



2020 HRACRE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

1. Transportation Funding. (a) monitor funding sources for transit fiscal cliff, while opposing use of recordation and grantor taxes to resolve problem; (b) support funding the widening of the “missing link” of I-64 between Lightfoot and Bottoms Bridge; (c) support funding for higher speed rail; and (d) support funding sustainable revenue sources for transportation and added funding for Smart Scale.

2. Economic Development Funding. (a) Oppose efforts to divert money from the Commonwealth Opportunity Fund and other existing economic development initiatives to fill budget gaps; (b) support GO Virginia, Ready Sites, Virginia Jobs Investment Partnership, local economic development programs and state Enterprise Zones, and oppose cutting or eliminating their funds; and (c) oppose efforts to unduly weaken authority of Economic Development Authorities in economic development projects.

3. Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Oppose any legislation or budget provisions that would reduce or eliminate their use in Virginia.

The Hampton Roads Region has benefitted greatly from historic rehabilitation tax credits; historic rehabilitation tax credits have helped to breathe new life into older urban neighborhoods that had experienced decades of decline. Most noteworthy historic redevelopment projects would not have been pursued by developers if the credits had not been available. A 2017 study by Baker Tilley found in the year 2014 the HRTC produced \$467 million in economic output, supported 9,960 jobs and generated after three years of project operation about \$3.50 of economic output for every \$1.00 invested.

4. Recurrent Flooding/Sea Level Rise. Strongly support the funding of the *Virginia Shoreline Resiliency Fund* as well as legislation to (a) provide state funding that can be used as a local match for participation in Federal funding programs, (b) establish a *State Resiliency Assistance Fund* modeled on the *Stormwater Local Assistance Fund*, (c) create regional planning funds for coastal flooding modeled after the Transportation planning level funding program, (d) support funding to achieve projects already recommended in Joint Land Use Studies between our region’s localities and adjoining military bases, and (e) support funding and authority for the Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection.

5. Ground Water Permitting. (a) Monitor legislation for ground water withdrawal permitting and availability and irrigation restrictions; (b) support protection of aquifers as an economic development resource; (c) support HRSD’s Sustainable Water Initiative for Tomorrow (SWIFT) research project and its expansion to other treatment plants; and (d) encourage a study of extremely high ground water withdrawal users and establish a baseline for the cost/benefit of continued high ground water withdrawals by such users vs. the risk it poses to future economic development.

6. Storm Water and Other Environmental Programs. Support storm water management legislation which (a) balances water quality/quantity objectives while not overly intruding on owners' property rights; (b) recognizes and addresses the distinctions in storm water management solutions between the Mountain, Piedmont and Coastal Plain provinces of the Commonwealth; (c) fixes erroneous formulas in the existing storm water laws and DEQ regulations; (d) continue to oppose any legislation which would exempt localities outside of the Chesapeake Bay watershed from compliance with the storm water laws and regulations; and (e) support the extension of all or any parts of the existing or an improved the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act to cover western Virginia.

7. Land Use Issues. (a) Continue to oppose legislation authorizing adequate public facilities requirements or increased authority for impact fees and (b) monitor proffer legislation.

8. Energy. (a) Support legislation that enhances energy security and surety of supply for Hampton Roads; (b) monitor energy legislation addressing carbon emissions, renewable sources and energy efficiency programs; (c) support legislation that promotes low energy pricing, abundant energy availability and use of renewable power; and (d) oppose legislation authorizing localities to establish an energy benchmarking and disclosure program for commercial buildings.

9. Landlord-Tenant Matters. Monitor any efforts to modify landlord-tenant laws with respect to eviction procedures and other issues of import to property managers and landlords.

10. Statewide C-PACE Program. Support legislation to create a statewide Commercial Property Clean Energy (C-PACE) program, to which localities could opt-in rather than have a stand-alone program.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES, NOT RANKED IN ANY ORDER:

Redistricting. Support a non-partisan redistricting system in Virginia.

Broadband Expansion. Support legislation to expand and facilitate broadband and ultra-high-speed internet service in Hampton Roads.

Building Revitalization Grant Fund. Support creating such a fund.

Workforce Development. Support legislation and programs that expand technical and construction jobs as well as train and expand the workforce to fill those jobs.