

Capitol Contact

Virginia General Assembly

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Thursday, February 27, 2025

Transportation Services Mandate Bills Pass the General Assembly

[SB 919 \(Salim\)](#) / [HB 2619 \(Helmer\)](#), as substituted, would require that the governing body or transportation district commission of any county that contracts with a private company to provide transportation services must:

1. Require such company to provide any employee of such company providing such services compensation and benefits that are, at a minimum, equivalent to the compensation and benefits provided to a public employee;
2. Provide transportation services through such company's own employees; and
3. If such transportation district commission or county subsequently elects to provide its own system of public transportation, the governing body must adopt an ordinance or resolution providing for collective bargaining and ensure all employees of such private company are offered employment with such subsequent public transportation system without loss of compensation or benefits.

KEY POINTS

- The bills would mandate collective bargaining within select counties, interfere with the ability for a county to make employment and services delivery decisions, and may have costly unintended consequences (as shown by this [fiscal impact statement](#)).

- The bills include language that could be potentially harmful to counties such as how “transportation services” are constituted. Generally, this means those who operate transit systems but could very likely include mechanics of such systems.
- The bills would almost certainly raise the operating costs of transportation delivery systems at a time when the budgets for these services are very tight as they are.

SB 919 and HB 2619 passed the House by a vote 50-47 and the Senate by a vote of 21-19. **VACo opposes SB 919 and HB 2619.**

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)

Towing Rates Bill Passes General Assembly

[SB 1332 \(Marsden\)](#) and [HB 2214 \(McQuinn\)](#), as introduced, would repeal the authority for localities to establish trespass towing fees, with exceptions, and require the State Corporation Commission to establish such fees statewide and adjust such fees annually. VACo opposed SB 1332 and HB 2214 as introduced because these bills stripped localities of little authority they currently have to set rates regarding trespass towing.

VACo worked closely with the patrons and stakeholders to amend the bills to make them more favorable for localities. [As previously reported](#), HB 2214 would die early on in a subcommittee hearing. [SB 1332, as substituted](#), would allow towing and recovery operators to continue to charge a \$20 fuel surcharge fee for each trespass tow, which is a concept continued in these bills from a [2023 law](#). The bill would raise the statewide maximum rate for a trespass tow from \$150 to \$210. The bill further states that no towing and recovery operator is authorized to charge a fuel surcharge fee (as previously mentioned) in any locality in which the governing body of such locality has an ordinance setting limits on fees charged for trespass towing violations. The bills give localities, if they choose to, until December 31, 2025, to conduct a review considering an adjustment of trespass towing fees or establishing such ordinance. Nothing in the bill requires the governing body of a locality to raise any previously set limits or establish any limits.

SB 1332 passed the Senate by a vote of [36-4](#) and the House by a vote of [53-43](#). The bill now heads to Governor Youngkin.

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)

General Assembly Approves Amendments to Biennium Budget

The General Assembly approved a package of revisions to the state’s 2024-2026 biennium budget on Saturday, February 22, prior to adjourning the 2025 session. The amendments contained in the [conference report](#) represent an agreement negotiated between the House and Senate on revisions to the Governor’s proposed budget, which was submitted in December. Both the House and Senate approved the budget conference report by wide margins of 81-18 and 37-3, respectively. The Governor now has 30 days from the date of adjournment to act on the budget bill, along with all other bills presented to him in the last week of the legislative session (bills sent to the Governor when there are more than seven days remaining in the session must be acted upon within a seven-day window). The legislature will then review the Governor’s amendments and vetoes at the reconvened session on April 2.

Following is an overview of items of interest to local governments in the budget conference report. Additional detail provided by the state Compensation Board is available at [this link](#), and tables provided by “money committee” staff with estimated distributions to school divisions as proposed in the conference report may be found at [this link](#). More details on school division distributions will be posted on the Virginia Department of Education’s website at [this link](#).

[CLICK HERE FOR VACo’s FULL REPORT](#)

VACo Contacts: [VACo Legislative Team](#)

Energy Landscape of Virginia Episode 8 | Virginia General Assembly Update – Legislation on Data Centers and Utility-Scale Solar



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Virginia General Assembly Update – Legislation on Data Centers and Utility-Scale Solar. Joe Lerch and VACo Executive Director Dean Lynch provide an update on the status of legislation relating to Data Centers and Utility-Scale Solar.

Where to find out more about topics covered in this episode

- [JLARC “Data Centers in Virginia” Report](#)

- [**HB 1601/SB 1449**](#) – Siting of Data Centers; Site Assessment
- [**House Budget Amendment**](#) – Extends the sunset date for sales tax exemption for data centers from 2035 to 2050
- [**Senate Budget Amendment**](#) – Requires data center operators to meet energy efficiency standards to qualify for sales tax exemption
- [**Capitol Contact ALERT: VACo Opposes Bill Mandating Targets for Utility-Scale Solar in Comprehensive Plans**](#)
- [**Bills to Mandate Counties put State Targets for Utility-Scale Solar in Comprehensive Plans Fail**](#)

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