



- 2026 Legislative Priorities -

PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

We urge the State to fully fund its share of the realistic costs of the Standards of Quality (SOQ) and reverse policy changes that previously reduced funding or shifted funding responsibility to localities.

- The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) report on K-12 education funding found that public education in Virginia is underfunded, noting that local school divisions receive less funding per student than divisions in other states and several key funding benchmarks.
- Localities need an adequately defined SOQ that more equitably shares the costs of public education between the state and local governments.
- Localities and school divisions should have flexibility in the use of state funds provided for school employee compensation.
- We support allowing all localities the option of levying a one-cent sales tax to be used for construction or renovation of schools.

BUDGETS AND FUNDING

We urge the governor and legislature to preserve and enhance state aid to localities, to not impose mandates on or shift costs to localities, and to enhance local revenue options.

- Adequate state investment for local service delivery is crucial.
- We oppose unfunded state and federal mandates and the cost shifting that occurs when the state or federal government fails to fund requirements or reduces or eliminates funding for programs.
- We urge the state to avoid shifting costs for programs previously supported by federal funds to localities, and to collaborate with local governments to implement required changes to programs with shared state/local responsibility.
- We support additional revenue options for localities to diversify the local revenue stream; the state should not restrict local revenue or confiscate or redirect local dollars to the state treasury.

LAND USE and GROWTH MANAGEMENT

We encourage the State to resist preempting or circumventing existing land use authorities, and to support local authority to plan and regulate land use.

- We support local control of decisions to plan and regulate land use and oppose legislation that weakens these key local responsibilities.
- We support the state providing local governments with additional tools to manage growth.
- We support local authority to address siting and other impacts of utility-scale clean energy resources, and state funding and technical assistance that address the planning, production, transmission, and deployment of such resources.