

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ROANOKE COUNTY, VIRGINIA, HELD AT THE ROANOKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2016

**RESOLUTION 102516-1 ADOPTING A LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE 2017 SESSION OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND PETITIONING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO FAVORABLY CONSIDER THE TOPICS AND ISSUES ADDRESSED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Roanoke County, Virginia, appointed a Legislative Committee on July 19, 2016, to develop and review local and statewide issues that affect the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of Roanoke County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desires to adopt this resolution as its Legislative Agenda for promotion by the local delegation, its legislative liaisons and County staff for the 2017 Virginia General Assembly.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Roanoke County, Virginia, that the following legislative initiatives are submitted for the 2017 session of the Virginia General Assembly for its favorable consideration and adoption to be designated as its "2017 Legislative Agenda."

**Economic Development**

To prosper in a dynamic, global economy that rewards knowledge, innovation, and creativity, Roanoke County supports strategic investments that will enhance the region's competitive advantages, promote regional and public/private sector collaboration, attract and nurture human capital, and ensure development of a technically skilled workforce.

**Roanoke County Seeks:**

- Funding for the GO Virginia initiative to facilitate regional collaboration on priority economic development projects;

- Commitment of resources for the Virginia Research Investment Fund and Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute to promote research, development, and commercialization of product and processes;
- Implementation of the New Economy Workforce Credentials Act;
- Funding to promote and expand Career and Technical education in the Roanoke region;
- Additional resources for existing economic development programs including:
  - The Commonwealth Opportunity Fund
  - Virginia Business Ready Sites Program
  - Virginia Jobs Investment Program (VJIP)

### **Transportation**

A robust, multi-modal transportation network is critical for regional economic development and enhancing quality of life. Federal and state transportation funding sources remain inadequate to meet the region's current and future mobility needs.

#### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Efforts to fund regionally significant transportation projects, including Interstate 81, Interstate 73, and Route 460;
- Maintenance of robust Revenue Sharing Program and greater flexibility in determining project eligibility;
- Ensuring mechanisms exist to recover expenses associated with the repair of structural damage to public roads and bridges caused by the hauling of heavy equipment for the benefit of private enterprise.

## **Budget**

The Commonwealth of Virginia and Roanoke County share responsibility for ensuring sound financial practices that permit the delivery of critical public services. Roanoke County supports efforts to stabilize the Commonwealth's fiscal condition and minimize budget shortfalls that frequently result in unanticipated loss of revenue for local government operations.

### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Full state funding for K-12 education to sustain a learning environment that promotes student achievement and attracts exceptional instructional personnel.

### **Roanoke County Opposes:**

- Reinstitution of "local aid to the Commonwealth" or other actions that would shift funding responsibilities for State government to local government budgets through reductions in anticipated revenue and/or the imposition of additional unfunded mandates.

## **Government Transparency**

In 2015, Roanoke County passed an ordinance to require additional employees in positions of trust, beyond those mandated by statute, to file a financial disclosure form.

### **Roanoke County Seeks:**

- Flexibility in determining that employees in certain positions of trust, beyond those already mandated by statute, may file short-form disclosure under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3118 instead of the long-form disclosure as mandated under Section 2.2-3317.

### **Roanoke County Library Board**

Roanoke County, working in conjunction with a Library Advisory Board, has effectively operated a Library system for decades. A recent opinion of the Attorney General of the Commonwealth advises that the County must, per State statute, employ a Managing Library Board and delegate operational oversight of the system to that Board.

#### **Roanoke County Seeks:**

- A legislative exclusion from the requirement that management and control of its public library system be vested in a “Managing” library board.

### **Behavioral Health**

During the 2016 session, an Administration initiative to close Catawba Hospital, a state facility that provides geriatric mental health services and short-term acute care, was removed from the adopted biennial budget. As the General Assembly continues its deliberations on the appropriate balance between community-based and institutional care and weighs options for filling the gaps in accessible services, measuring outcomes, and enhancing accountability, the critical role that Catawba Hospital plays in the region’s continuum of care should be recognized and carefully evaluated.

#### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Dialogue between the Joint Subcommittee Studying Mental Health Services in the Commonwealth in the 21st Century, local governments, Community Service Boards, and private sector stakeholders to discern the appropriate structure and funding mechanisms for community based services;

- Sustained funding for innovative programs that emphasize early intervention and long-term recovery;
- Review and implementation of system reforms which direct individuals with mental illness to appropriate care and divert individuals away from the criminal justice system while ensuring public safety;
- Sustained funding for Children's Services Act (CSA) programs ensuring sufficient appropriations to maintain the partnership between the Commonwealth and localities established in CSA to provide for especially vulnerable children's behavioral and physical health needs.

**Roanoke County Opposes:**

- Efforts to close or fundamentally alter the operations of Catawba Hospital absent a comprehensive plan addressing how those services will be continued in a community based setting and how funding for those services will be accommodated within the state budget.

**Wireless Communication Infrastructure**

As the promise of 5G wireless technology moves closer to reality, the Commonwealth must continue its efforts to reconcile efficient 5G deployment with local authority over zoning and land use.

**Roanoke County Opposes:**

- Legislation that would substantially limit the ability of localities to assess fees to wireless communications companies for the use of public lands and rights-of-way;

- Legislation that would limit a locality's ability to recover reasonable administrative fees to review wireless communication infrastructure applications, including costs associated with obtaining technical expertise through outside consultants;
- Legislation that would impose additional limitations or restrictions on regional initiatives designed to increase competition in broadband markets through the development of open-access networks.

### **Pipeline**

Roanoke County residents have expressed concern over potential adverse environmental impacts that will result from the construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

#### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Providing the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) with adequate resources and authority to effectively monitor and enforce erosion and sediment control standards in order to protect watersheds, historic sites, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Advertising – Public Notices**

The advent of social media and other electronic forms of communication has fundamentally reshaped the means for disseminating information to the public.

#### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Legislation that would grant localities greater flexibility to meet certain legal notice requirements including the authority to advertise legal notices on local radio, television or on the locality's website, in lieu of the newspaper advertisement requirement.

## **Public Safety**

In 2016, Roanoke County developed a Community Strategic Plan to guide decision making over the next several years. Public input generated during the planning process affirmed the value of locally provided public services, especially those services provided by the County's public safety personnel.

### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- Adequate funding for the Line of Duty Act, HB599 aid to localities with police departments, and Compensation Board funded positions in Sheriffs' offices and Regional Jails;
- Legislation that would make oral communication of a threat to kill or cause bodily injury to public employees a misdemeanor;
- Adequate state funding for the Department of Forensic Science to ensure the availability of forensic work in a timely manner.

### **Roanoke County Opposes:**

- Legislation that would legalize "consumer fireworks" or 1.4G fireworks that propel into the air.

## **Short-Term Rentals**

Roanoke County seeks to be a facilitator for consumer access to new technologies enabling the "sharing economy" while retaining its traditional tools to protect the interests and rights of the public.

### **Roanoke County Supports:**

- A regulatory structure that requires operators of short-term rentals to collect and remit taxes directly to local governments;


- Local authority to perform audits of local transient occupancy taxes.

On motion of Supervisor McNamara to adopt the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Peters and carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Supervisors Assaid, Bedrosian, Hooker, McNamara, Peters

NAYS: None

A COPY TESTE:



Deborah C. Jacks  
Chief Deputy Clerk to the Board of Supervisors

cc: Ruth Ellen Kuhnel, County Attorney  
Tori Williams, Planner II