

2013 RRPDC Legislative Agenda

Representatives of the governing bodies of the nine localities of the Richmond Region – collaborating as the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission – adopted the following legislative priorities and position statements for 2013.

- *Adopted on November 8, 2012; and*
- *amended with additions on December 13, 2012.*

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

This Federal Legislative Priority is the specific action the RRPDC is asking of the legislative and executive branches of the United States of America. The RRPDC is prepared to support efforts to accomplish these actions.

1 **Historic School Rehabilitation**

- 2 Amend the tax code to allow rehabilitation expenditures for public school buildings to
3 qualify for the federal rehabilitation tax credit.

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

These State Legislative Priorities are the specific actions the RRPDC is asking of the executive and legislative branches of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The RRPDC is prepared to support efforts to accomplish these actions.

4 **Commonwealth Transportation Board**

- 5 Update the definition of “urban” and “rural” as used for appointments to the
6 Commonwealth Transportation Board (see Va. Code Ann. § 33.1-2).

7 **Transportation Funding**

- 8 Establish, during the 2013 General Assembly Session, a comprehensive solution to
9 transportation funding that includes a dedicated funding stream to include an indexed
10 gas tax, and addresses efficiencies in the administration of transportation programs by
11 the Commonwealth of Virginia.

FEDERAL POSITION STATEMENTS

These Federal Legislative Position Statements express support for, or opposition to, various issues that impact the Richmond Region. These position statements are intended to provide broader guidance on issues that may arise. The RRPDC will monitor these issue and make a case-by-case determination of the appropriate manner to respond.

1 **Local Authority**

2 **Federal Mandate for Collective Bargaining**

3 We **OPPOSE** federal legislation that would require
4 localities to provide collective bargaining
5 rights for public safety employees.

6 **Environment**

7 **Resource Protection**

8 We **SUPPORT** the restoration of the Chesapeake
9 Bay through specific, quantifiable goals.

10 We **SUPPORT** water quality regulations and
11 programs that address the impacts of both
12 point sources of pollution and non-point
13 sources of pollution.

14 **Governing Locally**

15 **Unfunded Mandates**

16 We **OPPOSE** federal legislation and regulations
17 that impose mandates upon local government
18 without providing adequate funding to
19 implement required programs.

20 **Transportation**

21 **Passenger Rail Funding**

22 We **SUPPORT** the Commonwealth's efforts to
23 obtain federal funding for capital
24 improvement projects that will enhance
25 passenger rail service in the Richmond Region.

STATE POSITION STATEMENTS

These State Legislative Position Statements express support for, or opposition to, various issues that impact the Richmond Region. These position statements are intended to provide broader guidance on issues that may arise. The RRPDC will monitor these issue and make a case-by-case determination of the appropriate manner to respond

26 **Government Reform**

27 **Regional Cooperation**

28 We **SUPPORT** reform measures and financial
29 incentives that encourage regional
30 cooperation and encourage state and local
31 officials to review the forthcoming JLARC
32 study on the costs and benefits of regional
33 collaboration.

34 We **SUPPORT** the Commonwealth's efforts to
35 develop programs and policies that utilize
36 Virginia's planning district commissions in
37 order to reduce costs through economies of
38 scale and increase collaborative
39 implementation with localities.

1 We **SUPPORT** increased state funding of Virginia's
 2 planning district commissions based upon a
 3 formula jointly agreed upon by the Virginia
 4 Association of Planning District Commissions,
 5 the Virginia Municipal League, and the Virginia
 6 Association of Counties.

7 Governing Locally

8 We **SUPPORT** local government autonomy to
 9 make policy decisions on local issues,
 10 particularly concerning land-use regulation
 11 and local revenue measures.

12 We **SUPPORT** full funding of all state and federal
 13 mandates on local governments.

14 We **SUPPORT** a study by the Joint Legislative Audit
 15 and Review Commission to examine the
 16 impact of the Dillon Rule on local
 17 government's ability to efficiently address
 18 local issues such as public safety, land use, and
 19 revenue.

40 Transportation

41 CTB Representation

42 We **SUPPORT** increasing the Richmond Region's
 43 voice on the Commonwealth Transportation
 44 Board in a manner that is commensurate with
 45 the region's percentage of Virginia's
 46 population.

47 Regionally-Allocated Transportation Funding

48 We **SUPPORT** efforts of local jurisdictions,
 49 metropolitan planning organizations, the
 50 Commonwealth Transportation Board, the
 51 Virginia Department of Transportation, and
 52 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public
 53 Transportation to allocate, obligate, and
 54 expend regionally-allocated transportation
 55 funds in a timely manner, so long as any
 56 deadlines for allocation, obligation, and
 57 expenditure:

- 58 • are developed in cooperation with the
- 59 Virginia Association of Metropolitan
- 60 Planning Organizations;

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Local Taxes and Funding Mechanisms

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22 We **OPPOSE** piecemeal attempts to eliminate
 23 existing local funding sources, such as the
 24 Machinery and Tools Tax or Business,
 25 Professional and Occupational License Taxes,
 26 and urge that any elimination of single sources
 27 of local funding be replaced by realistic and
 28 implementable tools that enable localities to
 generate equal or greater funds.

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30 We **SUPPORT** comprehensive evaluation of local
 tax authority that:

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- 32 • enables localities to generate sufficient
- 33 revenue to provide services and comply
- 34 with state and federal mandates;
- 35 • provides counties, cities, and towns with
- 36 equal taxing authority;
- 37 • updates taxing mechanisms to reflect
- 38 modern business practices; and
- 39 • reduces local dependence on real estate
- and personal property taxes.

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- 62 • realistically balance the timely delivery of
- 63 projects with adequate time to complete
- 64 the phases of transportation projects;
- 65 • reflect federal deadlines;
- 66 • do not penalize metropolitan planning
- 67 organizations for delays that are outside
- 68 their control; and
- 69 • enable metropolitan planning
- 70 organizations to appeal any rescission of
- funds on a case-by-case.

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Public Transit

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73 We **SUPPORT** increased state funding for public
 transit service operations.

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75 We **SUPPORT** measures that enhance the
 Richmond Region's transit system.

1 **Passenger Rail**

2 We **SUPPORT** the extension of high-speed rail
3 from Washington, DC to Richmond followed
4 by further extensions from Richmond to
5 Raleigh, North Carolina and from Richmond to
6 Norfolk along the Southeast High Speed Rail
7 corridor.

8 We **SUPPORT** enhancements to intercity
9 passenger rail service connecting through
10 Richmond, especially those that increase
11 reliability, on-time performance, and speeds
12 of travel.

13 We **SUPPORT** the establishment of a permanent
14 source of funding for the Intercity Passenger
15 Rail Operating and Capital Fund.

16 We **SUPPORT** allowing federal funds to serve as
17 matching funds for passenger rail projects
18 seeking funds from the Commonwealth's Rail
19 Enhancement Fund (see Va. Code Ann. § 33.1-
20 221.1:1.1). Currently, the code only allows
21 matching contributions from private sources,
22 local government sources, or a combination of
23 both.

24 **Land Use**

25 **Growth Management Tools**

26 We **SUPPORT** strengthening local government
27 authority to manage future growth in the
28 Region.

29 We **SUPPORT** local growth management tools
30 that:

- 31 • can be tailored to the needs of the local
32 jurisdiction;
- 33 • are flexible to the specific needs of
34 development locations;
- 35 • are simple to implement and easy to
36 understand;
- 37 • transparently allow all parties of interest
38 to freely and fairly negotiate agreements;
39 and
- 40 • only require development to contribute its
41 fair share for infrastructure improvement.

42 We **SUPPORT** cash proffers or impact fees as
43 optional tools for local governments to
44 require developers to pay for public
45 infrastructure improvements required to
46 accommodate development.

47 We **SUPPORT** local government authority to apply
48 zoning laws and comprehensive plans to all
49 private residences and private businesses.

50 **Public Infrastructure Investment**

51 We **SUPPORT** growth that maximizes public
52 infrastructure investment, including infill
53 development and redevelopment of areas
54 where existing infrastructure is under-utilized.

55 We **SUPPORT** local government authority to adopt
56 adequate public facilities ordinances.

57 **Environment**

58 **Resource Protection**

59 We **SUPPORT** the protection and enhancement of
60 Virginia's natural resources through
61 environmental regulations and programs that:

- 62 • are connected with adequate funding to
63 implement mandated programs;
- 64 • are based on well-researched scientific
65 foundations;

- 66 • have demonstrated an ability to achieve
67 meaningful improvements to the
68 environment;
- 69 • offer short and long-term solutions;
- 70 • fully consider unintended consequences;
- 71 • consider the size, location, or type of
72 development being regulated instead of
73 imposing a generalized standard;

- 1 • can be implemented in a reasonable time
- 2 period and in a cost-effective manner; and
- 3 • embrace the planning authority of local
- 4 government and allow flexibility for local
- 5 government to determine the best
- 6 approach to meet program goals.

7 We **OPPOSE** water quality regulations and
8 programs that:

- 9 • strip the authority of urbanized localities
- 10 to maintain and manage wastewater
- 11 treatment plants;
- 12 • discourage proper planning by stripping
- 13 the unused, yet permitted, allocation of
- 14 discharge capacity of wastewater
- 15 treatment plants; or

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- solely regulate permitted point sources of
pollution without addressing the impact of
non-point sources of pollution.

Watershed Improvement

We **SUPPORT** increasing state funding of local
water-quality improvement programs in order
to empower localities to achieve the water-
quality improvements mandated by Virginia’s
Watershed Implementation Plan and the
Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load
regulations.

27 **Education**

28 **Education Funding**

29 We **SUPPORT** a state budget that meets the
30 Commonwealth’s obligations to localities for
31 K-12 education funding.

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We **SUPPORT** an assessment of the equity of the
local composite index formula for funding K-
12 education.

35 **Public Safety**

36 **Public Safety Funding**

37 We **SUPPORT** full funding of the Commonwealth’s
38 commitment for local law enforcement
39 assistance, including Compensation Board
40 funding for Sheriff’s offices and HB 599
41 funding for police departments.

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Emergency Management

We **SUPPORT** restructuring the program for state
regulation of dams to focus on those dams
which involve the potential for significant risk
to public safety or property.

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