VACo's Annual Business Meeting on November 15.

Bellows succeeds Stafford County Supervisor Meg Bohmke, and becomes the first-ever President from Lancaster County since VACo was established in 1934. Bellows is the first President from the Northern Neck since W.D. "Berry" Gray of Richmond County, who served in 1990-1991.

"I am excited and honored to be selected your next leader and first president from Lancaster County," Bellows said. "I look forward to being your advocate as we continue the work on behalf of our localities across the Commonwealth. Together as one voice we will weather whatever lies ahead while also building resiliency for our collective futures."

When Bellows was first elected to the Lancaster County Board of Supervisors in November 2011 to represent District 3, he became the youngest to serve on the board. Bellows is the 5th generation of his family to call District 3 home. He has served as Chairman in 2015, 2019 and again in 2020.

Education has always been Bellows' passion. He graduated from Radford University with a biology degree and taught as a science teacher at Lancaster High School, where he graduated in 1995. He also holds a master's degree in school administration from Old Dominion University and is a 2014 graduate of the VACo certified supervisor program.

“Jason is a thoughtful leader who brings civility and respect to county governments,” VACo Executive Director Dean Lynch said. “His background in education, energy and other legislative issues will serve our association well. We’re excited that Jason will serve as our next President.”

Bellows also served on the Lancaster County Community Partners Foundation Board, which built and managed workforce housing for local teachers.

As the current chairman of the Rappahannock River Basin Commission, Jason is also passionate about protecting the local natural environment and water quality across the basin and state.

In his spare time, he can be spotted working on one of his many home-improvement building projects, gardening, boating, or spending time with his partner and their two Great Danes Sascha and Nero.

“As your President for the upcoming year, I pledge to work tirelessly on your behalf in support of our combined futures and will serve as a model for civility in our political landscape,” Bellows said. “I look forward to continuing our strong advocacy on behalf of our local governments, but also see VACo and local leaders as uniquely positioned to model civility in our communities and in the work we do as an association. As the government closest to the people, we have a duty to ensure that the great American experiment in self-governance, *of the people, by the people, for the people* continues to thrive and endure.”

VACo 2022-23 Executive Committee

President: [Jason D. Bellows](#) | Lancaster County

President-Elect: [Ann H. Mallek](#) | Albemarle County

First Vice President: [Ruth Larson](#) | James City County

Second Vice President: [William M. McCarty, Sr.](#) | Isle of Wight County

Secretary-Treasurer: [Donald L. Hart, Jr.](#) | Accomack County

Immediate Past President: [Meg Bohmke](#) | Stafford County

VACo 2022-23 Board Directors

In addition to the VACo Executive Committee and Past Presidents, the Board of Directors consists of supervisors representing 13 regions of the state, and a NACo Delegate. The terms are on a two-year cycle and the number of directors, per region, is based on the population.

This year, representatives were selected in regions 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12

VACo 2022-23 new board members

Region 1: Open

Region 3: [Patricia S. O'Bannon](#) | Henrico County

Region 5: [John \(Mike\) Sheridan](#) | Fluvanna County

Region 6: [Terri T. Catlett](#) | Clarke County

Region 7: [Cathy Binder](#) | King George County

Region 7: [James P. Crozier](#) | Orange County

Region 8: [Matt de Ferranti](#) | Arlington County

Region 8: [Margaret Franklin](#) | Prince William County

Region 8: [Penelope A. Gross](#) | Fairfax County

Region 8: [Phyllis J. Randall](#) | Loudoun County

Region 8: [Daniel G. Storck](#) | Fairfax County

Region 8: Open

Region 10: [Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch](#) | Floyd County

Region 11: [Billy W. Martin, Sr.](#) | Botetourt County

Region 11: [April DeMotts](#) | Montgomery County

Region 12: [Adam Kidd](#) | Bland County

Past President: [Jeffrey C. McKay](#) | Fairfax County

Past President: [Stephen W. Bowen](#) | Nottoway County

Past President: [Sherrin C. Alsop](#) | King and Queen County



Visit Chesterfield County and the Chesterfield County Historic Courthouse

Location: 10011 Iron Bridge Road / Wagner Way

Built: 1916 – 1917

Style: Classical Revival

Architect: J T Skinner

Contractor: Vaughan Construction Company of Shawsville

Description: The building faces south and is a two story red colored brick and wood Colonial Revival style structure. The building is located on the landscaped grounds of the Courthouse Square in the center of Chesterfield and is a “T” shape. The south front has a large portico with four white colored columns rising to a pediment with fanlight at the roof line. The recessed entrance is framed with white colored wood and with a small pediment above. On the center of the roof is an octagonal open sides belfry with bell and white colored dome.

Note: The courthouse is a replica of the 1749 courthouse which stood of the site of the present building. Surrounding the courthouse are the 1889 Clerk’s Office, the 1828 Clerk’s Office and the 1892 old jail.

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

SAVE THE DATES!

Rural Caucus Reception

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 | Richmond

VACo/VML/VAPDC

Local Government Day

Thursday, January 19, 2023 | Richmond

VACo/VML Legislative Reception

Thursday, January 19, 2023 | Richmond

VACo Chairpersons' Institute

Friday, January 20, 2023 and

Saturday, January 21, 2023

Join us for these important events.

Call VACo at 804.788.6652 for more information





January 2023 HIGH PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP

This is a 12-week online program with content provided by industry leading executives. The curriculum provides best practices in leadership, organizational development and change management, negotiation and collaboration, effective business communication, and how to deliver increased value from high performance county management.

Course 1: Leadership Mindset & Positive Engagement

This course provides insights from members of the program's National Leadership Board on the ways leaders shift their mindset from being excellent individual contributors to becoming highly effective leaders. The course also focuses on increasing empowerment and engagement to achieve individual, team and enterprise success. The second half of this course demonstrates how leaders enable "positively deviant" performance and engender positive culture and communication.

Course 2: Leading Effective Change

The emphasis of this course is to prepare participants to engage in change initiated by others and to drive effective change as an active change agent. This course illustrates three facets of organizational change, including planning, executing and sustaining successful change. A balance of theoretical and pragmatic insights allows participants to understand the strategic, financial or market-based reasons for change and drive toward breakthrough results.

Course 3: Communication and Collaboration

Participants learn and practice the skills needed to improve the quality of interpersonal communication in a variety of contexts. Participants will learn how to effectively speak the language of business and convey information across diverse stakeholder groups, as well as break down silos between business divisions to drive better decision making. Each participant will understand effective communication as it relates to leading others, managing conflict, providing and receiving feedback, and negotiating with the Mutual Gains Approach.

Course 4: Leading High Performance Teams

This closing course focuses on measures, metrics, and practices used across the enterprise to achieve high performance. Participants learn that business results – values and benefits – may differ from one company to the next and even from department to department within a single company, but the consistent variable is It's All About People.

COURSE 1: Jan. 9th – Feb. 3rd

Module 1: Your Leadership Mindset
Module 2: Your Potential as a Positive Leader
Module 3: Positive Leadership and Your Team:
Empowerment & Engagement
Module 4: Leadership Rules and Your Oath
Break Week: Feb. 6th – Feb. 10th

COURSE 2: Feb. 13th – March 10th

Module 1: The Process of Change: Planning
Module 2: The Process of Change: Executing
Module 3: The Process of Change: Sustaining
Module 4: Leadership Rules and Your Oath
Break Week: March 13th – March 17th

COURSE 3: March 20th – April 7th

Module 1: Speaking the Language of Business
Module 2: Positive Communications
Module 3: Mutual Gains Approach

COURSE 4: April 10th – April 14th

Module 1: It's All About People
Graduation: April 14th



"Many frontline managers are exactly the people we cannot afford to lose. The NACo High Performance County Leadership Academy helps to retain these vital employees and helps enable them to be better leaders."

Matt Chase, Executive Director, NACo





National Association of Counties Leadership Development: Learn from the best!

We would like to acknowledge and congratulate the August 2022 NACo Leadership Academy graduates from Virginia. They join over 5,000 graduates and current participants from across the country benefitting from the 12-week online program enabling existing and emerging county leaders to achieve their highest potential.

Ann C. Cupka, Supervisor, King George County

Mari Pringle, Therapist IV, Prince William County

Sarah Clarius, Therapist IV, Prince William County

Start the new year off with Leadership Development!

Our January cohort is just around the corner. Prioritize leadership development for your team today and deliver results for your team and County. **Scholarships are available.**

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE AND ENROLL](#)

Developed by General Colin Powell, the Professional Development Academy and NACo, the High Performance Leadership Academy is an online 12-week program that helps your workforce develop fundamental, practical leadership skills to deliver results for counties and our residents.



Understanding the Time Commitment

Armed with YOUR data, not opinions, cashVest allows you to see more, so you can do more with your cash.

Your time is valuable, your work is important, and because our team at three+one is composed of public officials too, we have perfected how to onboard your public entity to cashVest without further stretching your finite resources.

In fact, we utilize data files your internal teams are already producing. With an easy onboarding protocol that relies on non-intrusive, view-only banking data, cashVest is able to provide immediate and actionable strategies.

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

**NEWS RELEASE Dec. 1, 2022****Contact: Jennifer T. Harris, 540-381-6887
harrisjt@montgomerycountyva.gov****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Troy Cole Named Montgomery County Information Technology Director**

CHRISTIANSBURG, VA – Troy Cole was named Montgomery County Information Technology Director, effective Nov. 22, 2022.

“Troy has been serving as Interim Information Technology Director for the last two months,” said Angela Hill, Deputy County Administrator and CFO. “Troy has been a valued team member for over 14 years. During that time he has shown continued dedication to both the organization and all of our employees. As Interim Director, Troy demonstrated exceptional leadership. We know he will continue to make a significant positive impact for Montgomery County in his new role.”

As Information Technology Director, Troy will be supporting the software applications and technology infrastructure used by Montgomery County employees and departments. In addition, he will lead the Information Technology team in identifying and responding to the changing and diverse needs of the County through fiscally responsible collaboration and innovation.

Troy began his Montgomery County career in 2008 as a Technology Support Specialist and went on to serve as Systems Engineer prior to being named Interim Information Technology Director in September of 2022. He has 16 years of information technology experience and more than 25 years of customer service experience.

Troy completed computer science coursework at Roanoke College and web design coursework at Virginia Western Community College.



Nancy Boyd is Loudoun County's New Director of Transportation & Capital Infrastructure



Nancy Boyd has been selected as the new director of the Loudoun County Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure (DTCI), County Administrator Tim Hemstreet announced today. Boyd, who has been serving as acting director since May 2022, was selected after a nationwide recruitment. Her appointment is effective immediately.

Prior to joining the Loudoun County government in June 2021 as the deputy director of DTCI, Boyd served as an engineering manager for WSP USA and held senior positions with the Washington State Department of Transportation.

As director of DTCI, Boyd will oversee the planning, design and construction of capital projects for the county through the Capital Improvement Program as well as the county's transportation system, which includes transit and commuter services, long range transportation planning, and traffic engineering. Staff in DTCI also serve as technical advisors to the Board of Supervisors on matters relating to transportation, facility development, regional funding, land acquisition, project scheduling, and cost estimating.

"Ms. Boyd has played a key role in a number of transportation initiatives and has demonstrated exceptional leadership since she joined the Loudoun County government," Hemstreet said. "I believe her knowledge and experience in capital projects and transportation will help Loudoun as we continue to make advancements in developing an effective transportation network, which is a key strategic initiative of the Board of Supervisors."

Boyd holds a bachelor's degree from Whitman College as well as accreditations as a professional civil engineer and engineering geologist.

Boyd fills the vacancy left by the promotion of former DTCI Director Joe Kroboth, who is now an Assistant County Administrator.

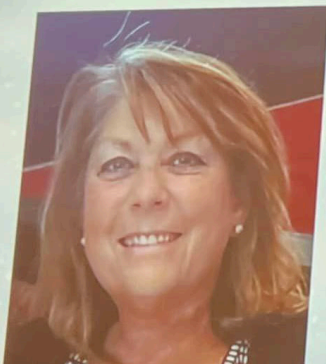
More information about the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure is online at loudoun.gov/DTCI.

CONGRATULATIONS PHYLLIS!



Congratulations to VACo General Counsel Phyllis Errico for being recognized with the Virginia Society of Association Executive's 2022 Awards of Excellence for Association Staff!

Award of Excellence



ASSOCIATION STAFF

Phyllis Errico, JD, CAE

General Counsel

Virginia Association of Counties

Key additional recommendations include:

- Funding a salary increase for direct care staff at CSBs, and directing the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to report annually on certain workforce metrics, such as turnover and vacancy rates, across CSBs.
- Directing DBHDS to review documentation and reporting requirements applicable to CSB direct care staff and to eliminate requirements that are not essential to ensuring that consumers receive effective and timely services, or are duplicative or conflicting.
- Directing DBHDS to conduct a comprehensive review of the performance contracts with CSBs and to ensure that the contracts measure consumer experiences and outcomes, include relevant benchmarks, and provide clear direction on how DBHDS will monitor performance and enforce compliance.
- Requiring DBHDS to develop and implement requirements and processes for monitoring CSBs' performance; requiring DBHDS to monitor compliance and use available enforcement mechanisms as necessary; and requiring DBHDS to report performance information to CSB governing boards, the Behavioral Health Commission, and the State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

Dual Enrollment Program Costs and Funding: JLARC staff's [report](#) proposes a significant change to the state's dual enrollment program by recommending prohibiting community colleges and school divisions from charging tuition and fees for non-career and technical education dual enrollment courses taught on public high school campuses as long as state funds cover dual enrollment expenses. Dual Enrollment is a program that allows high school students to earn college credits for courses taken through the Virginia Community College System while still being enrolled in high school. JLARC staff found that dual enrollment expenses consist primarily of personnel costs and are nearly five times greater for school divisions than community colleges. High school students in the majority of school divisions do not pay for dual enrollment courses. While some school divisions rely on dual enrollment tuition or fees to help offset costs, by eliminating the ability of community colleges to charge tuition or fees, at least 51 school divisions would save average of ~\$81K per year in tuition and fees charged by colleges, while community colleges would lose an average of ~\$270K per year. The report opined that the General Assembly could provide an additional \$6.2 million to replace colleges' dual enrollment tuition and fee revenue as well as provide funds for grants to divisions that demonstrate need for financial assistance for their dual enrollment programs.

Key additional recommendations or policy options include:

- Funding to provide annual bonuses to high school teachers statewide who teach dual enrollment courses.
- Directing the Department of Education to (i) outline the types of alternative credentials and/or expertise that may be considered acceptable by the community colleges' accrediting body for qualifying high school teachers to teach dual enrollment courses; and (ii) clarify that, on a case-by-case basis, divisions with teachers who may have sufficient alternative qualifications should work with their community college to determine whether these teachers can teach dual enrollment and document their credentials accordingly

K-12 Standards of Quality Funding Formula Status Update: JLARC staff's [update](#) on this study found that for FY 2021, Virginia School Divisions received \$20.1 billion in funding, the majority of which (52%) came from local governments, while the state contributed 39% and the federal government provided 9%. This echoes the Virginia Board of Education's 2022 Annual [Report](#) on the Condition and Needs of Public Schools in Virginia, which found that despite significant progress by the legislature, state direct aid per-pupil has decreased 3.4%, adjusted for inflation, since 2008-2009. For FY 2021, local governments in Virginia invested \$4.2 billion above the required local effort for SOQ programs. Localities continue to provide a greater share of funding, which allows wealthier divisions to go above and beyond local effort causing inequitable resources and opportunities for individualized education in divisions that are less wealthy and those divisions that serve high percentages of economically disadvantaged students. For instance, the school division with the lowest K-12 operating expenditures per student was \$11,100 while the school division with the highest was \$25,600.

The study will continue to compare current state staffing standards to workgroup recommendations, research literature, other states, and actual staffing; evaluate the SOQ formula, including all assumptions, data, and calculations so as not to be arbitrary and to reflect prevailing costs; assess current LCI formula assumptions and calculations and determine how well they measure local ability to pay; evaluate concerns raised by localities about the LCI; and identify alternative methods that could be used to measure local ability to pay, among other areas of interest. VACo staff provided an extensive interview to JLARC on these issues earlier this year. The final report will be presented at the June 2023 JLARC meeting and will likely include recommendations for substantial changes to Code and Appropriation Act language with significant budget implications for state and local governments.

VRS Oversight Report: JLARC staff's [report](#) showed that VRS serves more than 788,000 members, retirees, and beneficiaries. The VRS Trust Fund held \$96.8 billion in assets as of September 30, 2022. Ranked by value of assets, VRS is the nation's 17th largest public or private pension fund. In FY22, VRS paid \$5.7 billion in retirement benefits and \$493 million in other post-employment benefits from the trust fund. VRS earned investment income in FY22 but had net investment losses of \$124 million after accounting accruals and adjustments were made. VRS investments generated a return of -5 percent for the one-year period ending September 30, 2022. However, the total annualized return over the 10-year period was 7.9 percent, which is above the 6.75 percent long-term (30+ year) rate of return that VRS assumes for its investments.

The continued health and well-being of VRS is important to local governments as it administers retirement programs and other benefit programs for state and local government employees, including teachers. VRS receives funds from employer contributions, employee contributions, and investment income. The board-certified rates for the Teachers and State Employees plans decreased for the FY23–FY24 biennium primarily because of the substantial investment returns for the fund in FY21. Investment returns more than offset the increases in plan liabilities resulting from recent changes to the plans' mortality assumptions, which assume future generations of plan members will live longer than current members. Even though the board-certified rates decreased for the Teachers and State Employees plans, the General Assembly maintained the higher FY21–FY22 contribution rates for the FY23–FY24 biennium in the 2022 Appropriation Act. Maintaining the higher FY21–FY22 contribution rates could result in \$500 million in savings for the Teachers plan and \$48 million for the State Employees plan, according to estimates from VRS staff and assuming the trust fund meets its 6.75 percent long-term investment return assumption.

The complete JLARC reports and presentations of the meeting as well as the video recording may be accessed [here](#).

VACo Contacts: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#) and [Katie Boyle](#)

JLARC Reports on the Impact of COVID-19 on K-12 Public Education and the Virginia Board of Education Releases Annual Report on Condition and Needs of Public Schools



On November 7, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) released its [report](#) on the Pandemic's Impact on K-12 Public Education. In short, chronic absenteeism, behavioral, and mental health issues among students have drastically increased, just as academic achievement has declined. Teacher and staff retention has worsened significantly as more teachers are leaving the workforce and fewer are entering the workforce.

Key recommendations and policy options from the report include:

- Amending the Code of Virginia to allow qualified, licensed psychologists in other fields to be provisionally licensed as a school psychologist. Including language and funding in the Appropriation Act to provide the state share of funding to divisions that experienced an increase in teacher turnover during the pandemic to be used for providing retention bonuses for teachers.
- The Virginia Department of Education should ensure its model memorandum of understanding to help divisions establish partnerships with community mental health providers.
- Including language and funding in the Appropriation Act to provide the state share of funding for teacher tuition assistance to divisions that experienced an increase in the number of

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provisionally licensed teachers during the pandemic to help provisionally licensed teachers in those divisions become fully licensed.

- Including language and funding in the Appropriation Act to help develop and support existing partnerships between school divisions and mental health providers to provide enhanced mental health services to students.

More information may be found [here](#).

Additionally, the Virginia Board of Education at its most recent meeting approved its 2022 Annual Report on the Condition and Needs of Public Schools in Virginia. The Annual Report highlights similar concerning trends covered in the JLARC report such as learning loss and teacher recruitment and retention. Despite major investments in recent years, when adjusted for inflation, education funding from the state continues to lag pre-2008-2009 levels and local governments invest \$4.2 billion beyond the required local effort for SOQ programs.

Additional data from the report shows that Virginia ranks 28th of 50 for state and local per-pupil funding for Pre K-12 education, and 41st of 50 for state per-pupil funding. These figures demonstrate the gap between state and local funding of public education. The majority of public school funding in Virginia, 53%, comes from localities. The state contributes 40% of public school funding, with seven percent from federal sources. From 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, per-pupil school funding in Virginia increased 3.7%. State spending increased \$226 per-pupil, local spending increased \$208 per-pupil and federal spending increased \$54 per-pupil. Across the country, state per-pupil spending increased an average of 3.5% between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. Localities continue to provide a greater share of funding, which allows wealthier divisions to go above and beyond local effort causing inequitable resources and opportunities for individualized education in divisions that are less wealthy and those divisions that serve high percentages of economically disadvantaged students.

The full report is available [here](#).

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

Workgroup on Jail Fees Releases Report



A workgroup to make recommendations regarding the reduction or elimination of certain fees charged to individuals incarcerated in local or regional jails released its report last week. The State Board of Local and Regional Jails convened the group at the direction of legislation passed during the 2022 General Assembly session. As introduced, the legislation would have capped or eliminated certain fees or costs, such as charges for telephone services (the legislation required telephone services to be provided at no cost for numbers on an approved call list) or the cost of items sold in jail stores or commissaries (the legislation capped the cost of items sold at 10 percent above the market rate for items or services sold by major retail stores). Due to the complexity of the issues involved and the potential financial impact on jail operations, the legislation was converted to a study directive, with a report due December 1, 2022. With dissent from the workgroup members representing sheriffs and regional jails, the workgroup has recommended reintroducing the 2022 legislation.

At the workgroup's June meeting, although the workgroup had no quorum and could not take official action, members discussed conducting a survey of jails to determine what fees are being charged and for what purposes funds are being used. At its August 30 meeting, members discussed the details of the proposed survey, which was subsequently sent to jails. At the November 7 meeting, members discussed survey responses; 28 responses were received from 59 local and regional jails, along with 26 contracts for communications services, a contract for commissary services and a contract for medical services. In the view of some members of the workgroup, this information was too limited to be of use in formulating recommendations, so the Compensation Board's annual *Jail Cost Report* was used instead.

A subsequent meeting was held on November 29 to finalize the report, to include establishment of a process for submission of dissenting viewpoints. Concerns raised at this meeting by representatives of sheriffs and regional jails included the limitations of the *Jail Cost Report* in reflecting expenditures on jail programs; the lack of substantive discussion in subcommittees that were planned to examine issues related to communications, commissary, and other costs, but did not meet; and the potential impact on jail operations if revenue streams were removed without replacements. Senator Morrissey, who chaired the workgroup, stated his view that public funds should be used to provide programming and other essentials in jails; he also expressed his intention to avoid unfunded mandates on localities.

The report is available at [this link](#).

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

Final Report on Children's Services Act Special Education Services Issued

The final report from the workgroup that was tasked with examining the use of Children's Services Act (CSA) funding to support special education needs was released on December 6. Although the stakeholder workgroup adopted a set of recommendations at its final meeting on October 14, these recommendations were subject to review by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Secretary of Education. Secretary Littel and Secretary Guidera transmitted the workgroup's recommendations with a cover letter indicating that the Administration does not intend to pursue several workgroup proposals at this time, notably the recommendation to transfer CSA private day school and residential placement funding to the Department of Education.

As reported in [an earlier edition of County Connections](#), the workgroup adopted several recommendations on October 14, as summarized below. The Administration's response to these proposals is also included below:

- On a divided vote, the workgroup recommended the transfer of funding and oversight responsibility for private special education day school and residential facility placements from the Office of Children's Services to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), effective July 1, 2024. The workgroup recommended the retention of funding and administrative responsibility for special education wraparound services within the Office of Children's Services and local CSA programs (these services support children's needs that extend beyond the school day and are funded by a capped allocation in the state budget). Secretary Littel and Secretary Guidera underscored the Administration's commitment to improving coordination between the Office of Children's Services and the Department of Education, but stated that the Administration does not recommend the transfer of funding and oversight of the program to VDOE at this time, "[g]iven the lack of a strong consensus that a transfer to VDOE would improve administration or outcomes or reduce costs."
- The workgroup recommended against any further use of CSA funds to pay for services within public schools beyond the transitional services that were allowed to be funded through CSA in legislation passed in 2021. However, the workgroup supported enhancing the ability of public schools to serve children with higher-level needs through the creation of a pool of funds within VDOE that would support students in remaining in public schools. Secretary Littel and Secretary Guidera indicated agreement with the recommendation against further expansion of CSA funding for services within public schools, but also expressed reluctance to establish a new pool of funds at this time, noting that there is not enough information on the "need, scope, use, and cost" of such a pool of funds, and that there has been "insufficient exploration of all potential solutions, including solutions pursued in other states."
- The workgroup recommended continued data collection on the CSA-funded transitional services for students returning to public school from private placements, as these services were recently allowed to be funded through CSA. Secretary Littel and Secretary Guidera indicated agreement with this recommended approach.

Commission on School Construction and Modernizations Makes Recommendations to the General Assembly



On December 1st, the Commission on School Construction and Modernizations [met](#) to review efforts by the General Assembly and Governor to act on the Commission's recommendations from 2021 as well as make recommendations for the 2023 legislative session. Overall and with one exception, the most recent Commission recommendations align with VACo priorities to address the issue of aging school infrastructure and the ability of local governments to finance modernization and construction efforts. The [Commission](#) is tasked with assessing the Commonwealth's school facilities and determining school construction and modernization funding needs, among other duties.

Of the seven recommendations from the Commission, the first three are closely modeled on [recommendations](#) made by VACo to the Virginia Board of Education pertaining to the [guidelines](#) for the School Construction Assistance Program. The fourth and fifth recommendations are consistent with VACo legislative priorities, including VACo supported [legislation](#) from the 2022 General Assembly session that will likely be reintroduced in 2023. VACo staff thanked the Commission for their past and ongoing work to address the \$25 billion in need for local governments to renovate or replace aging school infrastructure in Virginia. Recommendation 6 was adopted by the Commission in concept. VACo staff raised concerns to the Commission over the potential of this recommendation for imposing an unfunded mandate on localities.

The full list of recommendations are as follows:

1. Either (a) use multiple years of composite index and fiscal stress data for determining the 10%, 20%, or 30% grant award amounts to recognize changing local economic conditions or fluctuating data values from a single year, or (b) use the most favorable of the latest or multi-year data. Currently, only the latest composite index and fiscal stress data are used in determining the grant amounts to divisions.

2. Make school projects where construction began July 1, 2022, or after eligible for application, consistent with Board of Education intent for its final guidelines.
3. Make the principal portion of future debt service payments not yet begun on school projects where construction is pending or just begun an allowable cost with grant funding.
4. Authorize up to a 1% new local sales tax for all counties and cities with revenues solely used for school construction and renovation projects. Note: Recommendation #3 from the 2021 Commission Interim Report
5. Include additional funding of \$2.5 billion in the appropriation act for the School Construction Grant and Assistance Program (\$500 million for entitlement/ direct in School Construction Grant Program; \$2 billion for competitive grants in School Construction Assistance Program).
6. Require a minimum local effort for capital maintenance programs and require school boards to include in any capital improvement plans a minimum 1.5% capital asset replacement value commitment target to avoid major replacement costs in the future.
7. A Section 1 bill to direct the Board of Education to make recommendations to the General Assembly for revisions to the Standards of Quality to establish standards for operations, maintenance, and new construction of public school buildings. Note: Recommendation #4 from the 2021 Commission Interim Report

The full recommendations may also be accessed [here](#).

Additionally, earlier this year, the Virginia Board of Education approved [guidelines](#) for Implementing new Appropriation Act provisions for Literary Fund School Construction Loans in the 2022-2024 Biennium. Prior to this, the Literary Fund had become almost unusable as a source of school construction financing and had been used by the state to pay the state share of employer contributions for the VRS Teacher Plan. The following changes to the Fund have been made:

- Language authorizing the Board to offer up to \$200,000,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2023 and up to \$200,000,000 in FY 2024 from the Literary Fund for school construction loans, subject to the availability of funds. Amounts designated for school construction loans that are not obligated in FY 2023 may be obligated in FY 2024;
- Establishing an annual open enrollment process by which localities and school boards apply to the Literary Fund for school construction loans, in lieu of the First Priority and Second Priority waiting list process for awarding loans. Priority for loan funding is based on the local composite index of ability-to-pay (but the Board may consider other critical projects for priority);
- Establishing a maximum Literary Fund loan amount per project of \$25.0 million (from \$7.5 million currently authorized in the Code of Virginia);
- In consultation with the Department of the Treasury, establishing loan interest rates that are benchmarked to a market index interest rate on an annual basis, not to exceed 2.0 percent for the tier of localities with a school division local composite index of ability-to-pay between 0.0000 and 0.2999; and
- Language authorizing the Board to offer a loan add-on amount not to exceed \$5.0 million per loan for projects that will result in school consolidation and the net reduction of at least one existing school.

The open enrollment period for the Literary Fund is likely to occur in January and will be announced via a Superintendent of Public Instruction memo.

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

LODA Fund Premiums Set to Increase in FY 2024



As part of their November 15 [meeting](#), Virginia Retirement System (VRS) [Board of Trustees](#) approved an increase to the premium for the Line of Duty Death and Health Benefits Trust Fund. The Board of Trustees typically sets Line of Duty Act (LODA) rates for participating employers on a biennial basis. Last year, at its November 16, 2021 meeting, the VRS Board of Trustees certified a full-time equivalent premium rate of \$681.84 for the Line of Duty Death and Health Benefits Trust Fund for the FY 2023-2024 biennium, effective July 1, 2022. The Plan Actuary, however, has subsequently determined that given the LODA Fund's statutorily required pay-as-you-go status, additional funds are required in order to prevent the potential for negative cash flow in fiscal year 2024. As such, the Board of Trustees approved an increase in the FY 2024 full-time equivalent premium rate to \$830.00, effective July 1, 2023.

The increase can be attributed to several factors, with the most impactful being a more than 6% decrease in the full-time equivalent (FTE) headcount from 19,087 FTEs to 17,900 FTEs, as detailed in the FY 2022 valuation prepared by VRS plan actuary Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company. The lower headcount (fewer premiums coming in) coupled with an increase in approved claims last year means the LODA Fund will require more funding to pay benefits for the upcoming year. Generally, the required dollars collected from premiums will remain relatively level over the biennium if the headcounts are static. However, because this plan has no pre-funding, in the case of a substantial drop in the FTE headcounts or unfavorable plan experience, the premium level needs to increase to collect the required funding to pay expected benefits for the upcoming year. Because LODA is not part of the VRS pension plan, under the Internal Revenue Code's exclusive benefit rule the VRS trust fund cannot be used to fund benefits and there is no other source of funds to make benefit payments other than the annual premiums, Health Insurance Credit reimbursements, administrative fees, and any investment earnings. More information about LODA can be found [here](#).

VRS will contact [LODA Fund participating employers](#) 📧 (which includes eight counties) to ensure they are aware of the premium increase for budgeting purposes. Invoices sent to employers in July 2023 will reflect the higher premium amount. Non-participating employers with additional questions on impact to premiums should contact their risk insurance providers (such as [VAcorp](#)). Generally speaking, such premiums are substantially lower than the VRS rate.

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

Joint Commission on Health Care Adopts Recommendations from 2022 Studies



The Joint Commission on Health Care held its final meeting for the year on December 7, adopting a series of recommendations emerging from the four studies the Commission conducted this year and approving a set of studies to be undertaken in 2023.

Of particular interest to local governments are the recommendations from the studies on affordability of assisted living facilities and the structure and financing of local health departments. (Summaries of the study findings and recommendations proposed by Commission staff earlier this year may be found in previous editions of *County Connections* at [this link](#) and [this link](#).)

Affordability of Assisted Living Facilities – Adopted Recommendations

- Increase the base Auxiliary Grant rate to \$2,500 per month from the current level of \$1,609 per month outside of northern Virginia. This recommendation was proposed as a result of findings that the current rate falls short of facilities' costs to provide care. VACo submitted public comments suggesting that the increase be funded with state dollars rather than the traditional 80 percent/20 percent state/local funding partnership, given the disproportionate impact of auxiliary grant payments in certain localities.
- Expand the list of eligible living arrangements for the Auxiliary Grant program to allow recipients to remain in the community; this proposal would require the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to submit changes to the program's eligible living settings to the Social Security Administration for approval. VACo's public comments also included encouragement that any expansion of the Auxiliary Grant to other settings be state-funded.

- Increase the personal needs allowance for Auxiliary Grant recipients and require the allowance to increase at the same rate as future cost-of-living Auxiliary Grant rate increases.
- Direct the Department of Social Services to update assisted living facility regulations to require administrators to notify the appropriate local staff at least 60 days prior to closure if the facility currently houses residents supported by the Auxiliary Grant or Discharge Assistance Program funds.

Local Health Department Structure and Financing – Adopted Recommendations

Dr. Colin Greene, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Health, addressed Commission members and encouraged a focus on stabilizing staffing at local health departments as a fundamental step that would be required before imposing any requirements on local departments to enhance services.

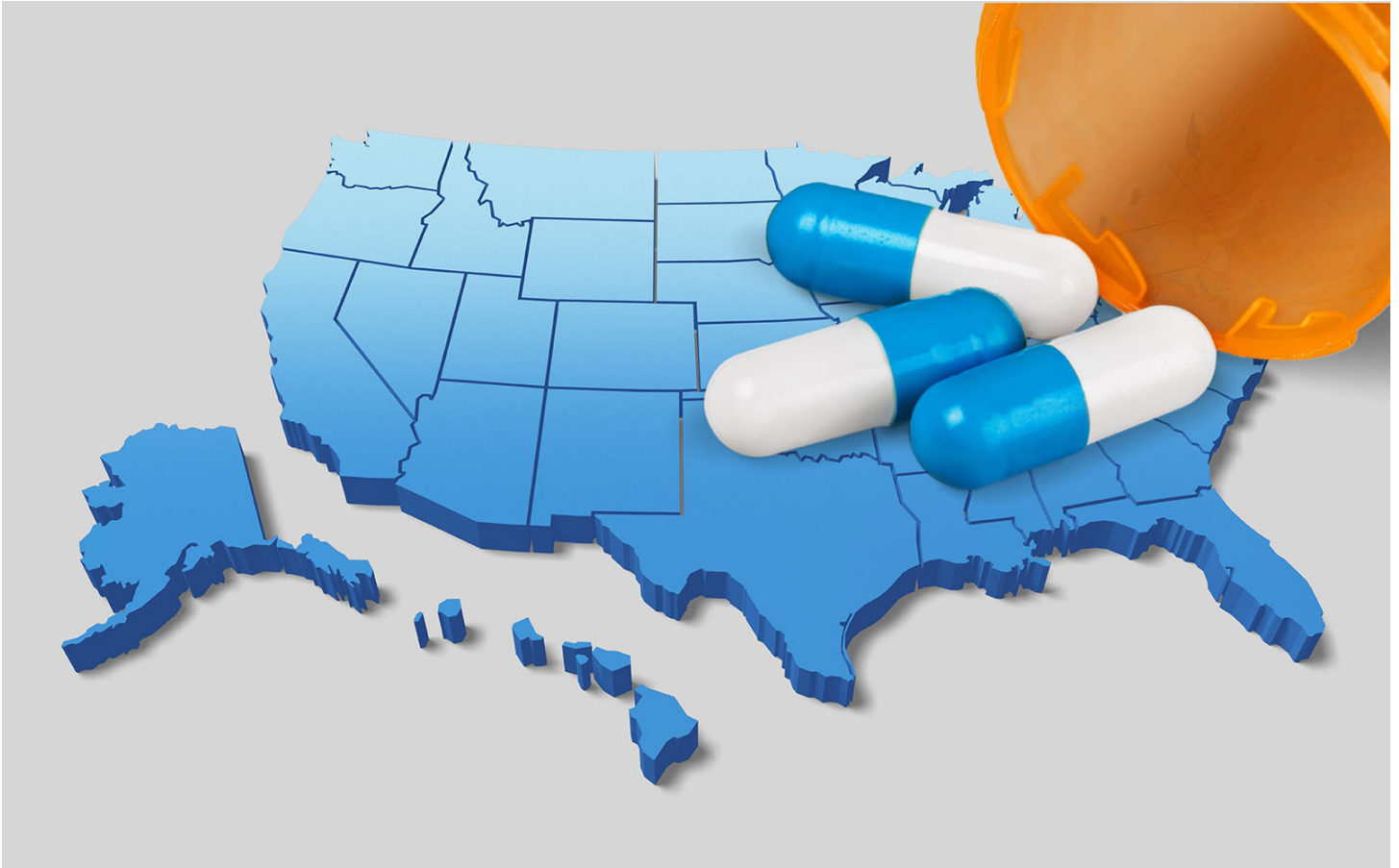
Commission members adopted a recommendation to fund targeted salary increases for local health department staff to align with current industry salary benchmarks. The remaining policy options included in staff's report will be addressed in a letter to the Virginia Department of Health indicating support for these goals and requesting the Department to convene the appropriate stakeholders to develop an implementation plan, to include priorities and cost estimates.

Key policy options to be addressed in the letter to the Department include requiring local departments to ensure the availability of clinical services and facilitate access to and linkage with clinical care and to address chronic disease and injury prevention; directing the Department to design a state performance management process for each local health department; directing the Department to submit a plan for a centralized data system; directing the Department to track cooperative budget funding per capita and make appropriate adjustments based on the identified needs of each local department; and directing the Department to update state regulations for environmental health services to increase inspection fees to account for the typical time required to conduct the inspection.

The Commission approved the following studies for 2023:

- Eating disorders and obesity prevention and treatment: Through this study, which was directed by legislation in 2022, the Commission will document the prevalence and incidence of eating disorders and obesity among Virginians; identify evidence-based strategies for their prevention, early identification, and treatment; document the extent to which Virginia's Medicaid program and state-regulated private health plans cover the costs of these strategies; assess barriers to care; and identify policy options to improve the prevention, early identification, and treatment of obesity and eating disorders.
- Team-based care approaches to improve health outcomes: This study will review evidence-based models of team-based care, a delivery model in which two or more providers work collaboratively with patients and caregivers to coordinate care across several settings; identify which populations most benefit from team-based care; evaluate the extent to which team-based care models are being used in Virginia and any obstacles to their implementation; and consider policy options through which the state may incentivize or promote effective models of team-based care.
- Vertically integrated carriers and providers: This study will review the extent of vertically integrated carriers in Virginia's health care market and the impact on patients. Vertically integrated carriers involve a joint ownership interest between payers and providers.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



Auditor of Public Accounts Releases Financial Reporting Guidance on Opioid Settlement Funds

The Auditor of Public Accounts has provided guidance to cities and counties receiving funds from the national opioid settlements to assist with FY 2022 financial reporting.

The guidance addresses the direct distributions that localities are receiving from settlements with distributors and with Janssen/Johnson and Johnson. The guidance is available at [this link](#). The document includes [a link to a spreadsheet](#) providing a schedule of estimated settlement payment accounts for each locality.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



VIRGINIA **Cannabis** **Control** **Authority**

Cannabis Control Authority launches website

On December 2, 2022, the Cannabis Control Authority (CCA) launched its new website - cca.virginia.gov.

According to an accompanying press release, “Consistent with the CCA’s mission, the site provides educational resources focused on the public health, public safety, and consumer protection aspects of cannabis.” The website is positioned to also share updates on cannabis law and policy as they occur as well as feature information about CCA activities. As the rules and regulation surrounding cannabis in Virginia can be hard to find while sources of such information can be outdated or incorrect, the CCA website, according to the acting Head of the Authority Jeremy Preiss, “...is an important milestone in CCA’s efforts to disseminate credible information about cannabis, including its legal status in the Commonwealth, and to illuminate the Authority’s mission and operations.”

The full press release on the announcement on the CCA website can be found [here](#).

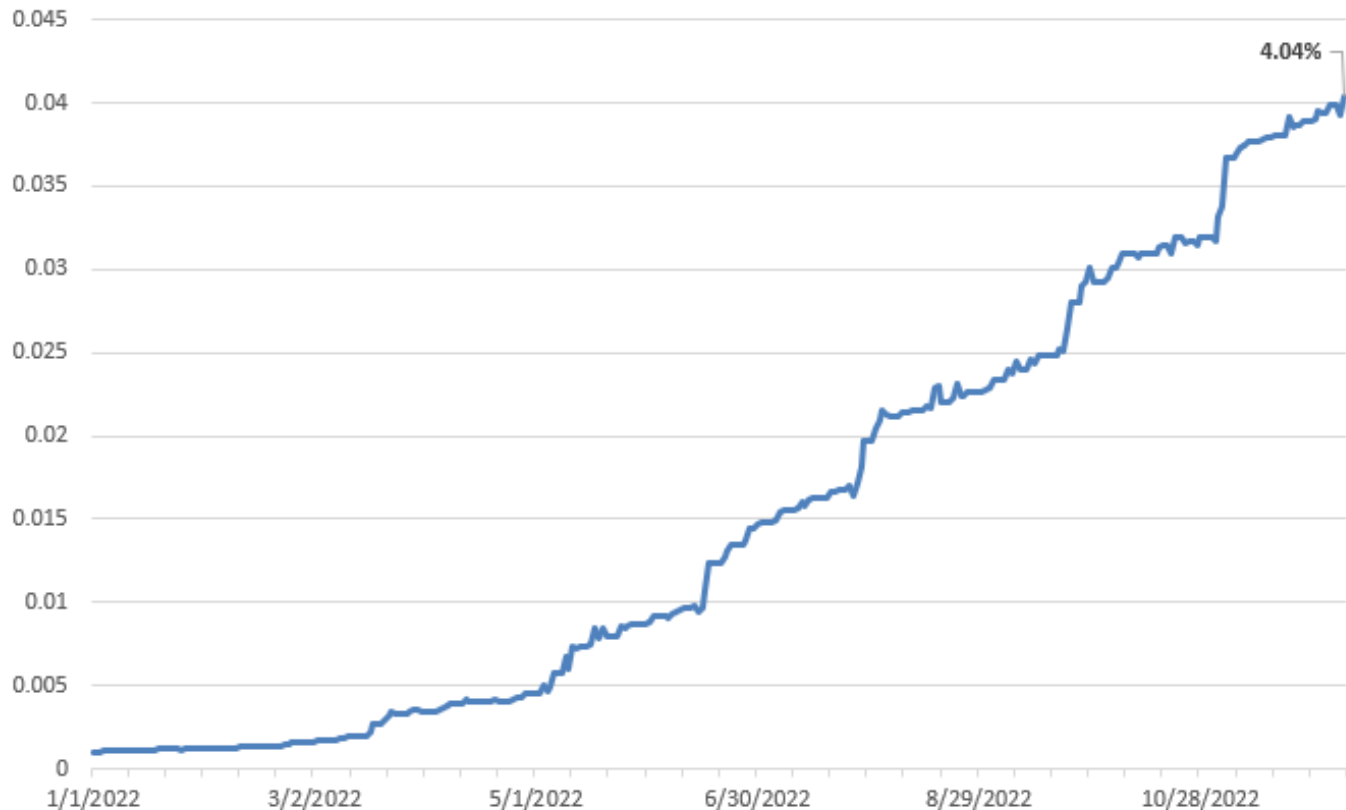
VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)



VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool (VIP)

Daily Net Yields

1/1/2022 to 12/6/2022



Past performance is not necessarily indicative of future results.

VIP Liquidity Pool Yield Tops 4%

Are you getting the most out of your liquidity fund balances?

The VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool offers a competitive yield of 4.04% (as of December 6, 2022). Visit virginiainvestmentpool.org to see the current net yield - which is set daily.

*Past performance is not necessarily indicative of future results.



For more information about the Virginia Investment Pool, contact Tyler Deen at tdeen@valocalfinance.org or 804.648.0635.

It's that time of the year when we display County Christmas Ornaments!



We look forward to every Christmas when VACo's Valerie Russell decorates our offices!



2023 Winter Series

Friday, January 6, 2023 12-1 PM
Legislation

Friday, February 3, 2023 12-1 PM
Equity

Friday, March 3, 2023 12-1 PM
Cybersecurity



Meeting Schedule

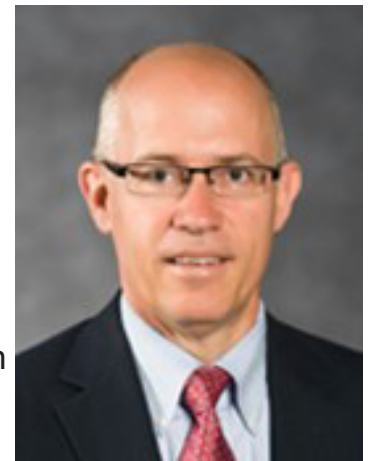
Session 1—Friday, January 6, 2023, 12 - 1 PM ***Gearing up for the Virginia General Assembly***

With the 2023 General Assembly convening soon, this session will explore the legislature's logistics and timelines, highlight anticipated legislative issues and the Governor's budget proposal, while providing a glimpse at the politics of it all.

Meet David Blount, Our Session 1 Speaker

David C. Blount | Executive Director, Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions; Deputy Director and Director of Legislative Services, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

David Blount is the first Executive Director of the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions. He has served in that position since 2018 through a partnership with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District, where he has served for 23 years and presently is Deputy Director and Director of Legislative Services. He previously held positions as a policy associate with the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute at VCU, and as a legislative consultant for both the Virginia Association of Counties and the Virginia Municipal League. He is a graduate of James Madison University.



Session 2—Friday, February 5, 2023, 12 - 1 PM | *Equity in the Workplace*

Session 3—Friday, March 5, 2023, 12 - 1 PM | **Cybersecurity**

Cost: \$25 per Session | Once registered, participants will receive login information to be able to join the day of the event.

REGISTER TODAY!

VACo Launches New Website



The Virginia Association of Counties is proud to announce the launch of the new www.vaco.org.

VACo used data and analytics to improve navigation and functionality. The pages people often visit are prominent and easily accessible such as an interactive map with county demographics and information.

Thank you [Whittington Consulting](#) for their outstanding work in the design and development of the new www.vaco.org! This is the second website Whittington Consulting has developed for VACo.

We look forward to unleashing the power of the new website as a tool that helps VACo provide high-level communications and services to our members.



VACo 2023 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

For the 2023 General Assembly Session



ADOPTED BY VACo
MEMBERSHIP ON
NOVEMBER 15, 2022



VACo Membership Adopts Legislative Program

Thank you for your participation in the development and adoption of the [VACo 2023 Legislative Program](#).

Please take a moment to review the adopted program.

[VACo 2023 Legislative Program](#)

VACo/VML/VAPDC Virginia Rural Center Local Government Day

Thursday, January 19, 2023 | [Omni Richmond Hotel](#)
[REGISTRATION FORM](#) | [REGISTER ONLINE](#)

Local Government Day

It's a day for all of us. Counties. Cities. Towns. Planning Districts. It's a day for us to learn how the decisions being made by the General Assembly might affect us. And it's a day to make our voices heard. Attend Local Government Day. Then visit the Capitol to meet with your legislators and observe committee meetings. Later join us for a reception.

Registration Fee

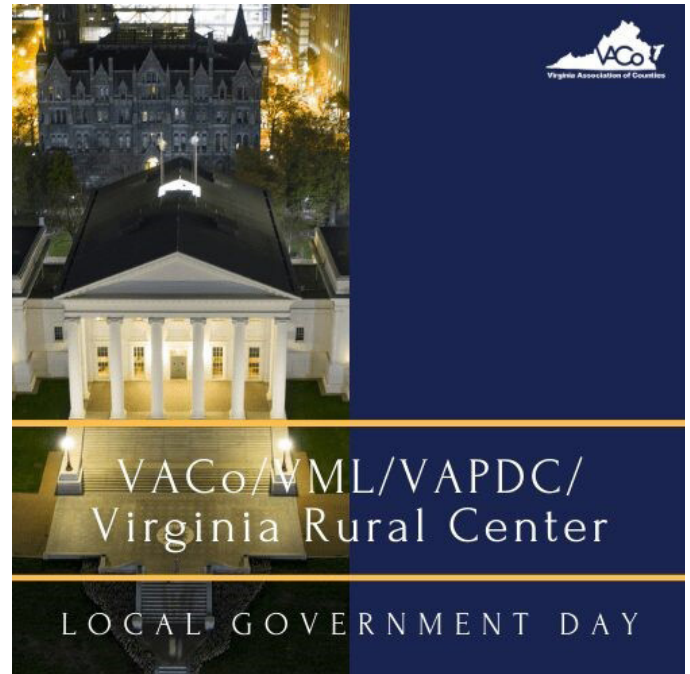
\$100 Day Briefing only (Noon – 2pm)
\$100 Reception only (530pm)
\$150 for both | \$175 late registration

Agenda

9 am – VACo Board of Directors Meeting
11 am – Registration/Check In
11:30am – Lunch
Noon – Local Government Day
Afternoon – Visit the Capitol to speak with legislators
5:30pm – Reception

Hotel Reservation Details

Lodging costs are not covered in the registration fee. Local Government Day is held at the Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Room rates start at \$165 (single room occupancy). To reserve a hotel room, call 804.344.7000 by January 3, 2023, with this code: Government Legislative Day 2023 Group or reserve a room at this [Omni Richmond Hotel link](#).

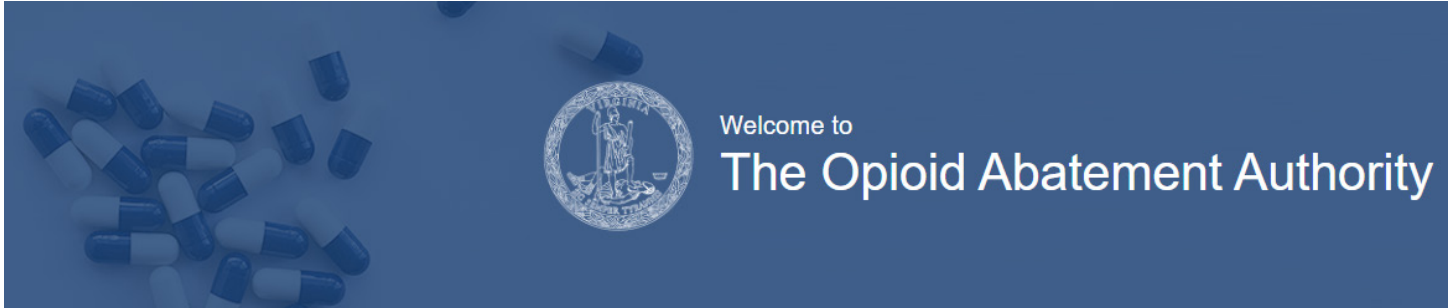


[REGISTRATION FORM](#) | [REGISTER ONLINE](#)

Register for the Opioid Settlement Funding and Best Practices Workshop

Thursday, January 19, 2023 | [Omni Richmond Hotel](#)

[REGISTRATION FOR THE WORKSHOP](#) | [AGENDA](#)



[REGISTER FOR THE WORKSHOP](#)

VACo, VML, and VAPDC are pleased to partner with the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority to offer the Opioid Settlement Funding and Best Practices Workshop on January 19 and 20 at the [Omni Richmond Hotel](#) (100 S. 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219).

This event will follow the Local Government Day lunch briefing and will begin at 1:30 p.m. on January 19. The objective of this workshop is to provide information on funding opportunities available through the Authority and how the application process will be administered, as well as information on best practices for prevention, treatment, and recovery.

An agenda for the workshop **is linked**. There is no cost to attend the workshop, but an RSVP is required by Friday, January 6. Please contact Valerie Russell at vrussell@vaco.org with questions.

RURAL CAUCUS RECEPTION

January 18, 2023 | 530pm – 8pm
Omni Richmond Hotel

[REGISTRATION FORM](#) | [REGISTER ONLINE](#)
[OMNI HOTEL ROOM FORM](#)



Join us on Wednesday, January 18 for the Rural Reception hosted by VACo and the Virginia Rural Center. Discuss issues that impact rural Virginia with colleagues and legislators while making personal connections with folks from across the Commonwealth. Register today [online](#) or fax the [Registration Form](#) to 804.788.0083.

Cost – \$150 per person

Hotel Reservation Details

Lodging costs are not covered in the registration fee. The Chairpersons' Institute is held at the Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Room rates start at \$165 (single room occupancy). To reserve a hotel room, call 804.344.7000 by January 3, 2023, with this code: **Government Legislative Day 2023 Group** or reserve a room at this [Omni Richmond Hotel link](#).

We look forward to seeing you at these two exciting events during the 2023 General Assembly Session.

VACo Contact: [Valerie Russell](#)

CHAIRPERSONS' INSTITUTE

Friday, January 20, 2023 | Saturday, January 21, 2023

Omni Richmond Hotel

[REGISTRATION FORM](#) | [REGISTER ONLINE](#)
[OMNI HOTEL ROOM FORM](#)



Virginia Association of Counties offers the County Board Chairpersons' Institute to Board Chairs to focus on the specific roles of that position, including meeting management, communications, work relationships, leadership, and goal setting. An overview of county government and the work of county supervisors are also covered.

Dates: Friday, January 20, 2023 and Saturday, January 21, 2023

Location: [Omni Richmond Hotel](#)

Who should attend: New and incumbent County Board Chairs and Vice Chairs will come away with information they need to guide their Board through their leadership cycle. But ALL County Supervisors are encouraged to register and attend.

Registration Fee: \$350

Hotel Reservation Details: Lodging costs are not covered in the registration fee. The Chairpersons' Institute is held at the Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Room rates start at \$165 (single room occupancy). To reserve a hotel room, call 804.344.7000 by January 3, 2023, with this code: **Government Legislative Day 2023 Group** or reserve a room at this [Omni Richmond Hotel link](#).

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)



Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report Released

How do you compare? That's a common question many public utilities face when considering how to set rates and fees for water and wastewater services. Virginia boasts more than 250 public providers of water and wastewater across every size and type of community, which can make benchmarking a challenge. Understanding water and wastewater trends across the Commonwealth is crucial for public utilities and municipalities, especially when they consider rate changes and evaluate capital recovery charges. This information is a primary reason the annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report is so highly anticipated.

Draper Aden Associates produced the report for more than three decades as it has become an essential resource for public utilities. That's why the team remained

[More on Next Page](#)

committed to delivering this crucial information when Draper Aden was acquired by [TRC Companies](#), a global professional services firm providing environmentally focused and digitally powered solutions that address local needs, in May. The [2022 edition](#) of the report was released publicly by TRC Companies in October 2022.

Even as public utilities continue to face a challenging and uncertain environment, these results provide valuable intel for planning and strategy.

The two most significant findings from the 2022 survey are related to rate changes. First, the average water rate across the Commonwealth increased by 2.1 percent in 2022 and the average sewer rate increased by 2.5 percent. Both the water rate and wastewater rate increases were slightly lower than the previous year. Since 2012, the average water rate increased by 3.4 percent per year and the average wastewater rate increased by 3.8 percent per year. These increases occurred across a control group of representative utilities that allows the report to extrapolate trends across the state.

Second, 43 percent of respondents reported a water rate increase in 2022 and 53 percent of respondents increased wastewater rates in 2022. Thus, slightly more than half of all providers that participated in the survey raised rates.

In addition to water and wastewater rates, the 2022 report also shares data for connection fees and capital recovery charges.

Looking ahead, water and wastewater providers continue to face a number of challenges. Yet, a significant opportunity for increased resources and funding will come from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#). This federal funding will provide billions for fiscal years 2022 through 2026, including for water infrastructure.

The [34th Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report](#) was produced by TRC Companies. The 2022 Virginia Water and Wastewater Report and previous reports are [available for download](#) online. For questions about the Water and Wastewater Report, please contact water@trccompanies.com.



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Most companies want to "put up cameras and cash checks". That's exactly how the automated industry has received such a bad name. Blue Line Solutions (BLS) believes there should be a high level of responsibility regarding educational elements as well as enforcement. Following standards set by the National Highway Safety Administration and the FHWA, our program consists of three elements:

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2023 EXCELLENCE IN VIRGINIA GOVERNMENT AWARDS

**VCU**L. Douglas Wilder School of
Government and Public Affairs

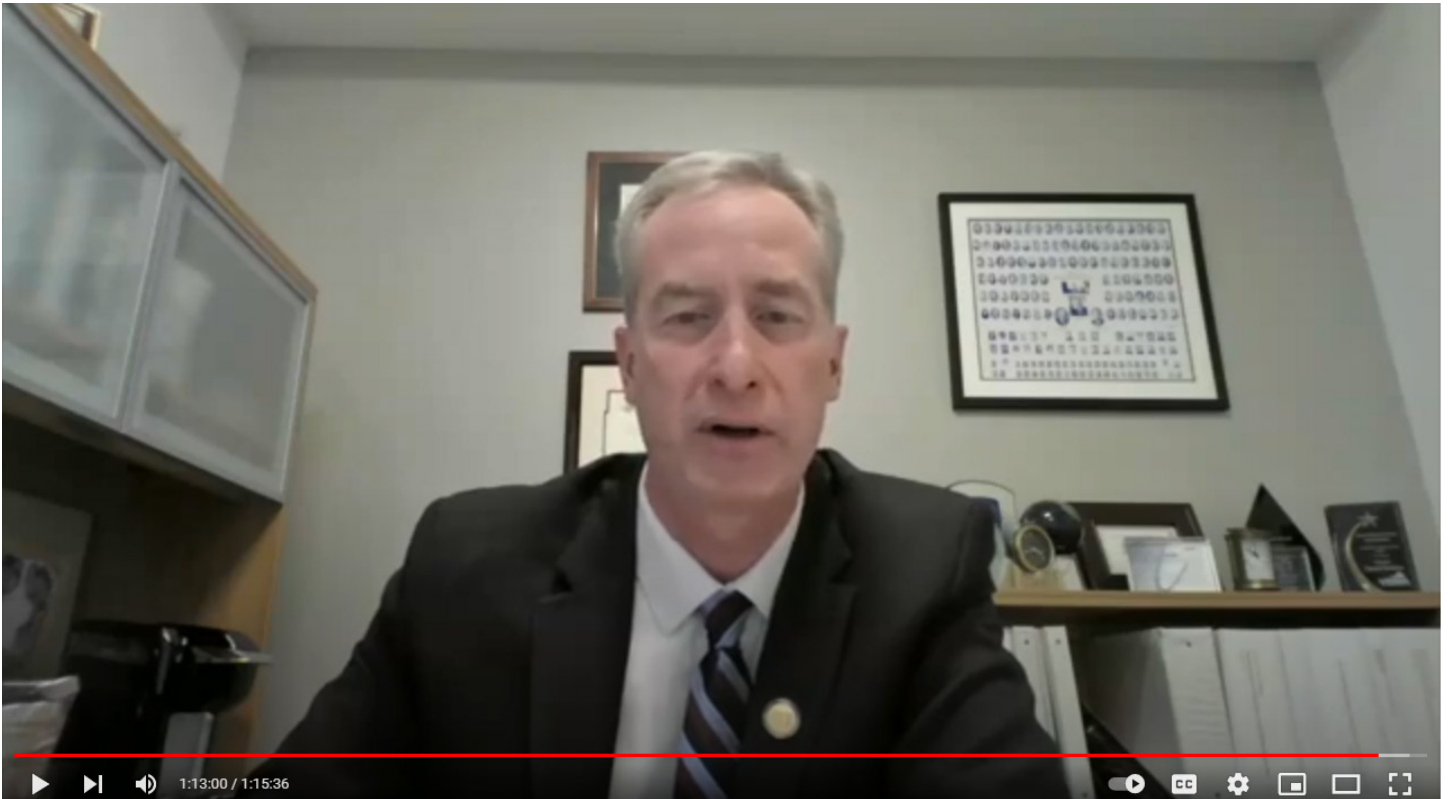
Excellence in Virginia Government Awards Nominations Open

The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University is pleased to announce the 16th annual Excellence in Virginia Government Awards (EVGA) on **April 11, 2023** at Noon. EVGA celebrates people and organizations in the public and private sectors who have made significant contributions to the practice of government and the well-being of our communities and citizens.

“These awards recognize outstanding work at all levels of government in Virginia and honor dedicated public service, innovative approaches and commitment to excellence,” said Susan T. Gooden, Ph.D., dean of the Wilder School.

Nominations for the 2023 Awards will be accepted through November 1, 2022. Nominations are being accepted in seven categories: Community Enhancement, Grace E. Harris Leadership Award, Hill-Robinson Expansion of Freedom, Innovation in Government, Lifetime Achievement, Public-Private Partnerships, and Unsung Hero.

To make a nomination, learn more details about the Excellence in Virginia Government Awards, including criteria and past winners, go to <https://bit.ly/evgavcu> or contact Paula Otto, piotto@vcu.edu.



New Approaches to Building Resilience in Counties

A variety of expert panelists describe new tools and approaches that counties can use to increase their resilience to flooding impacts.

Dr. Molly Mitchell from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) will discuss tools that can help localities determine the predicted level of flooding in their area, and VIMS' recent work to map predicted flooding of wells, septic systems and transportation networks.

Lewie Lawrence, Executive Director of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, will describe the PDC's innovative Fight the Flood Program and how it connects residents to potential funding and contractors to assist them with resilience efforts.

And Delegate **David Bulova** will provide an overview of legislative efforts to address resilience, including the new Resilient Virginia Revolving Fund.

Moderator **Elizabeth Andrews**, Director of the Coastal Policy Center at William & Mary Law School, will also provide a summary of some other resilience tools and initiatives in the Commonwealth.

Watch the Video – <https://youtu.be/B6SdTCbbzXY>

Dr. Molly Mitchell Presentation – https://www.vaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SeaLevelRiseFlooding_VACo.pdf

Elizabeth Andrews Presentation – <https://www.vaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/VACoNewApproachesBuildingResilienceCounties.pdf>

Inflation Reduction Act: Clean Energy Investment Tax Credits

Until Dec 31, 2024	Highlights	Deadlines to Consider	Additional Details
Extension of Energy Investment Tax Credit (Section 48)	Extends the existing energy investment tax credit for applicable energy projects. This tech-specific ITC ends in 2024 for most technologies and is replaced by the new tech-neutral Clean Electricity ITC (48D), which begins in 2025.	Extends date of construction in most cases to 2024 and maintains a 10% or 30% credit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains 30% credit for solar energy property, geothermal property, fiber-optic solar property, fuel cell property, microturbine property, small wind property, offshore wind property, combined heat and power property, and waste energy recovery property constructed before January 1, 2025. Creates 30% credit for energy storage technology biogas property, microgrid controllers, dynamic glass, and linear generators constructed before January 1, 2025. This credit can be up to 40% if in Opportunity Zones and designated rural areas. More later in this presentation. Extends 10% credit for microturbine projects constructed before January 1, 2025. 30% credit for geothermal heat pump projects constructed before January 1, 2033. Credit reduces to 26% in 2033 and 22% in 2034.

Logos: ITC, BILTgroup, GreeneHurlocker

Video feed: Greg Bryant

Opportunities in Energy Investment under Inflation Reduction Act

A significant component of the recently passed IRA seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. It does so by making significant investments in climate and environment programs and providing tax incentives to boost the development and deployment of clean energy. These investments include multiple direct funding opportunities for counties to save money while reducing emissions.

This webinar provides VACo members with a summary and explanation of how Virginia counties can take advantage of these investments. The panel of experts walk through the basics of the IRA regarding eligible funding opportunities in regard to deployment of technology, and how federal energy tax credits have been significantly modified and increased so that counties can utilize them to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

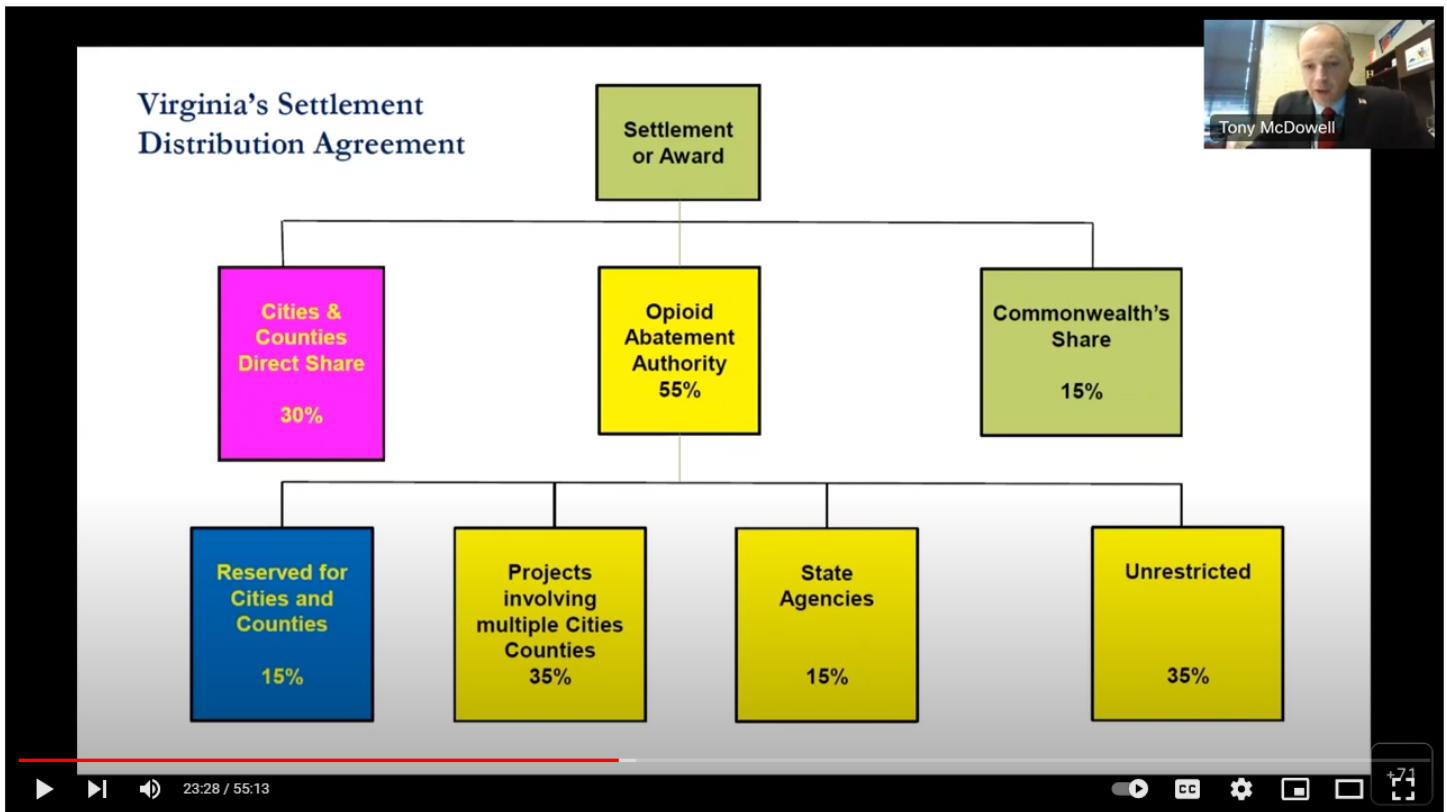
Attorney Eric Hurlocker, co-founder of GreeneHurlocker, PLC, which provides a broad range of administrative law, business and corporate law, commercial real estate law, employment law, energy law, mergers and acquisition counsel, regulatory law, and litigation legal services throughout the Mid-Atlantic.

CPA and Attorney Gregory Bryant, founder and managing partner of the BILTgroup, which provides clients expertise on understanding the nuances of federal tax and accounting law including the IRA.

Larry Cummings is a Regional Comprehensive Energy Leader for Trane and manages 5 states for them. Larry has been the Chair of VT's Sustainability Institute and President of VCU's College of Engineering Foundation, as well as being on various Boards for industry groups.

Watch the Video – <https://youtu.be/rS8socSfWC8>

Gregory Bryant (BILTgroup) and Erick Hurlocker (GreeneHurlocker, PLC) PRESENTATION – <https://www.vaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/EnergyInvestmentsIRAWebinarSlides22.pdf>



Briefing on Opioid Abatement Authority

Tony McDowell, Executive Director of the Opioid Abatement Authority, provided a briefing for VACo members on the Authority's plans for the distribution of funding being provided to the state from recent settlements of opioid-related litigation. A portion of these funds will be provided to localities, in addition to the direct distributions localities are receiving from the settlements.

Link to Video

<https://youtu.be/LhAy0UGqgsI>

PowerPoint Presentation

<https://www.vaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OAA-presentation-to-VACo-10.12.22.pdf>

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



Premier Partner Spotlight The Berkley Group



The Berkley Group | Part 1

Join Dean Lynch and Drew Williams, CEO, as they discuss the history of the Berkley Group and where they are today. The Berkley Group is the go-to consultant for Virginia counties and their communities. For more information, please visit www.bgllic.net.

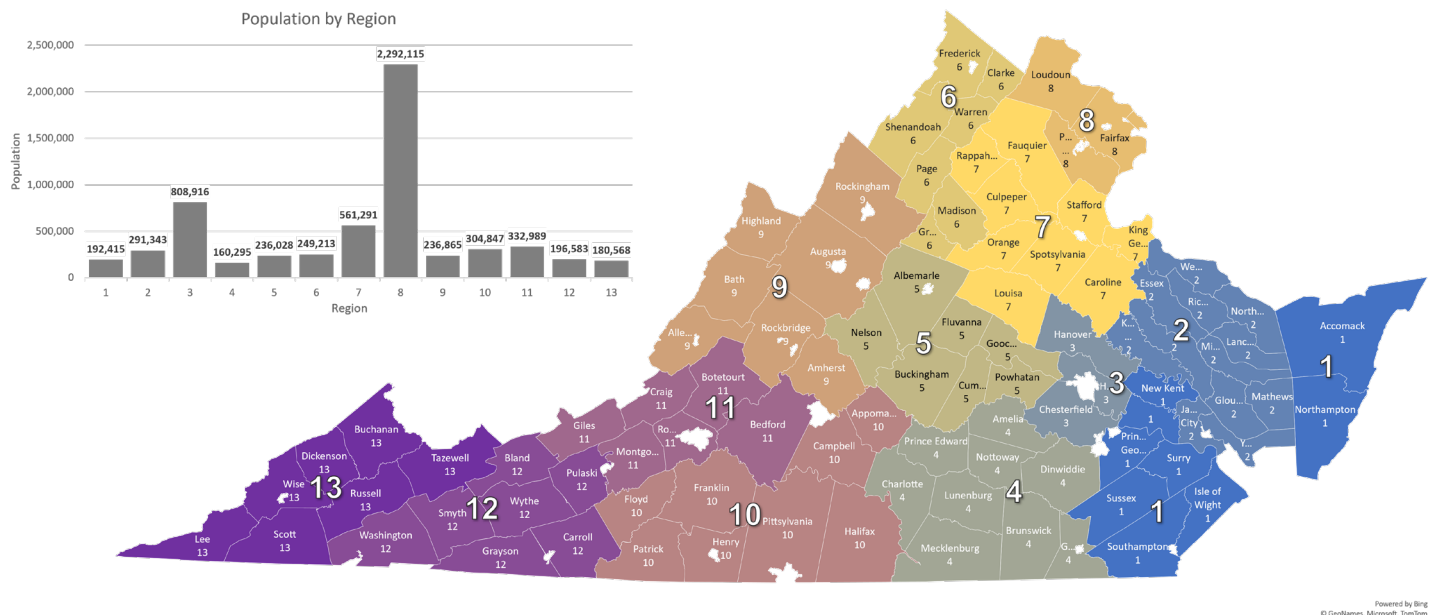
What doors can we open for you?

Watch the [Premier Partner Video](#)

Reapportionment and Bylaw Amendment

The VACo Bylaws provide for reapportionment every ten years beginning in 1991. The VACo President named a reapportionment committee in 2021 and the committee began the process when the census data was available. The committee presented its recommendations to the VACo Board of Directors at its meeting on June 4, 2022. The Board of Directors accepted the recommendation of the committee, which would add three seats to the VACo Board of Directors consisting of one rural, one suburban and one urban area seat. The specific changes to the existing VACo regions are as follows. New Kent County and Charles City County would be moved from Region 3 to Region 1. Montgomery County would be moved from Region 10 to Region 11. Region 11 would receive an additional seat. Region 8 would gain an additional seat based on population increases. The Board also endorsed a proposed Bylaw amendment, which would remove the 24-seat cap on Regional Director positions and would allow the additional seats to be added to the VACo Board of Directors.

The Membership of the association passed the Bylaw amendment at its Annual meeting on November 15, 2022. The reapportioned map of regions and the Bylaw are below.



Article IX entitled *Board of Directors*, shall be amended in Section 2 by adding the words **Regional Directors** and deleting the words **twenty-four members** as indicated below.

ARTICLE IX

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Authority and Responsibility. The governing body of this Association shall be the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have supervision, control, and direction of the affairs of the Association, its committees, and its publications; shall determine its policies or changes therein; and shall actively prosecute its objectives.

Section 2. Composition and Election. The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, The President-Elect, the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President, the Secretary-Treasurer, the Immediate Past-President, the three next most recent Virginia Association of Counties past-presidents who currently hold office as elected Virginia county supervisors who may serve only for 3 more years after their term as immediate past president, and **Regional Directors** ~~twenty-four members~~ elected on a “one person - one vote” basis from compact and contiguous Regions into which the State shall be divided for purposes of representation. Such regional directors shall be selected at the annual meeting by the member counties located within the region which the director will represent. The Board of Directors shall designate at least one member of the Board to represent the Association on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Counties. Any county supervisor who serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Counties shall also serve as an ex-officio member of the VACo Board of Directors.

Section 3. Qualification. Only elected county supervisors representing Virginia counties in good standing shall be eligible to stand for election to the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Term. Regional Directors shall be elected for two-year staggered terms with approximately fifty percent of its members elected and installed at each Annual Business Meeting. No Regional Directors shall serve more than four full consecutive terms. Any tenure as an officer of the Association shall not be included as any part of the tenure of the aforementioned four consecutive terms. The Regional Directors elected and installed at the Annual Business Meeting shall assume office immediately after the close of such meeting. Such Directors shall hold office until their successors are elected and installed. No Director shall continue to hold office after formally leaving office as an elected Virginia county supervisor. Past presidents may serve in that capacity for only three more years after their service as Immediate Past President.

Section 5. Reapportionment. Beginning in 1991, and every ten years thereafter, regional representation on the Board of Directors shall be reapportioned.

Section 6. Meetings. The Board of Directors shall hold quarterly regular meetings at such time and such place as the Board may prescribe. Notice of all such meetings shall be given to the members not less than thirty days before the meeting is held. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President or at the request of any three Directors elected from separate Regions of the Association. Meetings of the Board of Directors may be held by conference call or other electronic means and votes may be taken.

Section 7. Quorum. At any meeting of the Board of Directors, the members present, and voting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Association. Any such business thus transacted shall be valid providing it is affirmatively passed by upon by a majority of those members present and voting.

Section 8. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors between Annual Business Meetings shall be filled by the Board. A Director so elected to fill a vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of the predecessor.

Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



Congratulations Franklin County!



Happy 20th Anniversary VACo Achievement Awards!

Great to see so many friends in this video. The VACo Achievement Awards truly does bring us together in pursuit of improving our communities.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the VACo Achievement Awards during the past 20 years.

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



Take Your Leadership Skills to the Next Level Through the NACo High Performance Leadership Academy

The [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#) is an online 12-week program that empowers frontline county government professionals with the most fundamental leadership skills to deliver results for counties and communities.

NACo and the Professional Development Academy created the interactive program in collaboration with the late General Colin Powell, Dr. Marshall Goldsmith, private sector executives, and local government officials—all to enable your existing and emerging county leaders to achieve their highest potentials.

More than 5,000 participants have enrolled from counties across the country since the launch of the program, with incredible feedback and results. In fact, the positive feedback and demand for this NACo program has been truly unprecedented: to the point that NACo now has four scheduled opportunities to attend each year.



5,000+ Participants to Date



1,600+ Counties & Associations



5.5 Million+ In Scholarship Savings

The Academy has proven relevant and non-disruptive for self-paced and collaborative learning. Participants have the opportunity to engage with peers from other counties and receive expert guidance from program facilitators throughout the 12 weeks of course materials, all with a flexible 4-5 hour per week time commitment.

The cost per enrollee begins at \$1,645. Additional discounts may apply. Contact us for more details for your state.

To enroll, visit the [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#) webpage at [NACo.org/Skills](#).

For questions and assistance in enrolling, please contact Treina Smith-Slatt at treinas@pdaleadership.com



"This 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

Top 10 Participating Counties & Associations:

Hennepin County, MN
Fairfield County, OH
Texas Association of Counties
Montgomery County, MD
Douglas County, NE
Riverside County, CA
Tulare County, CA
Maricopa County, AZ
Sutter County, CA
Hamilton County, OH



Premier Partner Spotlight

Blue Line Solutions



Blue Line Solutions

VACo 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.

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

Watch the [Blue Line Solutions Video Part 1](#)

Watch the [Blue Line Solutions Video Part 2](#)

Watch the [Blue Line Solutions Video Part 3](#)

Watch the [Blue Line Solutions Video Part 4](#)

#InvestinChildCareVA

We are proud to be a member of the Virginia Promise Partnership, a coalition of 30+ leading organizations committed to quality, affordable child care for all Virginia families.

Please watch and share this video to show your support for child care!

[#VaPromise](#)

[#ChildCareIsEssential](#)

[#MoreChildrenMoreChoices](#)

[#WeNeedChildCareVA](#)

[#InvestinChildCareVA](#)



[Virginia Promise in Action - Video Campaign Compilation - YouTube](#)

A graphic titled 'MEMBER SPOTLIGHT' in a yellow, hand-drawn font. In the top left corner is the Virginia Promise Partnership logo. On the left side is a portrait of Jeremy Bennett, a man in a dark suit and patterned tie. To the right of the portrait is a quote in a dark teal font: "Access to safe and affordable childcare is an essential component to allow local businesses and county economies to thrive." Below the quote, the name 'JEREMY BENNETT' is written in a bold, yellow, hand-drawn font, followed by his title 'DIRECTOR OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS' and 'VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES' in the same yellow font. In the bottom right corner is the Virginia Association of Counties logo, which includes a map of Virginia and the text 'VACo Virginia Association of Counties'.

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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 \$100 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).

[**LIBRARY ASSOCIATE TEEN**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 12

[**LIBRARY ASSOCIATE CHILDRENS SERVICES**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 12

[**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITITES**](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted December 12

[**ATHLECTIC PROGRAM COORDINATOR**](#) | City of Harrisonburg | Posted December 12

[**ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER**](#) | Gates County NC | Posted December 12

[**LIBRARY ASSISTANT BRANCH MANAGER**](#) | Montgomery County | Posted December 8

[**COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER & EVENTS COORDINATOR**](#) | Town of West Point | Posted December 8

[**INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER**](#) | City of Fredericksburg | Posted December 7

[**BRANCH CHIEF \(PUBLIC WORKS- ENVIRONMENTAL SERCVICES MANAGER\)**](#) | Fairfax County | Posted December 7

[**EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/DEPUTY CLERK TO THE BOARD**](#) | Madison County | Posted December 7

[**PLANNER OR SENIOR PLANNER**](#) | The Berkley Group | Posted December 6

[**SENIOR CAPITAL PROJECTS FIELD COORDINATOR**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted December 6

[**SENIOR BUILDING INSPECTOR**](#) | Prince George County | Posted December 6

[**POLICE OFFICER \(CERTIFIED\)**](#) | Prince George County | Posted December 6

[**ASSISTANT COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY**](#) | Louisa County | Posted December 6

[**ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER**](#) | Amelia County | Posted December 5

[**BUSINESS ANALYST**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted December 5

[**COOK - JUVENILE DETENTION HOME**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted December 5

[**SENIOR ENGINEER PT**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted December 5

[**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**](#) | Cumberland County | Posted December 5

[**BUSINESS AUDITOR PT**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 5

[**BUSINESS AUDITOR**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 5

[**ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST II - TAX SUPPORT PT**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 5

[**ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST II - TAX SUPPORT**](#) | Culpeper County | Posted December 5

[**CUSTODIAN SENIOR**](#) | City of Harrisonburg | Posted December 5

[**LIEUTENANT/SHIFT SUPERVISOR**](#) | Carroll County | Posted December 1

[**TOURISM MANAGER**](#) | Carroll County | Posted December 1

[**UTILITIES ENGINEER**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted December 1

[**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES WORKER**](#) | Montgomery County | Posted November 30

[**CLINICIAN \(CD\) SCHOOL BASE CSB CLINICIAN**](#) | Hanover County | Posted November 30

[**CLINICIAN \(CD\) CHILDREN'S TEAM \(MH/SUD\)**](#) | Hanover County | Posted November 30

[**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**](#) | Bland County | Posted November 30

[**SENIOR ENGINEER**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted November 30

[**SENIOR AUDITOR**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted November 30

[**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING**](#) | Powhatan County | Posted November 29

[**CHIEF OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**](#) | Essex County | Posted November 29

[**SENIOR SQL SERVER DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR**](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted November 29

[**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted November 29

[**DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE**](#) | Grayson County | Posted November 28

[**RECREATION ASSISTANT \(PT\)**](#) | Montgomery County | Posted November 28

[**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted November 28

[**GROUNDKEEPER**](#) | Montgomery County | Posted November 28

[**DEPUTY EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR**](#) | Wythe County | Posted November 28

[**DSS DIRECTOR**](#) | Durham County, NC | Posted November 28

FABRICATION & PRODUCTION SPECIALIST/SIGN INSTALLER

Chesterfield County | Posted November 23

FRONT LINE TRANSIT SUPERVISOR (NIGHT SHIFT)

City of Harrisonburg | Posted November 23

INSPECTOR I or II or COMBINATION INSPECTOR – FT

Gloucester County | Posted November 23

FINANCE DIRECTOR

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission | Posted November 21

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Amelia County | Posted November 21

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Amelia County | Posted November 21

ENTERPRISE ARCHITECT

Chesterfield County | Posted November 21

INTERN/PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE (SPRING SEMESTER)

Montgomery County | Posted November 17

PERMIT TECHNICIAN (I OR II)

City of Alexandria | Posted November 17

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE (CODE INSPECTOR I, II, OR III)

City of Alexandria | Posted November 17

CHIEF OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Northumberland County | Posted November 17

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

UTILITY WORKER

Prince George County | Posted November 17

PLANNING & ZONING TECHNICIAN

Prince George County | Posted November 17

FIRE MEDIC

Prince George County | Posted November 17

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM SPECIALIST

Prince George County | Posted November 17

DEPUTY COURT CLERK I

Prince George County | Posted November 17

COMMUNICATION'S OFFICER

Prince George County | Posted November 17

BUSINESS MANAGER – PARKS & RECREATION

Hanover County | Posted November 17

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER/TOWN CLERK

Town of Vinton | Posted November 17

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE WORKER

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

SENIOR SCHOOL BUS TECHNICIAN

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

SCHOOL BUS TECHNICIAN

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

LEAD DEVELOPER ADMINISTRATOR

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

EMERGENCY VEHICLE TECHNICIAN

Chesterfield County | Posted November 17

MAINTENANCE MECHANIC II

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

OPERATIONS MANAGER – ECC

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

DEPUTY CLERK I

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

PUBLIC SAFETY APPLICATIONS ANALYST

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

SENIOR APPLICATIONS DEVELOPER

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

ACCOUNTANT IV-TAX REVENUE

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

ACCOUNTANT IV

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

Albemarle County | Posted November 16

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS MANAGER

Botetourt County | Posted November 16

UTILITY SUPERVISOR

Hanover County | Posted November 16

CIVIL ENGINEER

Hanover County | Posted November 16

REVENUE SPECIALIST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

New Kent County | Posted November 16

ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

New Kent County | Posted November 16

TOWN MANAGER

Town of Buchanan | Posted November 16

SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN

Chesterfield County | Posted November 16

DEPUTY CLERK

Madison County | Posted November 16

HUMAN RESOURCE ANALYST

Hanover County | Posted November 16

CLERK TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

Fairfax County | Posted November 10

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

City of Staunton | Posted November 9

ZONING PERMITS MANAGER

Loudoun County | Posted November 9

UTILITY TECHNICIAN – CONSTRUCTION

Hanover County | Posted November 9

VALUE OF VACo



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VACo's lobbying efforts have helped stem the tide of unfunded mandates and have saved Counties millions of dollars every year.



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.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

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.

1207 East Main Street | Suite 300
 Richmond, VA 23219-3627
 Phone: 804.788.6652 | www.vaco.org

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