

# Capitol Contact

## Virginia General Assembly

Virginia Association of Counties • 1207 E. Main Street, Suite 300 • Richmond, VA 23219  
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Thursday, January 15, 2026

## 2026 General Assembly Session is Now Underway

The 2026 General Assembly convened on January 14 and began hearing legislation shortly after completing the traditional first-day organizational business. Newly elected legislators took their seats, and both the House and the Senate adopted a procedural resolution setting out a schedule for the conduct of business this session (please see [this article](#) for key dates) and announced updated committee assignments.

The General Assembly moved swiftly to consider four Constitutional amendments that had previously passed in 2025. The House Privileges and Elections Committee reported the House version of the amendments, which were subsequently passed by the full House; the Senate acted similarly on its version of the amendments, and it is expected that both chambers will complete work on the amendments by the end of the week. These amendments address reproductive rights, restoration of voting rights for individuals convicted of felonies, marriage, and temporary provisions for mid-decade redistricting. It is anticipated that the redistricting amendment could be placed before voters in April.

In the evening, Governor Youngkin delivered his final State of the Commonwealth address to a joint assembly of the legislature. In his remarks, the Governor expressed gratitude to the legislature, members of the Cabinet and the Administration, and fellow Virginians. He touted successes from his tenure, including economic development gains and investments in teacher compensation, public safety, substance use disorder prevention and treatment, behavioral health, child care, maternal health, and water quality. He exhorted legislators to maintain pro-business policies, cautioning against making changes to Virginia's right-to-work laws and encouraging policymakers to ensure reliable, affordable energy supplies.

Bills continue to be filed in advance of the January 23 bill filing deadline, with more than 1600 bills submitted as of this morning, and committees are beginning to hold

initial meetings to receive briefings and to begin hearing legislation. Budget amendments are due tomorrow. Governor-Elect Spanberger, Lieutenant Governor-Elect Hashmi, and Attorney General-Elect Jones will take office on Saturday.

**VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)**

## **VACo Supports Priority School Construction Financing Bills**

VACo supports two priority bills, [HB 334 \(Rasoul\)](#) / [SB 66 \(McPike\)](#), which is legislation that once again seeks to grant additional revenue raising authority if approved by local referendum for school capital needs. 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.

HB 334 / SB 1307 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, including service of debt for existing projects. As currently drafted, there are slight differences in the debt services provisions of each bill that VACo is aware of and engaged on.

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.

Similar legislation from last year was [vetoed](#) by Governor Youngkin.

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

# **Key Dates for 2026 General Assembly Session**

The General Assembly convenes today for a scheduled 60-day session.

Key dates for the 2026 session, as approved by the Joint Rules Committee in the procedural resolution setting out the schedule for the session, are as follows:

- **Wednesday, January 14:** General Assembly convenes; pre-filed bills must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. (after the prefiling deadline, legislators are limited to five additional bills or resolutions). Last day to submit bills creating or continuing a study or to submit bills dealing with the Virginia Retirement System. Governor Youngkin will address a joint session of the General Assembly at 7 p.m.
- **Friday, January 16:** Deadline to submit budget amendments.
- **Saturday, January 17:** Inauguration of Governor-Elect Spanberger, Lieutenant Governor-Elect Hashmi, and Attorney General-Elect Jones.
- **Monday, January 19:** Joint session of the General Assembly for remarks by Governor Spanberger.
- **Friday, January 23:** Last day to submit legislation, other than bills submitted by unanimous consent or bills requested by the Governor.
- **Tuesday, February 17:** Last day for bills to be acted upon in their chambers of origin, other than the budget bills. Bills must “cross over” to the opposite chamber by Wednesday, February 18.
- **Sunday, February 22:** “Budget Sunday” deadline for House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations committees to report their respective budget proposals.
- **Thursday, February 26:** Deadline for each chamber to act on its respective budget proposal.
- **Wednesday, March 4:** Deadline for each chamber to act on budget and revenue bills from the other chamber and appoint conferees as necessary.
- **Monday, March 9:** Deadline for committee action on all legislation by midnight.
- **Saturday, March 14:** Scheduled adjournment *sine die*.

- **Wednesday, April 22:** Reconvened session to consider Governor's actions on bills and budget items.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

## Advocate for Your Community at the VACo Local Government Day

Thursday, February 5, 2026 | [Omni Richmond Hotel](#)



## REGISTER TODAY

It's a day for us. Localities. 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.

**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026

**Reserve a Room:** [Omni Richmond Hotel Room Link](#)

**Who should attend:** ALL local elected officials and staff are encouraged to register and attend.

### **Registration Fee**

**\$100** | Includes Day Briefing (Noon – 2pm) and Reception (430pm – 630pm)

## **Agenda**

- **9am** | VACo Board of Directors Meeting
- **10am** | Registration
- **1130am** | Lunch
- **Noon** | VACo Local Government Day
- **Afternoon** | Visit the Capitol to speak with legislators
- **430pm-630pm** | VACo Legislative Reception | Omni Richmond Hotel

Please email Valerie Russell at [vrussell@vaco.org](mailto:vrussell@vaco.org) with questions.

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 [\*\*2026 Legislative Program\*\*](#). We will distribute the Local Government Day Bulletin before the event.

**VACo Contact:** [\*\*Valerie Russell\*\*](#)