

TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

The Prince William Chamber of Commerce believes the top priority of the Prince William area delegation to the Virginia General Assembly must be to *promote economic development in the Prince William region and guarantee a fiscally stable, pro-business environment that is conducive to creating jobs and wealth.*

The Prince William Chamber of Commerce urges our legislators to support and initiate action to advance the following objectives:

- Secure significant, new, dedicated, reliable transportation revenues drawing on a balanced, equitable distribution of funding sources to address Northern Virginia's transportation infrastructure construction needs, eliminate the ongoing diversion of construction funding to maintenance, and oppose devolution of responsibility to local governments without associated revenue streams.
- Seek to reform and/or eliminate BPOL.
- Seek to reform and/or eliminate the M&T Tax.
- Eliminate differential taxing authority (among the last remaining vestiges of 2007 H.B. 3202) for Prince William County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.
- Pass legislation to allow voter approval of a Constitutional amendment to prevent including fees and taxes in appropriations legislation.

ISSUE AREAS

TRANSPORTATION

Virginia's transportation system is in crisis. Funding to ensure efficient movement of goods, services and people via the transportation system is a core state responsibility and the General Assembly must work to secure significant, new, dedicated, reliable transportation revenues drawing on a balanced, equitable distribution of funding sources to erase the Commonwealth's crippling transportation deficit, which threatens Virginia's long-term prosperity and competitiveness.

- » The Chamber supports bonds, public-private partnerships, general funds, allocation formula changes, tolls, telecommuting, the new Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Bank and other mechanisms, but believe they are inadequate individually and collectively to address well documented construction and maintenance needs.
- » The Chamber supports creating a "legislative lock box" to prevent transportation dollars from being used for non-transportation purposes as well as measures to prevent the diversion of transportation construction funds to support maintenance.
- » The Chamber believes fiscal and political realities dictate that the Commonwealth's transportation needs cannot be met without new, reliable revenues in the form of dedicated taxes and/or fees.
- » The Chamber believes that the state should shoulder a larger share of public transit capital and operating costs, since prevailing levels of state participation are far lower than the legislative cap. The lower state participation rate imposes an added burden on public transit systems' local government sponsors to sustain and improve services.

- » The Chamber supports taking necessary measures to incorporate telework into the state's transportation strategy including policies designed to take people off roads.

The Chamber urges our legislators to pursue these transportation priorities in the 2012 legislative session:

Interstate Projects:

- » Reconstruct the I-66/Route 15 interchange to include improvements and a grade-separated interchange at Route 15.
- » Widen/upgrade I-66 between the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge and Route 15.
- » Proceed with the Environmental Impact Study and designate right-of-way for the Western and Eastern Transportation Corridors.
- » Complete the I-95 HOT lanes public-private partnership project and work to restart the I-395 portion.
- » Work with Maryland to identify sites and advance construction of new Potomac River crossings.

Primary Highways:

- » Assign a high construction priority, protect right-of-way and advance the construction of the Bi-County Parkway (Route 234 Bypass from I-66 to Route 50 to improve connectivity with Dulles Airport).
- » Assign a high construction priority, protect right-of-way and advance the construction of the comprehensive plan alignment of the Tri-County Parkway to improve north-south travel and relieve Route 28 congestion.
- » Fund the unfunded portions of the Route 1 widening and re-construction project and phase II construction of the Route 1/Route 123 interchange.
- » Widen Route 28 from Manassas south to Route 29 in Fauquier County.
- » Extend I-95 HOV lanes from Route 234 into Stafford County.
- » Construct a grade separated interchange at Route 15 and Route 55.

Transit:

- » Extend VRE from Manassas to Gainesville and Haymarket.

ENERGY

Diverse options are necessary to ensure Virginia's future energy needs are met affordably. The Chamber supports:

- » Reliance on a broad range of dependable energy sources.
- » Incentives to encourage the research, development and implementation of new sources.
- » Incentives to promote conservation, new technologies and the increased efficiency of existing technologies.
- » Streamlining current regulations that slow the use of new energy sources and technologies.
- » Consideration of offshore drilling, both to increase energy supplies and provide possible new state revenue sources.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Northern Virginia higher education institutions and high-quality Prince William public schools educate tomorrow's workforce and attract quality businesses. The Chamber supports:

- » Full funding for George Mason University's Prince William campus and Northern Virginia Community College's two Prince William campuses
- » Full funding of K-12 state mandates to maintain the region's competitive economy
- » George Mason University's continued growth as a top tier research institution.
- » Northern Virginia Community College's professional and technical programs which provide essential workforce training, that will strengthen our area as it experiences expansion due to the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) and further business growth.



EDUCATION, Continued

Higher Education Initiatives:

- » \$30 million to fund construction of the Workforce Development Center at the Woodbridge Campus of Northern Virginia Community College. (Project approved and under design and now needs to receive capital construction funding.)
- » \$1.75 million for renovation design of the Colgan and Howsman Halls at the Manassas Campus of Northern Virginia Community College and for the design of other college renovation projects in Northern Virginia. (This work will add more classrooms and labs while reducing the HVAC and maintenance costs of dated facilities.)
- » \$3.2 million for detailed planning for construction of the Biomedical Life Sciences Building to be located on the Prince William Campus of George Mason University. (This project as planned includes life sciences focused academic and instructional space and technology enhanced library and study space. This building also supports the expansion of the medical education program, the Governors School, as well as existing programs in Applied Information Technology and Recreation Health and Tourism. The project will also include lab spaces for life science instructional and research needs.)

K-12 Education Initiatives:

- » Full state funding of its mandates for K-12 public schools, particularly the Standards of Quality (SOQs) and those for Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- » Greater emphasis on promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education for K-12 public schools.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT

- » The Chamber supports reforming or eliminating business taxes including the Machinery & Tools tax and the BPOL tax.
- » The Chamber opposes including fees and taxes in appropriations legislation and supports measures that would eliminate this practice.
- » The Chamber supports state policy that requires uniform real estate tax rates for residential and commercial properties; without additional exemptions or deferrals.
- » Recognizing that the private sector is an efficient provider of services, the Chamber believes government should always consider competitively outsourcing to the private sector to accomplish internal operations and service citizens.
- » The Chamber opposes any new unfunded mandates on localities by the Commonwealth.
- » The Chamber supports incentives for mixed-use development while opposing impact fees, adequate public facility ordinances or levels of service legislation.
- » The Chamber opposes diminution of the Dillon Rule.
- » The Chamber supports the Commonwealth's Right to Work statutes.
- » The Chamber opposes any expansion of the Commonwealth's unemployment insurance system.
- » The Chamber supports a Constitutional amendment to allow a Governor to serve two consecutive terms.
- » The Chamber believes the grant of regulatory authority to state agencies should not place undue burden on business and any resulting regulations should be fully reviewed for their impact on business prior to implementation.



Legislative Agenda

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*Proudly serving the businesses of
Prince William County and the Cities of
Manassas and Manassas Park as Northern
Virginia's largest chamber of commerce.*

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State Legislative Agenda