



Each year, in addition to developing its own legislative priorities for the next General Assembly session, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce also comments and, as appropriate, takes positions on legislative proposals made by the Arlington County Board and School Board.

Responses are not made to every policy position of the two elected bodies; generally, they only are made on issues of substantial budget and public-policy matters related to the business community and economic development in the county, region and across the commonwealth. Responses generally are based on draft County Board and School Board policy packages, as final versions are not yet adopted at the time the Chamber reviews them.

The Chamber's package of responses emanates from the Government Affairs and Economic Development Committee, which forwards recommendations to the Executive Committee. Final action rests with the Chamber's Board of Directors.

Below please find selected County Board and School Board policy statements and legislative requests, and the Chamber's responses:

Arlington County Board

County Board position: Local Taxing Authority: Retain all current local taxing authority, including business license, and machinery and tools tax administration, real estate and rate making authority. Any modifications to local taxing authority must be made revenue neutral on a permanent basis.

Chamber response: The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Transient Occupancy Tax Dedicated to Travel and Tourism Promotion: Request that the General Assembly reauthorize the .25% transient occupancy tax on hotel rooms that funds travel and tourism promotion in Arlington. **Chamber response:** The Chamber strongly supports this position.

County Board position: Economic Development Incentives: Support additional, critically important economic development incentive and program funding to enable Arlington and other Virginia localities to compete successfully with other states, and the District of Columbia, in recruiting and retaining highly sought-after businesses. **Chamber response:** The Chamber strongly supports this position.

County Board position: On-Line Travel Companies/Modifying State Sales and Local Transient Occupancy Taxes: Ensure the collection and remission by on-line travel companies (OTCs) of all state sales and local Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) levies associated with on-line travel sales.

Chamber response: The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority: As a party to the compact, ensure that the Commonwealth continues its long-term funding commitments to WMATA. Look for ways to increase funding in light of recent safety and maintenance issues that have been caused, in part, by aging infrastructure. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Nonpartisan Redistricting: Support depoliticizing the redrawing of Congressional and state legislative district boundaries with an approach that advocates for fairness, transparency and accountability, keeps the residents' interests in mind, and encourages healthy debate and participation by the public in the process. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Land Use Policies: Support authority of local governments to plan, zone, and enforce land use regulations, without restricting local zoning authority or the zoning process. **Chamber response:** The Chamber believes this request is too nebulous for a proper response, but has grave concerns over the phrase "without restrictions."

County Board position: Housing Trust Fund: Support a permanent source of funds for State Housing Trust Fund. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Education: Ensure all high school graduates, including undocumented students who meet residency and other reasonable requirements, have access to Virginia colleges and technical schools at in-state tuition rates. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to All Virginia Utilities: Expand PPAs to include all utilities across Virginia so that nonprofit entities and public agencies served by currently non-participating utilities can purchase renewable power from private investors who take advantage of the federal tax credits. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

County Board position: Permanent Power Purchase Agreements: Replace current pilot program for third-party power purchase agreements with a permanent provision that allows PPAs without customer class, system size, and program capacity limits. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports the broad framework of this proposal.

County Board position: Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansion: Support full Medicaid expansion in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act, which will create jobs as well as increase federal funding to cover a critical group of working, poor Virginians. Support continued efforts to increase program economy, efficiency and effectiveness while enhancing the quality of care. Encourage the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services to continue their rigorous efforts to make sure taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and for their intended purpose. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.

Arlington School Board

School Board position: Funding – The Arlington School Board supports a review and update of the State education funding formula to ensure that it reflects the actual costs and needs of providing quality education. In addition, the Board supports:

- Poverty/ELL Add-On Funding, which would be provided to schools with large numbers of students learning English as a second language and those living in lower-income households.
- Continuation of full funding of the Cost of Competing factor.
- Continuation of the present funding formula for the Virginia Preschool Initiative.

Chamber response: The Chamber supports this position.

School Board position: Community College Credit Coordination – The Arlington School Board supports efforts to provide for the awarding of high school credit for community college courses and for a standardized system for granting community college credit to students who have successfully completed one or more industry recognized credential programs at the high school level. **Chamber response:** The Chamber supports this position.