I. 2013 KEY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

.03 Ground Transportation
.05 Interregional & High Speed Passenger Rail Service
.06 Public Transit
.07 Tourism
.07 Post-Labor Day School Start
.08 Education
.14 Small Business Development Center
.15 Illegal Immigration
.16 Uniform Taxation
.16 Workforce Development
.17 Minimum Wage
.18 Growth & Development

II. ONGOING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

.19 Business Professional & Occupational License
.20 Certificate of Public Need
.20 Health Care
.21 Collective Bargaining / Public Sector
.21 Dillon Rule
.22 Employment Law
.22 Environmental Regulation
.23 Gubernatorial Succession
The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance, collectively representing more than 2,500 businesses, are dedicated to serving their members and communities by advocating and supporting the economic business interest of the region.

The Chambers’ 2013 legislative agenda is produced by members of their Legislative Affairs Committees and approved by the Board of Directors of both Chambers. This document outlines the Chambers’ positions on critical issues affecting our businesses and the business community.

THE CHAMBERS’ KEY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2013 ARE:

- GROUND TRANSPORTATION
- INTERREGIONAL & HIGH SPEED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE
- PUBLIC TRANSIT
- TOURISM
- POST-LABOR DAY SCHOOL START
- EDUCATION
- SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER
- ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION
- UNIFORM TAXATION
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- MINIMUM WAGE
- GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT
SUPPORT revenue streams that are (1) broad-based, long-term, simple, efficient to collect, (2) sourced from all ultimate consumers including those in-state, out-of-state, wholesalers, retailers, and users of products and services moved over the transportation grid, (3) designed to encourage smart transportation grid use and development and (4) enabling everyone to pay their fair share.

SUPPORT revenue streams dedicated to the Hampton Roads Transportation Project Priorities for the 2034 long-range transportation plan.

OPPOSE fees designated to fund transportation that disproportionately target the business community in Hampton Roads.

Transportation remains a critical priority for businesses throughout the Hampton Roads region. Of equal importance, transportation is crucial to the mission and performance of the 50+ military and other federal facilities in Hampton Roads.

Congestion caused by current transportation conditions is placing all tourism in Hampton Roads at risk particularly for Williamsburg and Virginia Beach, two of the premier tourist destinations in the Commonwealth. Visitors to our area are confronted with lengthy delays, causing many of them to consider not returning for future vacations and conferences. The I-64 corridor must be addressed in any transportation solution for Hampton Roads.

Transportation networks and infrastructure improvements are vital to the future growth of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Another significant source of pride and revenue for Virginia comes from its robust ports. Virginia serves as an intermodal collection point for containers from West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Northern Virginia and elsewhere. The Virginia Port Authority (located in Hampton Roads) is the state’s leading agency for international transportation and maritime commerce.

A multi-modal system approach on regional and state levels enhances the region’s business community and economic development opportunities. Businesses throughout the region depend on a diverse transportation network to remain competitive in the global economy. Business needs a seamless system of highways, mass transit, railroads, seaports and airports to conduct business efficiently, expand, prosper, and create jobs. The efficient movement of people, goods, and services is essential to maintain our favorable business climate and quality of life.

All forms of transportation have a role to play in serving the needs of our citizens. Current levels of congestion outside and within our region are already placing business growth, tourism, port growth and our military facilities at risk.
REVENUE GENERATION

The following revenue generation capabilities are estimated for the Hampton Roads region:

- Local Income Tax of 1% $251.2 million
- Local Sales Tax of 1% $194.8 million
- 10 Cent Per Gallon Gas Tax Increase $83.6 million
- Property Tax Increase of 1 Cent Per $100 of Assessed Value $17.3 million
- 5% Tax on Auto Repairs $25.9 million
- Grantors Tax of 40 Cents Per $100 $15.2 million
- Motor Vehicle Rental Tax 2% $3.7 million
- One-Time Vehicle Registration Increase of 1% $14.7 million
- 2% Retail Tax on Motor Fuels $57.3 million

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance recognize transportation issues as central to maintaining a healthy business climate. The Chambers’ number one legislative priority is finding a dedicated, long-term solution to the Commonwealth’s transportation funding crisis. Most conservative estimates place our current transportation funding shortfall at $1 billion per year with $500 million that is slated for construction going to maintenance each year.

The more than 2,500 businesses of the Chambers believe transportation is a state-wide problem and should be dealt with on a state-wide basis. Sustainable long-term funding for transportation is still necessary on a state-wide basis for the Commonwealth to remain competitive and to sustain our significant military and federal presence. Transportation is the lifeblood of the economy, and for years the region’s business community has been concerned about the state having sufficient revenue to maintain and improve roads and other modes of transportation deficiencies.

Increasing demands on transportation infrastructure, coupled with a diminishing revenue stream for new construction, put the future of the Commonwealth’s economy at risk. The CNBC “Best State for Business” survey ranking dropped Virginia from the top spot because of transportation infrastructure.

Analysis conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute for the three Virginia metro areas, referred to as the “urban crescent,” indicated that total congestion over the 28 years from 2013 to 2040 will cost business and commuters $77 billion and 5.6 billion hours of delay.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance believe it is important that all businesses, be it the military, ports, retail, wholesale, manufacturing and other myriad of businesses, need to be able to travel efficiently.
interregional & high speed passenger rail service

**SUPPORT** the study and extension of high speed rail service.

**SUPPORT** improvement of the quality and frequency of intercity passenger rail services from Newport News and Norfolk through Richmond and Washington D.C.

**SUPPORT** the application by the Commonwealth of Virginia for federal funding this critical infrastructure.

**SUPPORT** a dedicated funding source to assist in funding the operation of passenger rail in the Commonwealth.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance have long supported improved transportation infrastructure. Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of Washington, D.C. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation’s largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation’s Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient, and cost-effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to operations.

Hampton Roads is home to major tourist destinations, including the Virginia Beach oceanfront and historic Williamsburg area, attracting nearly five million tourists annually. Passenger rail, coupled with a connection to an intercity light rail system with first phase complete, will provide a much needed transportation alternative to visitors and will help mitigate growing congestion during the peak tourist season.

In addition, the Chambers believe that Hampton Roads has insufficient emergency evacuation routes to handle its population. This region is also hindered to a great extent by bridge and tunnel crossings on every major corridor.

The Chambers strongly encourage the Federal Railroad Administration to approve the Commonwealth of Virginia’s funding application to construct interregional passenger rail and ultimately high speed rail from Richmond and Petersburg to Hampton Roads.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Passenger rail service will provide a high volume transportation option for moving people more quickly from the area without future congestion limiting highway evacuation routes. In order to keep Virginia competitive in the global economy and provide adequate public safety in the case of a natural disaster, it is necessary to develop a 21st century transportation system. Passenger and high speed rail will reduce fuel consumption, improve air quality, enhance freight service, significantly increase capacity and reliability, enhance visitor traffic, and foster the revitalization of urban areas.
SUPPORT dedicated funding for transit in Hampton Roads.

SUPPORT efforts to secure increased federal and state capital funds to match local funds and other agency-generated revenues for ongoing bus fleet needs.

Public transit is an essential part of Hampton Roads’ multi-modal transportation infrastructure, fundamental for near- and long-term solutions to ensure competitive and efficient mobility of goods and people.

Since forming as the result of a merger between PENTRAN and Tidewater Regional Transit in 1999, Hampton Roads Transit has grown to providing more than 18 million trips per year on bus, ferry, light rail, paratransit, and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) services.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY

A dedicated funding source will:

A. Enable Hampton Roads to be more competitive in securing federal discretionary dollars that will support bus, ferry, light rail and other transit investments;

B. Provide for critical transit investments that cannot be made now since local transit funding is constrained to municipal general fund sources only;

C. Establish parity between Northern Virginia (where dedicated funding has been in place since 1980) and Hampton Roads in how public transportation funding is collected and used;

D. Once transit needs are met, provide option for localities to use available funds for other local transportation needs, helping address secondary road maintenance and improvement needs and relieve loss of Urban Allocation funds;

E. Enhance fiscal stability and flexibility that will allow for expanded services and long-term sustainability to improve regional mobility and economic competitiveness.
post-labor day school start

**SUPPORT** continuation of current law beginning the school year for public schools after Labor Day. Any effort to begin the school year earlier would affect traditional family vacations and the tourism season.

Community interests often collide when it comes to school start dates. Stakeholders interested in educational outcomes, family leisure time, and economic development each make cases about the effects of school start dates.

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tourism

**SUPPORT** continued and increased investment in tourism at the local and state level and innovation and expansion by the tourism economic driver of our area including both our major attractions and other entrepreneurial initiatives. We believe that the best way to achieve that investment is through additional offerings at our current attractions, particularly those that extend the tourism season and through the creation of a business climate that welcomes new and different tourism options.

**SUPPORT** marketing of area attributes that provide additional reasons for visitors to come to the Historic Triangle and enjoy Civil War reenactments, artisans, ecotourism, biking, golf, and other forms of sports and recreation.

**SUPPORT** continued increased state funding to the Virginia Tourism Corporation for out of town marketing and encourage our localities to set the pace with funding increases.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance believe that tourism is critical to the well-being of the economy of the Historic Triangle and the Hampton Roads region.

The tourism sector of the Commonwealth’s economy is comprised primarily of small businesses spread across the state which depend on collective efforts to market the broad array of attractions and destinations. The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance support initiatives promoting tourism in the Commonwealth. We also support efforts to create a fund for use in developing new tourism products and support infrastructure as a means of maintaining the vitality of Virginia as a destination relative to its competitors.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**
The Chambers view tourism funding as a wise and prudent investment and is one of the state’s leading industries that will pay dividends in the form of revenue generated by travelers, vacationers and guests visiting the Commonwealth. The continued economic vitality and health of the tourism industry is essential to the long-term fiscal condition of both the Commonwealth and this region.
A recent study conducted by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center examined how travel patterns change among households with school-aged children when school starts before Labor Day. Data for the study was drawn from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS), a national study sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The ATUS is the nation’s largest effort to document how those in the U.S. spend their time on a daily basis.

While past studies have asked hypothetical questions about travel, the Tourism Center study examined actual travel behavior of families in five states and Virginia. The study examined differences in family travel patterns from 2005 to 2010.

Data collected from the University of Minnesota Tourism Center found that: (a) The post-Labor Day school start increases the likelihood that families report at least one trip of two or more nights away from home in the month of August or September by 50%. (b) The likelihood of reporting such a trip in any month between (and including) May and September is 30% higher as a result of schools starting after Labor Day. This may reflect families planning ahead when they know that they won’t have the opportunity to travel in late summer. The overall effect on the number of trips still remains substantial. (c) This effect is completely absent in families without children that have statistically identical demographic (e.g. race, ethnicity, age, overall household size, urban status, etc.) and economic (e.g. income, education, home ownership, etc.) characteristics and live in the same states in the same calendar year.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY
Tourism in Virginia generates nearly $18 billion as an industry, and supports 204,480 jobs. In 2009, tourism generated $1.24 billion in state and local taxes. In 2008, domestic travel employees in Virginia earned more than $4.4 billion in payroll income. The total economic contribution of Virginia’s tourism industry is more than $30.1 billion per year.

August is a key month in the high tourism season, thus uniformly shortening the tourism season would forgo tourist spending by $274 million a year. The total economic consequences of shortening the tourism season would be more than $369 million a year. In addition, state and local tax revenues from tourism support K-12 public education budgets.

SUPPORT world-class standards of excellence in Virginia’s education system by maintaining the current Standards of Quality funding formula requiring the Commonwealth to pay 55 percent of the prevailing cost of education.

SUPPORT policies and practices advancing the principle of accountability for all involved in the educational process.

SUPPORT the efforts of the school divisions and continue to work with them to develop partnerships that will benefit students in our public education system.

SUPPORT efforts to expand secondary education in trades and other non-academic pursuits.

SUPPORT initiatives at the state level to create a more comprehensive, unified system of publically funded universal employment and training services.

SUPPORT STEM and STEAM initiatives.

SUPPORT full funding of early childhood education programs.
The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance believe that life-long education is a driver of economic development. By striving to create a workforce that has the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of the business community, education will become the dynamic force behind business in the Commonwealth.

The Chambers support world-class standards of excellence in Virginia’s education system. We support appropriate funding necessary to improve all levels of education preK-12 through the university levels. We support initiatives to provide quality education and training that enable businesses to achieve their goals via a more skilled, flexible and productive workforce.

We strongly support public school initiatives to expand educational experiences and student success in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject areas. We also support full funding of early childhood education programs so that no student runs the risk of being behind their peers when they enter kindergarten.

We believe the education infrastructure must be of the highest quality for our students to compete in today’s global economy. We support policies and practices advocating the principle of accountability for all involved in the educational process, as well as ensuring all students have access to the resources needed to reach high standards including quality physical facilities, equipment and materials, and a sufficient number of well-qualified instructional personnel consistent with student success.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

The Chambers recognize that public education is essential to business. A well-educated, well-trained, and readily available workforce is vital to the region’s business community. Legislation that focuses on the creation of workforce programs, initiatives that place emphasis on STEM subject areas, as well as initiatives that address the mismatch in labor supply and demand, contribute to greater productivity and competitiveness, leading to greater economic growth.

**education // HIGHER EDUCATION**

**SUPPORT** the legislative agendas of the following institutions:

- Old Dominion University
- College of William & Mary
- Norfolk State University
- Thomas Nelson Community College
- Tidewater Community College

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY**

Old Dominion University (ODU) is dedicated to providing Virginia citizens access to a quality, affordable and successful academic experience.

Approximately 88 percent of ODU’s fall 2012 enrollment is comprised of in-state students, a full 10 points better than the statewide average. Since 2004, ODU has added more in-state students than any other public university and has added the third largest number of in-state students over the past decade.
Paradoxically, due to state budget cuts sustained over five consecutive years, General Fund support for these additional in-state students has significantly decreased, resulting in ODU receiving the smallest percentage of funding among all of the state's colleges and universities. Yet, despite the recent budget cuts and lack of funding from the Commonwealth, over the years ODU has consistently had among the lowest increases in undergraduate tuition among the public institutions of higher education.

Such tuition moderation is imperative, as over 30% of ODU’s fall 2012 undergraduate enrollment qualified for Pell grants, the federal need-based financial aid program. These grants provide students who otherwise wouldn’t be able to afford college, access to higher education.

The incongruity in state funding coupled with the need for ODU to keep its tuition and fee increases moderate present the infrastructure and operations of the University with major financial challenges, and has had an adverse impact on services provided to our students.

And while we are enormously grateful for the significant support we received from the Governor and General Assembly in 2011 and 2012, we would be remiss not to mention that, despite the encouraging support from the Governor and General Assembly for the past two years, the University’s General Fund shortfall remains at $43 million and we are still at the very bottom of the state’s funding calculation at 85%.

Therefore, our top priority during the 2013 General Assembly session is a request of $15 million to address the University’s critical shortage of full-time faculty. Currently, ODU’s faculty-student ratio is 21 to 1, the highest of any doctoral institution in the Commonwealth. These funds will allow the university to hire almost 200 additional faculty with an emphasis on STEM and other critical shortage areas, bringing our ratio to 17 to 1, and on par with our peer institutions. These funds ensure that ODU’s 88% Virginia population has the same opportunity as those afforded to others across the Commonwealth.

In addition, our legislative priorities contain initiatives that represent priorities shared by both the institution and the Commonwealth focused upon improving access to quality, affordable higher education, increasing STEM enrollments and graduation rates, critical research activities, and economic development:

- A request for additional funding for the Center for Bioelectrics based upon our continuing success with developing novel cancer therapies, immunotherapies, and other medical and environmental applications with considerable commercial promise ($2.75 million).

- A proposal to create the ODU Military Connector Center, a comprehensive model to support our over 5,000 military-affiliated students, as well as the entire military community in the Commonwealth, by providing support services, interdisciplinary research, as well as outreach to the community ($2 million).

- Establishing of the Commonwealth Center for Transportation, Ports, Defense and Logistics Policy Analysis. This proposed new Center would provide critical analysis and suggested solutions by an interdisciplinary team of faculty, including individuals from VMASC for optimizing utilization and operations of all port and maritime activities of the Commonwealth ($4 million).

- Finally, building upon recent grant success and new discoveries in the area of conversion of solar radiation into direct current electricity, ODU is seeking additional funding for the Solar Alternative Energy Research Group within the Batten College of Engineering & Technology ($1.2 million).
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY

Additional general fund support
The College seeks additional general fund support as it continues its effort to become more efficient while addressing the goals of TJ21 including more in-state enrollment, additional STEM degrees, and additional financial aid.

Renovation: Tyler Hall
The 2012-14 Appropriation Act authorizes the College to proceed with detailed planning for the renovation of Tyler Hall. This amendment requests funds to complete the planning and proceed with renovation prior to the 2014-16 biennium. Once renovated, Tyler Hall will house the departments of Government, Economics and Public Policy.

Renovation: Residence Life Facilities
Over the past year, the College has developed a plan to accelerate the renovation of its residence halls by taking facilities completely offline for a year and the surrounding summers. This approach requires additional debt authority beyond the $5 million previously authorized for dormitory renovations. The requested authority allows the College to move forward with full renovation of Chandler Hall, air conditioning of Barrett Hall, and planning for the full renovation of Landrum Hall.

NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY

OPERATING:
Need-based Aid for Students in Good Academic Standing - Norfolk State University (NSU) has a student enrollment of approximately 7,100. Given the demographics of its students and the ability of the students with high academic potential to shop schools, NSU recognizes that it is disadvantaged by not having adequate public and private funds for need-based awards. Thus, the University regards financial aid as one of its highest ranked needs.

NSU would benefit from an increase in the number and percentage of Virginia college students receiving state assistance by providing more financial grants to recapture additional “stop out” junior and senior level students in good academic standing. These students often have exhausted financial aid options that prohibit their matriculation and degree attainment within two years or less. This additional support will help continue to reduce the current 18% attrition between the junior and senior years by 2% annually.

In keeping with TJ21 strategies, NSU plans to offer financial incentives for timely graduation to low and middle income students enrolled in high demand programs in STEM-H disciplines. The estimated cost is $500,000.

Micro – and Nano – Technology Center (MiNaC) Cleanroom - The Norfolk State University (NSU) Micro - and Nano-Technology Center (MiNaC) is a 6,000 square foot cleanroom facility that enables the production of microelectronics and optoelectronics devices on the micro- and nano-scale. This $6.5 million facility is a Class 100/Class 1000 user facility that provides unique processing capabilities not only for NSU researchers, but also for researchers around the Hampton Roads region including Old Dominion University, Hampton University, and NASA Langley Research Center. This facility will allow external researchers who currently do not have access to such a robust infrastructure, but need to make customizable devices on the micro - and nano-scale, the capability to do that. The annual funding needed to support MiNaC research and educational activities is $626,500.

Nursing Support - Norfolk State University’s Nursing Program began in the 1950s and is currently the University’s largest academic program. Nursing has been designated as one of NSU’s signature programs.

Given the large number of baby boomers entering the U.S. Medicare system, the demand for nurses, and faculty to train them,
is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. A barrier facing academic nursing programs during the last few years is the credentialing requirement for clinical faculty who teach nursing students in the external healthcare settings. Clinical faculty must now minimally hold the Master of Science Degree in Nursing. In addition, the clinical faculty to student ratio has recently changed from a ratio of 1:10 to 1:8.

In order to continue the successful legacy of Nursing at NSU, more nursing faculty is needed. Operating funds are also needed to support the large number of students the program serves.

**Nursing Support Request:**

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**Spartan Crusade for Academic Success** - Norfolk State University (NSU) is a Historically Black University that serves approximately 7,100. NSU’s historic mission of access and affordability continues to be a vital and significant priority. This mission is beset by many challenges including student financial difficulties and lack of college preparedness. As the ninth largest HBCU in the U.S., Norfolk State University is well positioned to assume a leadership role in advancing educational attainment in the Hampton Roads region and engaging fellow HBCUs in this national imperative.

The Spartan Crusade for Academic Success (SCAS) Project aims to promote youth development in the areas of fostering resilience, emotional competence, self-determination, and belief in the future. The targeted student population has multiple risk factors and the identified constructs, if fostered, will reduce negative behavior patterns, promote self-esteem, assist students to manage emotions, facilitate the incorporation of values that will enhance autonomy, independent thinking and self-advocacy; and the internalization of hope and optimism; work values; belief in higher education; and a focus on a healthy and productive adult life. These constructs are very critical to the participants’ success in grade school, higher education and life as they will promote a more positive attitude towards the value of an education and the benefits of social integration, thus reducing high school dropout and promoting a commitment to postsecondary. **The estimated cost is $200,000.**

**CAPITAL:**

**Pre-planning for the New Science Building:**

The Six-year Capital Outlay Plan for NSU calls for a new 120,000 square-foot science building to replace Wood Science Building. The new building will support the use of innovative science and research that is critical to current standards of undergraduate education. It will provide support to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs and help students meet state competency standards in critical thinking, scientific and quantitative reasoning.

<table>
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**G.W.C. Brown Memorial Hall:**

G.W.C. Brown Memorial Hall is the original academic building at Norfolk State University and was built in three different sections, beginning in 1954. This building currently serves as the main academic classroom building.

The Norfolk State University Master Plan, adopted by the Board of Visitors on December 10, 2010, called for the partial renovation of the “A” wing of Brown Hall, the demolition of the remaining Brown Hall, and construction of a new Mathematics and Mass Communications Classroom Building. After reviewing the studies that were performed this year, it has been determined that the only acceptable course of action is to demolish Brown Hall, and to build anew.

The Six-year Capital Outlay Plan for NSU calls for a 154,000 SF building, with a construction cost of $42,500,822, and a total project cost (includes design costs and Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment [F.F.E.] costs) of $52,758,000.
THOMAS NELSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

• Seeking More Faculty and Facilities
• Training Virginia’s Workforce with State-of-the-Art Equipment
• Serving More Virginia Students and Veterans
• Lowering the Cost of a Bachelor’s Degree for Virginians
• Producing More Virginia College Graduates

Thomas Nelson Community College (TNCC) is the largest provider of higher education and workforce training on the Virginia Peninsula enrolling more than 16,000 college students and 12,000 workforce students annually. Over the past five years, TNCC has seen its full-time equivalent enrollment increase by more than 30%, while overall state funding for higher education has decreased. As a result, community colleges, along with four-year colleges and universities throughout Virginia, are becoming increasingly reliant on tuition to make-up the difference in the costs of receiving a high quality education and the reduction in state funds allocated for higher education. Thomas Nelson Community College supports the legislative agenda adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges seeking funding for faculty, facilities, equipment and financial assistance for students to enable Virginia’s Community Colleges to continue to provide world class higher education and workforce training, produce more graduates and stimulate and sustain economic growth and development to position the region to compete in a global marketplace.

TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

With 46,000 students, Tidewater Community College (TCC) is the largest provider of higher education and workforce development services in the Hampton Roads region. More than 1,100 employers across the region use TCC’s services to help improve the quality of their workforce and the business bottom line. In 2013, TCC’s state legislative agenda seeks to: right-size faculty ratios; modernize facilities and equipment; and catalyze the pursuit of higher education, the development of its facilities, and private investment.

RIGHT-SIZE
• Increase the community college full-time faculty ratio to 47%

A greater balance of full-time to part-time faculty is desirable to achieve “Top Jobs Act” goals and Virginia Community College System student success targets. The full-time faculty ratio was increased from 43% to 45% in 2012. Increasing the ratio from 45% to 47% in 2013 is in line with the six-year plan approved by the State Board for Community Colleges.

MODERNIZE
• Fund community college construction projects now approved for planning, including renovation of the Bayside Building at TCC’s Virginia Beach Campus

The Commonwealth has supported TCC’s phenomenal enrollment growth over the last decade with funding for the construction of impressive new facilities, including the Virginia Beach Campus Joint-Use Library, being built in cooperation with the City of Virginia Beach as an innovative combination of academic and community library. Once the new library is open in June 2013, the Bayside Building, built in 1974 and last renovated in 1987 and housing the current campus library, requires renovation to re-purpose the building to provide a modern, efficient, technologically current one-stop student support services center

• Modernize equipment for job training

TCC requests the establishment of an Equipment Trust Fund program for workforce development programs to enable community colleges to obtain and maintain equipment that is on par with potential employers. Responding to the workforce training needs of the business community is problematic when equipment used to train our workforce is less than state-of-the-art. Funding will help existing businesses and attract new businesses to the Commonwealth by ensuring that students are trained on the most up-to-date equipment available to support the latest innovations in manufacturing and business technologies.
CATALYZE

- Build on TCC’s military and veterans education success by expanding community college access for our service members and their families

TCC ranks first among community colleges nationwide for the number of veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill and near the top among all higher education institutions. In the 2011-12 academic year, more than 14,600 students attending TCC were on active duty, military veterans, or military family members. The Commonwealth should enhance educational opportunities and services for this large population in Virginia. For example, develop a new set of support tools through the Virginia Education Wizard to specifically address the unique needs of veterans as they pursue the education, workforce training, and industry certifications needed to complement their military experience and transition to critical civilian occupations. The Wizard’s existing functionality, which guides users in navigating options to pay for college, should be expanded to direct veterans to take full advantage of their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

- Spur transfer from TCC

Reduce the barriers to transfer from community colleges by increasing the number of students eligible to receive transfer grants from community colleges by increasing the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) threshold from $9,000 to $12,000. Transfer grants have served as an excellent incentive to encourage more students to pursue a post-secondary education by starting their baccalaureate career at a community college. Over 1,100 community college students have received transfer grants since the program began and $1.44 million has been awarded. Increasing the EFC threshold from $9,000 to $12,000 would allow an estimated 400 additional students in the Commonwealth to receive the benefit of transfer grants.

- Tax credit for private contributions to STEM goals

Create a Community College Scholarship Match Tax Credit as an innovative public/private partnership - consistent with the “Top Jobs Act” - to expand educational opportunity for Virginians in STEM fields. The Tidewater Community College Educational Foundation and the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education could receive donations from private contributors who would qualify for the tax credit. The foundations would then disburse those funds in the form of scholarships to students seeking degrees in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, nursing, or other health sciences fields.

- Reduce restrictions on community college site improvements

Eliminate the statutory requirement for localities to pay for site preparation activities for state construction projects. Currently, the state will not pay for site improvements for community college projects 5 feet beyond the wall of facilities which can result in delay of construction for projects already funded and approved by the Commonwealth.

SUPPORT the Virginia Small Business Development Center Network’s initiative to secure $1 million in state funding.

The Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads, Inc. (SBDC) is part of a statewide network of 29 centers under the direction of the state office at George Mason University. The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Thomas Nelson Community College, operates the SBDC in Hampton Roads. Funding support for the network’s operations originally came from the Small Business Administration and was matched by both state and local funding. In 2003, the state eliminated all funding for the SBDC network as part of a budget reduction program. The loss of $1 million in state funding resulted in a 30% reduction in funding support for operations. While the SBDC has been able to locate some additional funding partners to help minimize this loss, there has been a reduction in services provided due to this funding cut.
The SBDC is a recipient of one of 10 nationally awarded Portable Assistance Grants by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Portable Assistance Grant Program is designed to assist organizations in developing products or programs that can be replicated in other areas of the country.

The SBDC, in partnership with the Retail Alliance of Hampton Roads, will use the $100,000 grant from September 2012 - September 2013 to develop a regional Retail Institute. The Retail Institute will consist of both classroom and online training courses designed to provide information across the entire spectrum of the retail experience as well as general business management. Courses will cover topics such as business practices, store displays, inventory management, and theft prevention. The grant will allow the SBDC to hire a counselor to oversee the Retail Institute.

During the next year, the SBDC and Retail Alliance will develop and beta test the program and then implement it throughout the region. The SBDC and Retail Alliance will work with the Old Towne Business Association in Portsmouth, as well as the Portsmouth Department of Economic Development, to bring the Retail Institute to retailers in Old Towne Portsmouth.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**
The services the Small Business Development Center provide are critical to the health and survival of local small businesses that are the fastest-growing employment sector. Restoration of the funding for the state network will result in the local SBDC receiving $190,000 which will go to restoring services that had been reduced or eliminated, as well as enable it to meet the increasing demand for its services.

illegal immigration

**SUPPORT** immigration laws that are fair and balanced.

**OPPOSE** any legislation that creates undue hardships on employers for verifying worker eligibility.

**OPPOSE** any legislation that creates overly punitive sanctions on employers who unknowingly hire ineligible workers.

**OPPOSE** state efforts to further regulate immigration in the workplace, favoring instead a workable federal approach.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance recognize that our immigration system is broken. The Chambers support efforts towards achieving a resolution in addressing the challenges of illegal immigration. We support the development of a uniform approach. In addition, the Chambers strongly support immigration laws that are balanced and fair. Foreign workers are essential to the growth of the economy and it is imperative that comprehensive reform take into account the enormous contribution that all immigrants have made and continue to make to sustain and further our American way of life.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**
The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance recognize that immigration is a complex issue confronting business. The industry faces, and will continue to face, a growing shortage of both highly-skilled professionals and laborers in many sectors of our economy. Failure to address these shortages will result in the relocation of businesses to other nations where there is an abundance of skill-appropriate workers.

Virginia is known for its business-friendly climate and it is the goal of the Chambers to ensure that we remain competitive. We applaud the efforts of our elected officials to maintain our strong business climate while dealing with an issue that impacts many of our citizens. We will continue to actively work with the General Assembly to define an acceptable state role in a federal problem while working to ensure that the solutions do not negatively impact economic growth and jobs creation.
uniform taxation

SUPPORT uniform taxation.

SUPPORT the promotion of tax policies that balance the need to provide for essential services and the need to minimize the relative tax burden on business.

OPPOSE any measure that taxes commercial real estate at a different rate than residential real estate.

OPPOSE the accelerated sales tax.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance recognize the effects of business costs and tax burdens on businesses as well as the region’s challenges in job creation. To encourage economic growth and investment, the Chambers support fiscal tax policies and business cost reforms designed to increase competitiveness and create jobs.

The Chambers also support the Commonwealth of Virginia in efforts to adopt a simple and uniform state and local taxing system. We believe that fair and reasonable real property taxation is necessary to ensure that a level playing field is maintained for businesses throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Chambers support uniform taxation as outlined in Article X of the Virginia Constitution. The Chambers oppose any measure that taxes business at a different level than residential property owners.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY
Virginia employers make hiring decisions based on the costs of doing business. When these costs are burdensome or unpredictable, businesses become cautious and less likely to invest in new employees and projects.

Tax policies that respect the proper balance between the need to sustain necessary government programs and the need to maintain and grow a strong economy is critical to the sustainability of the region’s competitiveness locally and globally.

workforce development

SUPPORT initiatives to create a more comprehensive, unified system of publicly funded universal employment and training services.

SUPPORT initiatives to provide quality education and training that enable businesses to achieve their goals via a more skilled, flexible and productive workforce.

SUPPORT efforts to expand employment opportunities consistent with the quality of life expectations.
The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance support initiatives that create a more comprehensive, unified system of publicly funded universal employment and training services, built upon public/private partnerships that are demand-driven, business-led and locally administered.

The Chambers will continue to work with the Administration and the General Assembly to initiate, support and implement additional workforce reform through strategic partnerships with the Commonwealth's workforce development and services delivery system and the private sector.

Additionally, the Chambers support initiatives to provide quality education and training that enable businesses to achieve their goals via a more skilled, flexible and productive workforce. Virginia employers need a “thinking workforce” with the competencies to advance and innovate to ensure Virginia maintains a competitive economy. Given the accelerating integration of advanced technologies in products and processes and the associated rapid growth of skill requirements in today’s workplace, employers want educators to provide them with “trainable” employees. These are individuals with an understanding of theory and applied technology. These are individuals that can read, write, compute and communicate effectively and can readily adapt to changes in job requirements and workplace environments.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Jobs are essential to support the quality of life of any community. Good jobs within our community strengthen our collective ability to survive grow and prosper. In today’s globally integrated, innovation-driven, knowledge-based economy, access to a highly educated, skilled, and trained workforce is vital to a region’s competitiveness. Aligning our educational and publicly funded workforce development systems with business and industry demand is critical to our success.

On July 24, 2009, the federal minimum wage increased to $7.25 per hour. Although many advocates of this increase and those favoring an additional increase at the state and/or local levels have valid concerns for those living below, at or near the poverty level, we remain firm in our belief that raising the rate above the federal level would place Virginia’s businesses at a greater disadvantage. First, mandated increases in wages will result in increased prices for goods and services, placing Virginia’s businesses at a competitive disadvantage in the national and international marketplaces and adding costs for Virginia families. Second, with today’s mobile workforce, a substantially higher basic wage in Virginia would send jobs to other states or even overseas. Lastly, in a competitive marketplace, market driven wage rates encourage productivity and provide empowerment for advancement of the workforce. The General Assembly and Hampton Roads local governments should also reject proposals to establish local minimum wages, sometimes packaged as living wage requirements.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Wages set by legislation discourage workers’ competition for higher earnings, development and advancement that would normally be accomplished through continuing or completing education, or seeking additional training and personal investment. In addition, when a local government demands that its suppliers or local businesses pay wages higher than the market would otherwise dictate, or higher than are paid in the next locality, it is picking the pockets of its own citizens to provide the difference.
SUPPORT the rights of Virginians to choose where they live, work, and play, consistent with the principles of a market driven economy.

SUPPORT regional cooperation among adjourning localities in order to allow for economic development and shared economies of scale in service delivery.

SUPPORT the provision of the needed infrastructure to allow communities to plan for anticipated growth in economic activity.

SUPPORT planning, construction, and maintenance of an improved statewide multi-modal transportation system that is need-based, cohesive, integrated, and interconnected.

SUPPORT the revitalization of older suburban and core city areas through in-fill development and redevelopment.

SUPPORT a comprehensive review of Virginia’s tax structure to ensure that it is equitable, broad based, fosters a favorable business climate, and encourages economic development.

SUPPORT a process that does not impede or restrict the important agricultural and forest economies of Virginia as necessary components of sensible growth.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance believe that economic growth is both a natural and necessary aspect of a healthy economy. However, growth must be measured against its implications. We believe “balanced growth” involves not only the quantity of growth, but the type and location of growth. To that end, we support public policy initiatives at all levels of government focused on fostering the expansion of the economic strength of Virginia without adversely affecting the quality of life and prosperity of its citizens. These Chambers, representing nearly 2,511 businesses, support the creation of jobs through the expansion of existing companies and the attraction of new business activity to the Commonwealth.

We believe Virginia has the will and the tools necessary to ensure sensible growth throughout. These resources must work to create a climate attractive for business and conducive to expand business activity by both new and existing companies. The continued growth and development of Virginia is crucial to the success of our region and business communities.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY
Economic development initiatives are an essential component of a healthy business environment. Without business and job growth, our celebrated quality of life will not last. Legislative policies and actions that provide businesses of all sizes the tools and talent they need will help to increase their competitiveness, and additionally, stimulate growth while continuing to attract new industries to our region.
ONGOING LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

THE CHAMBERS’ ONGOING LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS REGARDING:

• BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL & OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE
• CERTIFICATE OF NEED
• HEALTH CARE
• COLLECTIVE BARGAINING / PUBLIC SECTOR
• DILLON RULE
• EMPLOYMENT LAW
• ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION
• GUBERNATORIAL SUCCESSION

business professional & occupational license

SUPPORT the reform of the BPOL tax in the Code of Virginia and replacing it with a revenue stream that holds local governments harmless and benefits business.

Since the BPOL tax was first enacted to fund the War of 1812, Virginia businesses have been burdened by an antiquated flat tax that transformed into a gross receipt tax. In 2011, the General Assembly passed three BPOL tax reform bills (HB 1587, HB 1437 and SB 1408) which Governor McDonnell signed into law. HB 1587 allows cities and counties to rebate or exempt the current BPOL tax for new businesses during their first year of operation. House Bill 1437 and Senate Bill 1408 grants localities the option of charging BPOL taxes based upon actual income (profit) rather than gross receipts and the option to rebate the taxes if the business loses money during the taxable year. We applaud the General Assembly and the Governor for these steps to incrementally repeal the BPOL tax. We recognize that these taxes are significant revenue sources to local governments. Therefore, the Chambers recommend that the General Assembly provide an alternative and broad-based funding source(s) of funds to hold the localities harmless from revenue losses from BPOL reform.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY
The present BPOL tax is patently unfair because it targets business’ gross receipts regardless of profitability. Gross receipt taxation is a significant impact upon small to medium businesses and it ignores the taxpayer’s fundamental ability to pay such taxes. Furthermore, the tax is unequal and discriminatory because it is only assessed on certain professions.
Certificate of Public Need Program

SUPPORT retention of the Certificate of Public Need Program.

The Certificate of Public Need (COPN) program was mandated in all states by the U.S. Congress under the Health Resources Development Act of 1974. The idea was that regulation was necessary to prevent the costly duplication of health care services in the United States. A number of states have repealed or modified their COPN statutes since the federal government no longer mandates the program. The record is mixed both as to whether COPN effectively held down health care costs but also as to whether those states that eliminated the program have realized any benefit from doing so.

The Chambers believe that great caution should be taken before Virginia considers the elimination or modification of the COPN. We believe there is enough evidence that COPN has restricted increases in health care costs in Virginia and that it has protected our safety net and critical access hospitals thereby assuring that medical care is available to all of our citizens.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY

Hospitals are required to provide care to every individual who seeks care in the emergency room, regardless of ability to pay. Government programs, such as Medicaid and Medicare, reimburse hospitals and physicians at rates far below the costs of treating their beneficiaries. Hospitals absorb many of those costs themselves, but a substantial portion is passed on to large and small businesses in the form of increased health insurance premiums for employees.

The Chambers believe that the COPN program in Virginia should not be eliminated or substantially modified until the General Assembly can guarantee that doing so will not adversely impact access, quality, public safety or the costs of health care to Virginia’s businesses.

Health Care

SUPPORT legislation and programs that assist businesses, particularly small businesses, facilitate the health care needs of their employees.

SUPPORT reasonable market-based efforts to make health care more affordable and available to citizens.

The Chambers recognize that health insurance access and affordability continues to be an issue for businesses throughout the state, particularly small businesses. The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance support reasonable market-based efforts to make health care more affordable and manageable for citizens of Virginia as well as the business community that currently provides health insurance for employees.

IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY

To maintain a healthy and productive workforce and to preserve the quality of life in the Commonwealth, it is imperative to address the well-being and human service needs throughout the region.
The Chambers oppose public sector collective bargaining. The need for collective bargaining by public sector employees does not exist because sufficient safeguards in the law exist to protect public employees from discriminatory or abusive employment practices. Collective bargaining agreements in the public sector place the taxpayer at the mercy of such agreements, without consideration of the fiscal condition of the local government or the will of its citizens.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Allowing collective bargaining by public employees places an unfunded state mandate on local governments, and such measures interfere with the responsibility to balance revenues with expenditures, including wages and benefits for public sector employees.

dillion rule

**SUPPORT** the Dillion Rule.

The Dillon Rule as a concept is found in all states – meaning that apart from the power ceded to the federal government in the U.S Constitution, state governments have all the remaining governmental authority. However, most states have adopted various types of “home rule” provisions that permit some or all of their local governments to undertake those governmental functions that are not specifically precluded by the laws of those home rule states. Virginia has not provided such home rule authority to its local governments.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Virginia has been a Dillon Rule state for more than 100 years. Retaining it is important to business because it promotes uniformity in tax administration, land use regulation, criminal and civil enforcement, environmental permitting and regulation, employment law as well as many other issues. Without it, this uniformity would not exist among Virginia’s localities.
In many countries, laws have been passed to establish standards that employers must follow in providing benefits, such as health insurance, to their employees; this may include additional coverage for health problems that arise due to conditions of the job or workplace. Employment law may also include protection against discrimination in the workplace based on race, gender, religion, disability, or veteran status, and may make provisions for the employment of foreigners.

Employment laws are becoming increasingly complex and ever-changing. Businesses today are at a greater risk of huge financial penalties as a result of non-compliance.

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance support Virginia’s unemployment compensation system of providing adequate and temporary assistance to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own; however, the Chambers oppose legislation to change current worker’s compensation policy and efforts to extend benefits to workers who through their own actions or inactions become unemployed, including those unemployed as a result of an employer lockout or a strike.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

Compared to national averages, Virginia enjoys low workers’ compensation insurance rates. While this makes the state attractive to new business and industry, continued rising costs threaten to jeopardize our competitive edge and places and undue hardship on businesses particularly in harsh economic conditions.

**environmental regulation**

**SUPPORT** broad based federal and state funding sources to meet the expensive cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

On December 29, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency established the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), a “pollution diet” to initiate actions to restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Despite extensive restoration efforts over the last 25 years, the Bay TMDL program was established in order to attempt to meet the federal Clean Water Act.

**employment law**

**SUPPORT** Virginia’s unemployment compensation system of providing adequate and temporary assistance to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own.

**OPPOSE** efforts to extend benefits to workers, who through their own actions or inactions become unemployed, including those unemployed as a result of an employer lockout or a strike.

**OPPOSE** legislation to change current Workers’ Compensation Policy.
The Bay itself is about 200 miles long, home to more than 3,700 species of plants, fish, and other animals. The Bay watershed totals about 64,000 square miles, stretching from Cooperstown, New York to Hampton Roads. Nearly 17 million people live in the Watershed. The TMDL program mandates that Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) be developed by each of the seven states. Subsequently, such regulations will be passed down to local governments and property owners.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

The Chambers understand that steps need to be taken to ensure new, innovative ideas are being developed for energy use and consumption that can be utilized without causing unnecessary harm to the environment, however, the cost to retrofit the region’s urban/suburban storm water systems is in the billions of dollars and there are no stable revenue sources at the federal or state levels to fund the complete overhaul of the region’s storm water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Hampton Roads businesses and property owners cannot afford the burden of these burdensome water quality improvement regulations and the task of cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay must be a partnership between the federal, state, and local governments.

The Hampton Road Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance support legislation that will allow for a Virginia Governor to serve in office for a total of two consecutive terms.

**IMPACT OF THE PRIORITY**

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance believe that allowing Virginia Governors to serve consecutive terms will improve government operations to have more stability in agency management.
Make a difference in the Hampton Roads business community.
Join the Hampton Roads Business Political Action Committee.

The HRBizPAC supports and endorses incumbent state legislators and other candidates who support the Hampton Roads Chamber’s legislative agenda, promote free enterprise and pledge to make Virginia a better place in which to do business.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the HRBizPAC, call the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce at 757-664-2572 or scan the QR Code with your mobile device.

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