



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

2018 GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

A. Finance

1. Local Taxing Authority: Retain all current local taxing authority, including business license, and machinery and tools tax administration, real estate and rate making authority. Any modifications to local taxing authority must include an alternative revenue authority with reliable, sustainable revenue sources.
2. Equal Taxing Authority: Grant counties the same taxing authority as cities to provide a level playing field among localities.
3. Transient Occupancy Tax Dedicated to Travel and Tourism Promotion: Request that the General Assembly renew, without a sunset, the .25% transient occupancy tax on hotel rooms that funds travel and tourism promotion in Arlington.
4. Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Program: Change state code to allow Virginia to join the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax program to collect state and local sales taxes on interstate mail order and internet sales to Virginia customers. This effort would enable the Commonwealth to receive sales and use taxes from over 1,000 out of state vendors that have agreed to participate voluntarily in the program and would remove the current competitive advantage remote sellers have over local Virginia businesses.
5. On-Line Travel Companies/Modifying State Sales and Local Transient Occupancy Taxes: Ensure the collection and remission by on-line travel companies (OTCs) of all state sales and local Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) levies associated with on-line travel sales.

B. Transportation

1. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA): Given WMATA's importance to the health of the economy in our region and the state, urge the General Assembly and newly elected governor to provide sufficient, sustainable and dedicated funding sources to provide for WMATA's long-term capital needs. Ensure state funding meets WMATA's capital budget request to prevent significant cuts in service.
2. Regional Gas Tax Revenue Floor: Establish the same floor on the regional gas tax that is currently imposed on the statewide gas tax through HB 2313 (2013). In the future this would protect Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads from the 40% revenue drop in tax collections since 2013. These funds are desperately needed for transit.
3. Transit Fiscal Cliff: Support those elements of the Transportation Capital Revenue Advisory Board report that ensure no decrease in transit capital funding on a statewide level.
4. Revenue Sharing: Encourage the Virginia Department of Transportation to continue funding its Revenue Sharing program at the current rate instead of reducing it over the next six years. This popular matching fund has enabled Arlington and many other localities to fund transportation projects that otherwise would not have been constructed.
5. Drivers Licenses for Non-Citizens: Encourage the General Assembly to pass legislation that would permit the Department of Motor Vehicles to develop and issue permits and licenses for the sole purpose of operating a motor vehicle to individuals who cannot provide proof of authorized presence in the United States, but otherwise meet DMV's qualifications.
6. Renaming Jefferson Davis Highway: Explore/pursue all avenues to request the renaming of the section of Jefferson Davis Highway that runs through Arlington County, including action by the General Assembly or the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

C. Education

1. Funding: Fully fund K-12 education, including the Standards of Quality and the Cost of Competing factor.
2. Support personnel: Eliminate the artificial funding cap placed on support positions, and restore the inflation factor for non-personal support costs.
3. Poverty Add-on: Support a poverty add-on that would provide additional funding based on the number of students who meet that criteria

D. General Government

1. Short-term Rental Properties (aka On-line Short-term lodging): Monitor all related legislation to ensure the preservation of local authority to regulate short-term rentals, audit tax collections and enforce zoning laws.
2. Unfunded Mandates: Oppose any mandates from the Commonwealth that are not fully funded, including additional administrative burdens on local governments.
3. Nonpartisan Redistricting: Support depoliticizing the redrawing of Congressional and state legislative district boundaries with an approach that advocates for fairness, transparency and accountability, keeps the residents' interests in mind, and encourages healthy debate and participation by the public in the process.
4. Procurement: Consider potential modifications to the Virginia Public Procurement Act that would provide localities with more tools to select contractors for capital projects based on experience and prior performance.

E. Land Use and Housing

1. Land Use Policies: Support authority of local governments to plan, zone, and enforce land use regulations, without restricting local zoning authority or the zoning process.
2. Housing Trust Fund: Support a permanent source of funds for the State Housing Trust Fund.

F. Civil Rights Initiatives

1. Education: Ensure all high school graduates, including undocumented students who meet residency and other reasonable requirements, have access to Virginia colleges and technical schools at in-state tuition rates.
2. Immigration: Oppose any state mandates to localities requiring local law enforcement officers to evaluate the immigration status of individuals encountered during lawful stops or other routine police activities.
3. Voting Access: Expand voting access by enhancing accessibility for people who may need assistance with registering and/or casting a ballot. Enact no excuse absentee voting.
4. Human Trafficking: Support measures to combat human trafficking, including enhanced training of law enforcement personnel.

G. Public Safety/Emergencies

1. License Plate Readers: Support the policy, developed by the Northern Virginia Chiefs of Police, to retain data from public safety License Plate Readers in order to assist with criminal investigations, Amber alerts, wanted violent felons, stolen vehicles and terrorist watch lists.
2. Jail Diversion Efforts: Support jail diversion efforts for mental health and substance abusing individuals who become involved with the criminal justice system.
3. Civil Unrest: Monitor the actions of the Governor's Task Force on Public Safety Preparedness and Response to Civil Unrest for recommendations relating to weapons, public demonstrations and hate speech.
4. Next Generation 911: Support the statewide transition to Next Generation 911 using state funds that will be dedicated to the 911 Services Board; this should not be an unfunded mandate for which localities become accountable.

H. Energy and the Environment

1. Permanent Power Purchase Agreements: Replace current pilot program for third-party power purchase agreements with a permanent provision that allows PPAs to all customer classes without limits on system size or program capacity.
2. Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard: Shift to a mandatory renewable portfolio standard (RPS) to boost the market for renewable power in Virginia to keep pace with neighboring states.
3. Net Metering: Allow ratepayer subscriptions (e.g. “community solar”) for electricity from solar-produced power for all rate payers, including community net metering. Any legislation permitting community solar subscriptions should not foreclose other Power Purchase Agreement options: Community solar must not be limited to utility-sponsored programs.
4. Energy Efficiency and Recurrent Flooding: Support forthcoming DEQ rule to regulate CO2 emissions from the electric power sector in Virginia through a market-based emission mechanism, such as participation in the existing Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Support use of proceeds from the market for carbon reduction (1) incentivize greater energy efficiency and renewable energy investments, and (2) address sea level rise and recurrent flooding in vulnerable areas, especially the Hampton Roads area.
5. Study opportunity for a Green Bank initiative in Virginia: Direct the Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME) to study the feasibility, costs, and benefits of establishing a “Green Bank” of public and private funds to serve as a catalyst for innovation and implementation of advanced energy efficiency practices, renewable energy deployment, and other environmental programming throughout the Commonwealth.
6. Preserving Trees: Support legislation to provide greater incentives for tree canopy preservation in the context of compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and related environmental laws.

7. Recycling: Encourage the use of reusable shopping bags by allowing a locality to impose a small fee for the use of paper and plastic bags, with exceptions for specific items such as certain foods, dry cleaning, alcoholic beverages, newspapers and prescription drugs.

I. Human Services

1. Medicaid Expansion: Support full Medicaid expansion in Virginia, which will create jobs as well as increase federal funding to cover a critical group of working, poor Virginians. Support continued efforts to increase program economy, efficiency and effectiveness while enhancing the quality of care. Encourage the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services to build upon its rigorous efforts to maintain program integrity and to ensure taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and for their intended purpose.
2. Same Day Access for Mental Health Services: Support increased funding for the implementation of Same Day Access – the first of 10 steps in STEP-VA - which is now mandated for all Community Services Boards in the Commonwealth by the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services.
3. Psychiatric Beds: Due to a critical shortage of local beds and challenges relating to accessing out-of-region beds, promulgate rules to increase the number of psychiatric beds in Northern Virginia, and the rest of the state, either by approving additional beds, or redesignating existing hospital beds as mental health beds.
4. Long-Term Care Workforce: Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates to provide sick days, a living wage, and on-going training to long-term care workers which in turn will provide a better quality of life for Virginia's older adults and people with disabilities.
5. Nursing Home and Assisted Living Care Ombudsman: Appropriate funding for the Northern Virginia region to meet the state standard of one full time Ombudsman for every 2,000 nursing home and assisted living beds.
6. Child Care Center Quality: Work with the appropriate state agencies to improve the quality of both child care centers and home-based day care centers by increasing technical assistance and trainings related to health and safety, including emergency preparation and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes (important for safety!).
7. Women's Health Care and Services: Support unrestricted access to the full range of reproductive health services.

"Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important."

— Arlington County Board Vision Statement