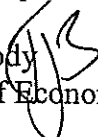


**ACTION ITEM  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**DATE:** December 15, 2009

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Tim Baroody   
Director of Economic Development and Legislative Affairs  
**ISSUE:** Endorse Legislative Initiatives Proposed by VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia Localities

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**BUDGET IMPACT:** N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:** (3)

- [1] Background Report
  - [2] Legislative Issues
  - [ ]
- [3] Reso/Ord/Proc # R09-421
  - [ ] Reso/Ord/Proc #
  - [ ] Reso/Ord/Proc #

**REVIEW:** [X] County Administrator's Office



- [X] **Consent Agenda**
- [ ] **Discussion Item**
- [ ] **New Business**
- [ ] **Other Business**
- [ ] **Presentation**
- [ ] **Public Hearing**
- [ ] **Unfinished Business**

**PRESENTATION BY:** N/A

**ELECTION DISTRICT:** N/A

**BACKGROUND REPORT**

Stafford County participates in the joint legislative efforts of the VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia localities. Representatives from the localities met during the annual Virginia Association of Counties conference last month to finalize legislative initiatives for the 2010 General Assembly (Attachment 2). Each governing body has been requested to endorse the legislative initiatives prior to the General Assembly Session.

Proposed Resolution R09-421 endorses the legislative initiatives adopted by the VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia Localities, dated November 18, 2009. Staff recommends adoption of the proposed resolution.

# VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia 2010 Legislative Issues

November 18, 2009 FINAL



## PRIORITY ISSUES

### STATE FUNDING FOR SHARED/LOCALLY ADMINISTERED PROGRAMS

The Region calls upon the General Assembly and the Governor to maintain state funding that supports the shared state-local services that are administered locally but whose funding is a shared responsibility. These services range from K-12 education to social services, from public safety to public health, from regional planning district commissions to local extension programs. Even in periods of public revenue downturns, the state requires localities to provide their share and therefore cannot back away from its funding responsibilities unless it reduces expectations regarding the level of service to be available to the public.

As the budget reduction discussions take place over the coming months restructuring of services will certainly be a consideration. The Region will generally be supportive of reforms if they are based on a full understanding of the long-term impacts of such decisions. These decisions must be made only after assessing the fiscal and tax impacts at all levels of government. To enact a change that lessens the tax impact for the state while forcing localities to shoulder a greater burden merely shifts who is sending the bill to taxpayers. As the General Assembly considers the broad range of options to balance the state budget the Region believes the time has come to offer greater flexibility to localities by restructuring requirements that currently increase costs including the costs associated with the Comprehensive Services Act.

### WATER QUALITY AND THE BAY TMDL

The Commonwealth requires that the maximum nutrient loading of the discharge from public wastewater treatment plants to be capped at the treatment plant's limits on December 31, 2010. The inability of the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement Partners to meet the goals established, especially in the area of Non-Point Source Pollution, will lead to the EPA's assumption of more strict oversight. This change will likely lead to 2-year milestones for each Bay State and its localities. Without aggressive state involvement in meeting these milestones Virginia localities will be under the threat of limited economic growth. The Region urges the Governor and the General Assembly to be actively involved in identifying and resourcing the solutions. The Rappahannock River Basin Commission has spent many years studying local, state and federal policies on water quality, especially Non-Point Source Pollution. The Commission has stood for several principles that the Region feels would be valuable in navigating the difficult and costly choices ahead:

- ✓ There is little value in pointing fingers, we are all a part of the problem and we all must be a part of the solution; agriculture, development, industry, government and individuals all have a stake and a responsibility in saving the Chesapeake Bay.
- ✓ Policy and programmatic decisions must be based on sound data and science; we cannot afford to waste resources on unproven and unsuccessful strategies.



# VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia 2010 Legislative Issues

November 18, 2009 FINAL



- ✓ We must be willing to look for innovative solutions especially ones that encourage or allow people and businesses to make good water quality choices; government can facilitate innovation through existing and new incentives as well as revising regulations that discourage creative private sector solutions.

## TRANSPORTATION

The Region recognizes that the current economic situation makes it very difficult to continue to make progress on addressing our severe transportation needs. It is however, essential that efforts continue. Providing more transportation choices for all Virginians including those who drive, use mass transit, walk or bicycle must remain a high priority. Transportation planning and decision-making must promote the principles of travel safety, livable communities, economic vitality, environmental stewardship and efficient use of public resources. Sound decision-making must continue to recognize the linkage between land-use and transportation decisions to achieve cost-effectiveness and to retain quality of life.

### Specific areas of concern –

- A. Road Funding:
  1. Address the annual shortfall of road maintenance funding. Until this situation is rectified the virtual elimination capital funding for secondary roads and urban streets will not be rectified.
  2. Adjustments to the formula for distribution of road construction funds statewide to reflect the disproportionate burden on fast growing areas of the state.
  3. Adequate funding for the Revenue Sharing program, a program that allows state funding to leverage local and private investment.
  4. Adjustment to the annual road maintenance allocation so that funding to localities in this fast-growing region is comparable with localities in the Northern Virginia Construction District.
- B. Transit Funding - Continued support for past improvements in the state share of transit funding.
- C. Additional financial support for transportation planning, especially rural planning which only receives state and local/regional funding. In this part of the Commonwealth these localities will cross the urbanized threshold with the next or following census and growth pressures will cause them to be far "behind the curve" in addressing transportation planning issues once they gain access to MPO-associated resources.
- D. Continue to promote the "transportation-land use" relationship that was a key element of the Transportation Act of 2007 through greater authority for localities to develop multi-modal consistent development and the concepts of livable and walkable communities.

# VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia 2010 Legislative Issues

November 18, 2009 FINAL



## THE MANAGEMENT OF GROWTH AND THE COSTS

The Region supports the efforts of the Athey/Vogel Study Committee to identify improvements to the land-use changes enacted as part of the Transportation Act of 2007 (HB3202). The current discussions include consideration of appropriate authority to allow the coordinated provision of public facilities with minimum impact on taxpayers for by-right zoning so that the supply of public infrastructure can match the demand created by new development. Coordination of residential and commercial development with availability of transportation, schools, water, sewer and other services is critical to livable and affordable communities. While all parties are engaged in these discussions, efforts to legislate local land-use authority changes that will “short-circuit” this deliberative process should be resisted.

## OTHER ISSUES

### EDUCATION FUNDING

The Region recognizes that the economic situation makes it extremely difficult to balance the needs of K-12 education with the realities of reduced revenues. The Region reminds the General Assembly that this problem is as real for localities as it is for the Commonwealth. As the Governor and the Assembly struggle to set appropriate and equitable priorities for the use of limited resources we offer the following concerns, challenges that existed when the economy was healthy and challenges that are no less important today.

- The Region seeks help in addressing the escalating cost of school construction over the past 20 years and identification of strategies to effectively control costs while meeting the educational demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Fair share funding for public education by the Commonwealth that at least includes the full funding of the Standards of Quality.
- Recognition by the Commonwealth that the current policy of not acknowledging localities that employ land use value taxation in the calculation of the Composite Index (versus the current practice of using full assessed value) is inconsistent with its land preservation goals and policies;
- Establishment of an appeals process for local governments to challenge the computation of their composite index;
- Recognition that reestablishing full funding for the literary loan fund must be a goal;
- Continued implementation of Cost-of-Competing funding for the localities of the region.

### UNFUNDED MANDATES

The Region strongly urges the General Assembly refrain from enacting new mandates or expanding existing mandates unless a (non-local) source of funding is identified and provided. Additionally, the relaxation of mandates or increased local flexibility in how to meet them, must accompany any state funding reductions in a mandated programs.

# VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia 2010 Legislative Issues

November 18, 2009 FINAL



## **SPECIFIC AREAS OF CONCERN**

1. Funding of the State's share of the true cost of the Standards of Quality.
2. Teacher salary mandates.
3. Increases in the local share for road construction.
4. State and federal environmental priorities.
5. Full funding for judges' secretaries.
6. Fringe benefits funding for constitutional officers and their staff.

## **ANNEXATION AGREEMENTS**

The Region supports legislation which would limit the authority of the Commission on Local Government to invalidate a negotiated settlement reached between two localities.

## **INDOOR PLUMBING**

The Region strongly urges the General Assembly to continue to support cost effective ways to provide indoor plumbing to the dwellings in Virginia that lack these most basic sanitary facilities.

## **HB599 FUNDING**

The Region considers that full funding of the HB599 program for localities with police departments to be an essential public safety policy.

## **RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER & THE CHESAPEAKE BAY**

The Region strongly supports the work of the Rappahannock River Basin Commission and continuation of the state portion of the shared state-local funding program. The Region also strongly urges the General Assembly to assure adequate funding for the Water Quality Improvement Fund in order to successfully implement the Rappahannock Tributary Strategy. The Region also strongly supports efforts by the Commonwealth to work with the basin's localities to plan for the future water supply needs for the basin.

The Regional Legislative Program Point of Contact is Eldon James, Legislative Liaison, 540-907-2008; fax 804-644-5640; [Eldon@EldonJamesAssociates.com](mailto:Eldon@EldonJamesAssociates.com) [www.EldonJamesAssociates.com](http://www.EldonJamesAssociates.com)

PROPOSED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF STAFFORD  
STAFFORD, VIRGINIA

RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors (the Board) held in the Board Chambers, Stafford County Administration Center, Stafford, Virginia, on the 15th day of December, 2009:

MEMBERS:

George H. Schwartz, Chairman  
Harry E. Crisp II, Vice Chairman  
M. S. "Joe" Brito  
Mark Dudenhefer  
Paul V. Milde III  
Cord A. Sterling  
Robert "Bob" Woodson

VOTE:

On motion of , seconded by , which carried by a vote of , the following was adopted:

A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES  
OF THE VACo REGION 7 – NORTH CENTRAL LOCALITIES FOR  
THE 2010 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WHEREAS, the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Region 7 and North Central Virginia localities have jointly proposed legislative initiatives for the 2010 General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the priority initiatives address issues critical to our region; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to express its support for these initiatives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 15th day of December, 2009, that the Board be and hereby does express its support for the legislative initiatives proposed for the 2010 General Assembly by the VACo Region 7 – North Central Virginia localities.