

Albemarle County's Proposed 2016 Legislative Priorities

Growth Management, Land Use and Transportation

Transportation Funding - Support legislation to 1) establish a new dedicated funding source for a Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transit Authority; 2) establish stable and consistent state revenues for Virginia's long-term transportation infrastructure needs; 3) direct funding efforts to expand transportation choices and engage in multimodal transportation planning; and 4) fund maintenance of rural road systems. The County also strongly opposes any legislation or regulations that would require the transfer of responsibility to counties for construction, maintenance or operation of new and existing secondary roads.

Biosolids - Support legislation enabling localities, as part of their zoning ordinances, to designate and/or reasonably restrict the land application of biosolids to specific areas within the locality based on criteria related to the public safety and welfare of its citizens and the environment. In addition, support legislation regarding land application of biosolids that protect the environment, public health and safety.

Local Authority - Support legislation to strengthen localities' authority by enabling them to utilize adequate public facilities ordinances, and encourage the General Assembly to refrain from passing legislation that preempts or circumvents existing local authority to regulate land use.

Impact Fee Authority - Support impact fee legislation that allows for 1) effective implementation through simple locally-based formulae and reasonable administrative requirements; 2) does not cap or limit localities' impact fee updates; and 3) does not diminish the existing proffer system.

Conservation Easements - Support legislation that augments local efforts in natural resource protection through 1) continued funding of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) for locally established and funded Purchase of Development Rights programs (e.g. ACE Program in Albemarle County); 2) continued provision of matching funds to localities for their Purchase of Development Rights programs through the Office of Farmland Preservation; 3) retaining provisions in transient occupancy tax legislation so that funds can continue to be used to protect open-space and resources of historical, cultural, ecological and scenic value that attract tourism; and 4) increased incentives for citizens to create conservation easements.

Scenic Protection and Tourist Enhancement - Support enabling legislation for Albemarle County to provide for a scenic protection and tourist enhancement overlay district. Such legislation would provide a method to ensure full consideration of visual resources and scenic areas when the County or state make land use decisions in designated areas.

Health and Human Services

Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) - Request that the legislature assist localities' implementation of CSA in a consistent, financially stable manner by: 1) fully funding the state pool for CSA with allocations based on realistic anticipated levels of need and a cap on local expenditures for serving a child through CSA, and 2) encouraging the state to be proactive in making service providers available and to support local and regional efforts to address areas of cost sharing among localities by procuring services through group negotiation.

Child Care for Low Income Working Families - Request the legislature provide additional funds to local governments to assist low-income working families with childcare costs. Funding helps working-class parents pay for supervised day care facilities and supports efforts for families to become self-sufficient.

Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) - Request the legislature increase funds for LDSS to match all available federal dollars to assist LDSS staffing needs in order to meet state mandated services and workloads.

Local Government Administration and Finance

Taxation - Support legislation granting counties taxing powers equal to those granted cities and towns, without decreasing, limiting or changing city and town taxing authority.

School Bus Video-Monitoring Systems - Request the General Assembly to amend Virginia Code Section § 45.2-844 to allow for service of summonses by mail for violations of passing stopped school buses recorded by school bus video monitoring systems similar to the authority in Virginia Code Section § 15.2-968.1, for the service of summonses for running red lights recorded by a traffic signal enforcement program.

Virginia Retirement System - The County supports restoration of funds to the Virginia Retirement System to maintain the long-term solvency of the plan without further devolving the funding responsibility to localities.

June Primary Elections – Support legislation to move the annual date for June primary elections in the Commonwealth from the second Tuesday in June to the third Tuesday in June to avoid conflicts between local election administration and local school systems, where schools serve as voting precinct polling places.

Composite Index - Support legislation to amend the Composite Index Funding Formula by re-defining the local true value of real property component of the formula to include the land use taxation value of real property rather than the fair market assessed value for those properties that have qualified and are being taxed under a land use value taxation program

Community College Capital Costs - Request the state to fund 100% of public funding required for community college costs. Currently, localities are required to fund a portion of operating and capital costs.

Public Defender funding - Request the state to adequately fund compensation for public defenders in Commonwealth jurisdictions.

Full Funding of State Mandates - Request full funding for state mandates in all areas of local government including the Standards of Quality (SOQs) and other mandates imposed on local school divisions, positions approved by the Compensation Board, costs related to jails and juvenile detention centers and human services positions.

Drug Court Funding - Request full funding for the Drug Court Program, which provides effective treatment and intensive supervision to drug offenders through the Circuit Courts of several Virginia localities.