



**Virginia's Region 2000
Local Government Council**
828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504

November 25, 2013

Re: 2014 Legislative Priorities

Dear [Senator/Delegate];

The Virginia's Region 2000 Local Government Council serves as the Planning District Commission for the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell and the City of Lynchburg.

At our meeting on October 17, 2013, the Council approved the following as our legislative priorities for the 2014 General Assembly session.

➤ **Local Taxing Authority**

The Virginia's Region 2000 Local Government Council supports legislation that maintains local taxing authority over local revenue sources, and opposes legislation at the state or federal levels that would reduce or eliminate control over local revenue streams. Taxation issues should be addressed by the governing bodies at the level that they are assessed: federal, state or local.

➤ **Implementation of JLARC recommended competitive regional collaboration grants**

The Local Government Council encourages the General Assembly to supply a series of state funded, competitive regional collaboration grants as outlined in the December 2012 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee's report, "Encouraging Local collaboration Through State Incentives". These competitive regional collaboration grants would facilitate local government cooperative projects to reduce costs and improve services for both the Commonwealth and for Virginia's localities.

➤ **Support the extension of the work of the Mandates Task Force**

The Local Government Council encourages your support for the Governor's Task Force for Local Government Mandate Review. We believe that the communications and information exchange that has been accomplished by the Governor's Task Force for Local Government Mandate Review is valuable and should be continued.

- **Require that any bill that imposes a new mandate on localities be filed by the first day of the legislative session**
The Local Government Council encourages your support for legislation which will require that new legislation which imposes financial mandates on Virginia's localities be submitted no later than the first day of the General Assembly session. We believe that this requirement would be necessary to allow Virginia's local governments to see and understand legislation which may have a financial impact.
- **Increased state funding for Planning District Commissions**
The Local Government Council supports an additional \$200,000 in each year of the biennium for planning district commission to support additional work on regional cooperation and support for state initiatives.
- **Consideration of changes to training and certification requirements now required for volunteer Fire and EMS personnel**
We encourage state legislators and officials to begin a dialogue on the appropriate levels of training and certification necessary for volunteer Fire and EMS personnel. Some rural areas are faced with no volunteers responding at certain hours because the volunteers are unable to commit to the 160 hours required for EMS certification. We encourage your active involvement in a dialogue with stakeholders and emergency response professionals on this issue.
- **Review of Regional Competitiveness Act**
The Regional Competitiveness Act helped establish some important economic development initiatives in our area and throughout the commonwealth. The Local Government Council encourages your review of this initiative and encourages your support for funding at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

/s:/ Gary Christie

Gary Christie
Executive Director