

Capitol Contact

Virginia General Assembly

Virginia Association of Counties • 1207 E. Main Street, Suite 300 • Richmond, VA 23219
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Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Support Priority Budget Amendments

VACo has worked with legislators and partner organizations to introduce a series of budget amendments to address county priorities this session. There are also a large number of other amendments under consideration that are helpful to local governments. The “money committees” will be reviewing member proposals in advance of reporting their respective budgets on February 18, so the time is now to advocate in support of these requests.

Restoration of K-12 hold-harmless for sales tax on food: The introduced budget does not include funding to maintain the state’s commitment to replace lost revenue for K-12 associated with elimination of the state’s portion of the sales and use tax on food, which took effect January 1, 2023. Language in the budget proposes to override the statutory requirement to provide an amount equal to the revenue that would have been distributed for this purpose had the state portion of the “grocery tax” not been eliminated. [Item 125 #11h \(McNamara\)](#) and [Item 125 #7s \(Boysko\)](#) reflect the net additional funding required to be provided to hold school divisions harmless (\$121.3 million in FY 2025 and \$121.8 million in FY 2026).

KEY POINTS

- At the time the state portion of the grocery tax was eliminated, there was a widespread understanding that the revenue replacement would be ongoing – an understanding incorporated into statute.
- Although the Administration has indicated that it understands that the expansion of the sales tax base that is also included in the budget would make up for the lost revenue, there is no guarantee that the General Assembly will agree to this policy action. The General Assembly needs to honor the state’s commitment and ensure

that school divisions do not lose revenue, regardless of the outcome of separate tax policy discussions.

Elimination of cap on recognition of support positions in the Standards of Quality: [Item 125 #14h \(Reid\)](#), [Item 125 #43h \(Simonds\)](#), [Item 125 #12s \(Carroll Foy\)](#), and [Item 125 #30s \(Favola\)](#) provide \$200.3 million in FY 2025 and \$202 million in FY 2026 to eliminate the cap on recognition of support positions in the Standards of Quality. [Item 125 #22s \(Carroll Foy\)](#) provides \$172.3 million in FY 2025 and \$173.8 million in FY 2026 to recognize two additional support positions per 1,000 students in the funding formula. [Item 125 #32s \(Deeds\)](#) provides \$312 million per year to fund several recommendations from JLARC to reverse funding reductions from the Great Recession, including the elimination of the support cap.

KEY POINTS

- Support positions are currently arbitrarily capped at a ratio that does not reflect the need for these positions or the local prevailing practice.
- Support staff (such as school psychologists, school social workers, and licensed health and behavioral positions, cafeteria workers, IT professionals, administrative personnel, custodial staff, etc.) provide vital support for the operations of school divisions.
- Substantial progress has been made over the last several years to recognize more positions in the funding formula, thereby allowing the state to share in the costs of funding these positions.

School capital funding: [Item 125 #17h \(Carr\)](#) and [Item 125 #9s \(Deeds\)](#) would provide \$120 million per year for the School Construction Grant Fund and Assistance Program.

KEY POINTS

- According to the Commission on School Construction and Modernization, more than half of K-12 school buildings in Virginia are more than 50 years old. The amount of funding needed to replace these buildings is estimated at \$25 billion.
- VACo strongly supports local self-help measures, but the state will need to continue to be a partner in meeting this substantial need.

Instructional assistants: [Item 125 #10h \(McQuinn\)](#) and [Item 125 #33s \(Locke\)](#) provide \$143.8 million in FY 2025 and \$146.2 million in FY 2026 for instructional assistants in schools accredited with conditions (in the House version) or not meeting

performance benchmarks for three or more school quality indicators (in the Senate version).

KEY POINTS

- These amendments are meant to provide additional state support for school divisions for positions that are currently funded with local dollars.
- This additional support is a recommendation of the 2022 JLARC study of the effect of the pandemic on public education. JLARC notes that the state provides funding for fewer than 3,000 instructional assistants, while school divisions employ approximately 21,000.

ARPA funding for early voting: Two helpful budget amendments would ensure that \$2.9 million in federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act that was appropriated in 2021 to support early voting will be spent for that purpose. [Item 486 #1h \(Carr\)](#), an amendment to the “caboose” bill, would reverse the proposed action in the introduced budget to revert these dollars, and [Item 77 #1s \(Deeds\)](#), an amendment to the biennium budget, would direct the Department of Elections to expend the funds by December 31, 2024.

KEY POINTS

- The recent expansion of early voting opportunities has been largely funded by local dollars. This federal funding will provide important assistance in supporting early voting, which will be particularly helpful with a Presidential election later this year.
- The 2021 budget language directed that this funding be used to “support local efforts to expand early voting to include the adoption of Sunday voting.” This language has been interpreted to award funds based on expansions to early voting beyond what was offered in November 2020. More flexible language may be needed to allow these dollars to support early voting in general, rather than using an election conducted during the pandemic as the baseline.

Staffing for sheriffs’ deputies: [Item 60 #7h \(Delaney\)](#)/[Item 65 #2h \(Delaney\)](#) and [Item 60 #4s \(Boysko\)](#) and [Item 60 #14s \(Diggs\)](#) would provide \$13.9 million in FY 2025 and \$16.7 million in FY 2026 to fund the statutorily-required staffing ratio of one law-enforcement deputy for each 1,500 people in a jurisdiction in which the sheriff bears primary law enforcement responsibilities.

KEY POINTS

- This staffing ratio has not been fully funded since FY 2008, leaving localities to fund positions necessary to support the operations of sheriffs’ offices. The

Compensation Board calculates that 327 deputy positions are required over the biennium to meet the 1:1,500 statutory ratio.

- Localities make significant local contributions toward public safety, including providing salary supplements and positions in Sheriffs' offices in addition to staffing funded by the Compensation Board, but the continued partnership of the state in support of this critical function of government is essential.

Local administrative costs for Percentage of Income Payment Program:

[Item 340 #1h \(Sullivan, HB 29\)](#) and [Item 324 #8h \(Sullivan, HB 30\)](#) and [Item 340 #1s \(Deeds, SB 29\)](#) and [Item 324 #3s \(Deeds, SB 30\)](#) clarify that nongeneral funds from the Percentage of Income Payment Program (PIPP) Fund will be used to reimburse local Departments of Social Services for the administration of the PIPP program, rather than requiring a local match for administrative costs for the program.

KEY POINTS

- PIPP is intended to reduce the energy burden of eligible participants by limiting electric bill payments to no more than 6 percent of annual household income if the household's heating source is anything other than electricity, and no more than 10 percent of annual household income on electricity costs if the household's primary heating source is electricity, and to reduce the amount of energy used by the household. Local departments of social services determine eligibility for the program.
- PIPP is funded by the collection of Universal Service Fees from all residential customers of Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power Company. State General Funds do not support the program.
- The statute creating PIPP specifies that the utilities may recoup their administrative costs. The Code does not address local administrative costs specifically, but contains general language providing that the PIPP Fund must be used for purposes of implementation and administration of the PIPP.
- The Department of Planning and Budget has determined that a local match is required for the administrative funding. This amendment will allow the local match to be covered by the PIPP Fund, similar to the way that costs for the utilities are covered.

Medicaid coverage for services within local and regional jails: [Item 288 #55h \(Coyner\)](#) and [Item 288 #5s \(Favola\)](#) direct the state Medicaid agency to pursue a waiver to cover behavioral health and substance use treatment for qualifying incarcerated individuals for the first 30 days of incarceration and the last 90 days prior to release. In 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued guidance on a new Medicaid Reentry Section 1115 Demonstration Opportunity that would allow federal funding to cover certain medical and behavioral health services for state prisoners and local and regional jail inmates while they are in a correctional facility. Currently,

Virginia Medicaid coverage for incarcerated individuals is limited to costs incurred during a hospital admission.

KEY POINTS

- Jails continue to serve large numbers of individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders, despite commendable efforts to develop a comprehensive continuum of community-based services, including crisis services.
- The most recent report on mental illness in jails from the State Compensation Board indicated that approximately 22 percent of the jail population were known or suspected to have mental illness. Of the individuals with mental illness in jails, approximately 55 percent also had a co-occurring substance use disorder. In addition, approximately 12 percent of individuals in jails without mental illness were reported to have substance use disorders.
- Additional flexibility to cover services provided to Medicaid-eligible individuals within the local correctional facilities would support continuity in care, particularly as individuals transition to jail and from jail back to the community.
- Individuals with substance use disorder are particularly vulnerable in the reentry process, as they are significantly more likely to die from an overdose in their first few weeks after release than the general population; consistent coverage would help to mitigate this risk.
- Avoiding gaps in health care coverage for individuals reentering the community has been demonstrated to assist in supporting a successful transition from incarceration by preventing recidivism.

Jail per diems: [Item 61 #2h \(Krizek\)](#) and [Item 61 #1s \(Peake\)](#) request \$8.7 million in FY 2025 and \$17.7 million in FY 2026 to restore the per diem rate for local-responsible inmates to the rates paid prior to the Great Recession. The first-year amount reflects a partial year due to the schedule of Compensation Board reimbursements.

KEY POINTS

- In the 2010 Session, per diem payments were reduced for local-responsible inmates (from \$8 to \$4) and restructured for state-responsible inmates (from \$8-14, depending on timing, to \$12). These rates were unchanged until FY 2023, when the General Assembly increased the per diem rate for state-responsible inmates to \$15. Subsequently, the General Assembly increased the local-responsible rate to \$5, as of December 1, 2023.
- These actions represent important progress in providing more resources to assist localities with the costs of operating jails, but there is more work to be done in strengthening the state's partnership with localities.
- In FY 2022, localities spent \$623.8 million in operating and capital costs for jails and jail farms (including debt service) and an additional \$15.9 million to house

inmates in other jurisdictions; the state contributed \$364.6 million through the Compensation Board. Other state funding (primarily grants) totaled \$3.2 million in FY 2022. Federal funding (direct grants and per diems) totaled \$55.6 million. In FY 2022, the Commonwealth's share of total expenditures was 34.2 percent; a decrease from FY 2021 (35.0 percent), while the average locality share of costs was 57.8 percent. In the past, these costs were more evenly shared; for example, in FY 2005, the state contributed approximately 45.6 percent and localities provided approximately 43 percent.

Substance use disorder treatment in jails: [Item 60 #12h \(Coyner\)](#)/[Item 394 #20h \(Coyner\)](#) and [Item 60 #13s \(Favola\)](#)/[Item 394 #8s \(Favola\)](#) move \$500,000 in FY 2025 opioid settlement funding for substance use disorder treatment in jails that was proposed in the introduced budget to be administered by the Compensation Board into the Virginia Opioid Use Reduction and Jail-Based Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Transition Fund (which is administered by the Department of Criminal Justice Services). The amendments also increase the funding amount to \$2 million per year.

KEY POINTS

- VACo supported the creation of the Virginia Opioid Use Reduction and Jail-Based Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Transition Fund, which was established (but not funded) in 2023.
- This fund is to be used for the planning or operation of substance use disorder treatment services and transition services, such as medically assisted treatment therapies, addiction recovery, and other services for persons with substance use disorder who are incarcerated in local and regional jails.

Aid to localities with police departments (“HB 599”): [Item 396 #2h \(McQuinn\)](#) and [Item 396 #1s \(Locke\)](#) provide additional resources (\$6.3 million in FY 2025 and \$13.5 million in FY 2026, for the House amendment, and \$6.3 million in FY 2025 and \$19.8 million in FY 2026 for the Senate amendment) for localities with police departments. By statute, the “HB 599” program is required to grow along with state general fund revenues.

KEY POINTS

- To be eligible for "599" funds, a locality must have a police department, and all of the department's law enforcement personnel must meet the state's minimum training requirements. Each locality must also certify that it will use the “599” funds to supplement, not supplant, local funds provided for public safety services.
- Localities that receive HB 599 funding contribute significant local funds to their local police departments. In FY 2023, localities that received HB 599 funds were

allocated \$210.8 million from this funding source and reported budgeting \$2.4 billion in local funds for this purpose.

Virginia Firefighting Personnel and Equipment Grant Program: [Item 406 #3h \(Sickles\)](#) and [Item 406 #3s \(Marsden\)](#) provide funding for a new grant program being considered in legislation this session. The program would make grants to localities for programs to hire new, additional full-time firefighters; convert part-time or volunteer firefighters to full-time firefighters; recruit and retain volunteer firefighters, or acquire firefighting and emergency medical services vehicles and equipment and modify facilities. The House amendment would provide \$50 million per year and the Senate amendment would provide \$25 million per year.

KEY POINTS

- Establishment of such a grant program was recommended by a working group directed by 2023 legislation and these resources would help localities meet critical public safety needs.

Broadband: [Item 103 #3h \(Bulova\)](#)/[Item 103 #8s \(Marsden\)](#) provide \$60 million per year to the Virginia Broadband Resiliency Initiative to supplement costs for make-ready work related to projects funded under the FY 2022 VATI program. It also dedicates 50 percent of non-deployment resources received from the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program to this initiative. [Item 103 #10h \(Krizek\)](#)/[Item 103 #13s \(Boysko\)](#) restores \$29.7 million in FY 2025 and \$49.7 million in FY 2026 to the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) and allows use of these funds for make ready costs, including pole replacements, in areas served by not-for-profit public utilities. These funds shall only be awarded to a unit of government that previously received VATI funding with a private sector internet service provider as a co-awardee and may be used to supplement the make ready costs in its previously awarded VATI projects.

KEY POINTS

- These amendments provide funds to the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) to be used for make-ready costs, including pole replacements, to accommodate the installation of broadband infrastructure, such as fiber optic cables.
- These funds will help to overcome bottlenecks in the delivery of high speed internet service to unserved and underserved areas in Virginia counties.

Additional amendments to support

Staffing for directors of Finance: [Item 62 #31h \(Callsen\)](#)/[Item 62 #1s \(Marsden\)](#) provide \$1.4 million in FY 2025 and \$1.5 million in FY 2026 to restore funding for unfunded positions in the offices of local finance directors (recent General Assembly actions provided funding for positions in the offices of Treasurers and Commissioners of the Revenue).

Forest Sustainability Fund: [Item 96 #4h \(Lopez\)](#)/[Item 96 #1s \(Perry\)](#) provide \$5 million per year to the Forest Sustainability Fund

Aid to local public libraries: [Item 227 #1h \(Carr\)](#)/[Item 227 #2h \(Morefield\)](#)/[Item 227 #1s \(Locke\)](#) provide \$2.5 million each year from the general fund to increase state aid to local public libraries. This funding represents the third installment of a four-year plan to fully fund the state library aid formula by fiscal year 2026.

Local departments of social services training academy: [Item 324 #1h \(Coyner\)](#)/[Item 324 #2s \(Favola\)](#) provide \$844,524 the first year and \$2.2 million the second year from the general fund (as well as matching nongeneral funds) for the Department of Social Services to implement a cohort-based "training academy" model.

Child Welfare Stipend Program: [Item 329 #2h \(Coyner\)](#)/[Item 329 #3s \(Favola\)](#) expand Virginia's Title IV-E Child Welfare Stipend Program to include individuals preparing to work in Child Protective Services (CPS) slots as well as several additional child welfare position slots.

Replacement of public benefits IT system: [Item 334 #2h \(Carr\)](#)/[Item 334 #1s \(Aird\)](#) provide funding to replace the Commonwealth's eligibility and enrollment system (currently known as the Virginia Case Management System or VaCMS) for public benefit programs, including Medicaid, TANF, SNAP, Child Care Subsidy, and energy assistance.

Catawba Hospital: [Item C-48 #2h \(Rasoul\)](#) provides \$2 million in FY 2025 for Catawba Hospital renovations.

Stormwater Local Assistance Fund: [Item 365 #2h \(Bulova\)](#) and [Item 365 #6s \(Marsden\)](#) provide \$35 million each year from the general fund to meet the estimated fiscal year 2024-2026 biennium financial need for state matching grants through the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF). [Item 365 #7s \(Marsden\)](#) would provide \$50 million per year for SLAF.

Wastewater improvements: [Item 365 #5s \(Marsden\)](#) provides \$200.0 million GF each year for the Commonwealth's portion of municipal wastewater facility projects that are now under or entering active construction to meet the Commonwealth's obligations under the U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay TMDL and Virginia Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan. [Item C-53.50 #1s \(Marsden\)](#) and [Item C-53.50 #1h \(Bulova\)](#) authorize \$400.0 million in VPBA tax-supported bonds for the Commonwealth's

portion of municipal wastewater facility projects that are now under or entering active construction to meet the Commonwealth's obligations under the U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay TMDL and Virginia Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan.

WMATA: [Item 433 #1s \(Marsden\)](#), [Item 433 #1h \(Sickles\)](#), and [Item 433 #2h \(Krizek\)](#) provide general fund support of \$65.0 million the first year and \$65.0 million the second year for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority during the implementation of a corrective action plan to provide for rightsizing of the Authority's total costs, operating costs, headcount, and automation. [Item 433 #2s \(Marsden\)](#) is a language amendment that would provide an exemption from the three percent cap on increases to the state share of WMATA's budget due to recent increases in inflation, provided that planning and reporting requirements are met.

I-81: [Item 438 #12h](#) and [Item 438 #6s \(Obenshain\)](#) provide \$295.5 million GF the first year and \$365.5 million GF the second year (\$660.5 million total) for improvements and safety enhancements identified in the I-81 Corridor Improvement plan.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

School Construction Financing Bills Pass Senate

On January 29, the full Senate passed [SB 14 \(McPike\)](#) on a bipartisan vote of 27-13. As previously [reported](#), this bill would permit any county or city to impose an additional local sales and use tax of up to 1 percent, if initiated by a resolution of the local governing body and approved by voters at a local referendum. The revenues of such a local tax would be used solely for capital projects for the construction or renovation of schools. Any tax imposed shall expire when the costs for capital projects are to be repaid and shall not be more than 20 years after the date of the resolution passed.

Currently, this authority is limited to the qualifying localities of Charlotte, Gloucester, Halifax, Henry, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Patrick, and Pittsylvania Counties and the City of Danville. [SB 146 \(Mulchi\)](#), which expands this authority to Prince Edward County, also passed the Senate on January 26 on a bipartisan vote of 27-11. VACo supports both bills and has testified in committee to that effect. Thank you to everyone who responded to our Action Alert.

These bills allow Counties to exercise a local voter approved option to meet their community needs. They are NOT an automatic tax increase. The House Companions of SB 14, [HB 600 \(Kilgore\)](#) and [HB 805 \(Rasoul\)](#) have been referred to the House Finance Committee, but have yet been assigned to a subcommittee. Additional standalone legislation for Prince Edward County ([HB 60 \(Wright\)](#)) and Stafford County ([HB 193 \(Cole\)](#)) are also supported by VACo and have been referred to the same committee.

ACTION REQUIRED – Call your Delegates who serve on the [House Finance Committee](#) now to urge them to support HB 600, HB 805, HB 60, and HB 193. Please review this [video](#) and [one-pager](#) for information on the desperate need for more school construction financing options.

KEY POINTS

- Funding for school construction and renovation is one of the biggest concerns and responsibilities of local governments in the Commonwealth and has been almost solely a local responsibility for decades. The condition of the facilities in which children are educated has a direct impact on their ability to learn.
- Many localities face significant challenges in raising sufficient funds to undertake these projects. These challenges include over-reliance on real property taxes to generate revenue, which can have vastly different yields depending on the locality and disproportionately burden a subset of taxpayers within a jurisdiction. This raises concerns over equity and diversity of revenues.
- According to the [Commission on School Construction and Modernization](#), more than half of K-12 school buildings in Virginia are more than 50 years old. The amount of funding needed to replace these buildings is estimated to cost \$24.8 billion.
- This legislation was a unanimous recommendation by the Commission on School Construction and Modernization.
- This bill is about parity for local governments, giving all counties the same authority currently given to nine localities.
- This bill is **NOT** a tax increase. It would merely create a local option and another tool in the toolbox of local government, which would only be enacted by local referendum.

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

FOIA Bills Update

VACo opposed [SB 324 \(Roem\)](#), which is an unfunded mandate bill and would allow every citizen of the Commonwealth, and representative of newspapers and magazines with circulation in the Commonwealth, and media in or into the Commonwealth, to make four free two-hour FOIA requests per 31 consecutive days. Then after the 8 free hours per person, per month, the highest rate that a locality could charge is \$33/hour unless they successfully petition the court for a higher fee.

VACo opposed this bill in Senate General laws and Technology Committee and was told by the Chair of the Committee to engage in negotiations with the patron over the next week. A meeting was held with a number of stakeholders which included VACo, VML, the Attorney Generals' office, the Sheriff's Association, the Coalition for Open Government, and the Press Association.

After the meeting, the patron offered a substitute at the January 24 Senate Local Government Committee Meeting, which passed unanimously. The substitute included provisions for one free hour per calendar year for each person, a cap of \$40 per hour and some language providing an exception for legal review by public bodies and requires the collection of data by public bodies for any request that takes over 30 minutes. In addition, the bill expires on July 1, 2025, and incorporates a provision for a study of FOIA fees to be completed by November 30, 2024. This bill is headed to the Senate Finance Committee next.

VACo supports [SB 244 \(McPike\)](#) and [HB 816 \(Cherry\)](#), which seek to validate otherwise lawful actions taken by a public body using electronic communication means occurring from March 20, 2020, until July 1, 2021, with respect to FOIA if the body provided public notice, public access, and public comment commensurate with the requirements of existing FOIA provisions regarding electronic and closed meetings.

VACo supports [SB 36 \(Locke\)](#) and [HB 818 \(Cherry\)](#), which amend the definition of "meeting" as it relates to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to clarify that a gathering of two or more members of a public body is not a meeting if there is no discussion or transaction of any public business as defined in the bill, by the members of the public body and that certain educational trainings are not meetings subject to FOIA. The bill is in response to the decision of the Supreme Court of Virginia in *Gloss v. Wheeler* (2023) and is a recommendation of the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council.

[HB 671 \(Frietas\)](#) adds to the definition of "public body" any organization, corporation, or agency that received more than 50 percent of its annual revenue, within any of the three preceding years, from public funds. VACo opposed this bill which was struck from the docket.

VACo supports [HB 894 \(Bennett-Parker\)](#) and [SB 734 \(Marsden\)](#), which provide that except for local governing bodies, local school boards, planning commissions, architectural review boards, zoning appeals boards, and boards with the authority to

deny, revoke, or suspend a professional or occupational license, any public body may hold all-virtual public meetings 2 times per year or no more than 50% of the meeting whichever is greater, provided that they have an electronic meeting policy in place. Previously, the limit was 25%.

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

Public Notice and Transparency Bills of Interest

VACo opposes [HB 710 \(Webert\)](#) and [SB 549 \(Russet Perry\)](#), which provide that any travel expense of a local official, as defined in the bill, to be paid from public funds, that is anticipated to exceed \$2,500 shall be subject to approval in advance by a vote of the local governing body in an open meeting. The bill specifies that if the final travel expense exceeds the previously approved amount, such expense shall be reported to the governing body and noted in the meeting agenda or meeting minutes within 60 days of the determination. It also requires a local official to repay to the locality any travel expense that the governing body determines such local official misappropriated within 10 days and to furnish a copy of any receipts for such expense at the next public meeting. The bill allows a locality to adopt more stringent standards for local officials' travel expenses.

VACo supports [HB 443 \(Williams\)](#), [HB 1488 \(Henson\)](#), and [SB 413 \(Head\)](#), which standardize the frequency with which and length of time in which notices of certain meetings, hearings, and other intended actions of localities must be published. The bills also standardizes descriptive information in such notices related to (a) proposing, amending, or repealing ordinances; (b) local budget adoption; and (c) zoning ordinances and planning-related actions.

[HB 69 \(Bulova\)](#) requires the local governing body or elected school board making an interim appointment to fill a vacancy in the membership of such body or board to hold a public meeting at least seven days prior to making such appointment. The bill specifies that at such meeting, the body or board shall announce the names of all persons being proposed for the interim appointment and shall make available for inspection each person's resume and any other materials required by the body or board.

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

Bill to Make Residential a “By-Right” Use in Commercial and Industrial Districts is carried over to 2025

At the request of the patron [SB 430 \(Van Valkenburg\)](#) was “carried over” for the year in the Senate Local Government Committee. The legislation proposes to make “*any type of residential use that is permitted in a locality*” a permitted use on any parcel, except for those with a zoning classification of agriculture, conservation, or a different residential use. The bill also prohibits a locality from requiring a special exception, special use, or conditional use permit for such use. **VACo opposed the legislation.**

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

Advocate for your locality at the VACo Local Government Day

In Partnership with VML, VAPDC and the Virginia Rural Center

Thursday, February 1, 2024

[Richmond Marriott 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

- **9am** | VACo Board of Directors Meeting

- **10am** | Registration
- **1130am** | Lunch
- **Noon** | Local Government Day
- **Afternoon** | Visit the Capitol to speak with legislators
- **530pm** | Reception

For information on how to reach your representatives, see the [Virginia House of Delegates](#) and the [Senate of Virginia](#) member websites. Find information about VACo's positions in the [2024 Legislative Program](#). We will distribute the Local Government Day Bulletin before the event.

Be a part of the legislative process at the 2024 General Assembly Session.

Register for the event at [VACo Local Government Day Online](#) or fax the [Registration Form](#) to 804.788.0083. Also, here's how you can book a room at the [Hilton Richmond Downtown](#) or the [Hampton Inn & Suites Richmond](#).

VACo Contact: [Valerie Russell](#)

Key Dates for the 2024 General Assembly

As part of its organizational work on the first day of the 2024 session, the General Assembly adopted a procedural resolution on January 10 that sets out important dates and deadlines for the 2024 legislative session.

- **January 10:** General Assembly convened at noon. Bills that were “prefiled” were due to be submitted by 10:00 a.m. Bills affecting the Virginia Retirement System, or creating or continuing a study, were required to be filed by adjournment of the floor session.
- **January 12:** Deadline for submission of member budget amendments.
- **January 19:** Deadline for all bills or joint resolutions to be filed (by 3 p.m.), with some exceptions, such as legislation introduced at the request of the Governor or legislation allowed to be introduced after deadlines by unanimous consent.
- **February 13:** “Crossover” deadline for each chamber to complete work on legislation originating in that chamber (except for the budget bill).

- **February 18:** “Budget Sunday,” the deadline for the “money committees” to report their respective budgets by midnight.
- **February 22:** Deadline for each chamber to complete consideration of its budget bill.
- **February 28:** Deadline for each chamber to complete consideration of the other chamber’s budget bill and revenue bills.
- **March 4:** Deadline for committee consideration of legislation, by midnight.
- **March 9:** Scheduled adjournment *sine die*.
- **April 17:** Reconvened session for consideration of Governor’s amendments and vetoes.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)