



2018 GENERAL LAWS POLICY STATEMENT

1 The basic purpose of local government is to
2 provide essential services and protection for
3 the community that citizens cannot provide
4 for themselves. Local governments should
5 decide which services and programs are of
6 primary importance to the community.
7 Virginia's counties, cities and towns need
8 legislation that provides the maximum
9 opportunity to foster improved quality of life
10 and high-quality growth.

11

12 **I. EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT**

13

14 **GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE**

15 The General Assembly should allow
16 significant diversity among municipal
17 charters and not impose uniformity.

18

19 The General Assembly should promote the
20 sharing of the economic, social, cultural,
21 fiscal and educational benefits and burdens
22 of urbanization among all local governments
23 involved.

24

25 The addition of sub-state and special district
26 governments should be controlled. New
27 districts should not be created by the
28 General Assembly unless local governments
29 are unable to furnish services. In addition,
30 no sub-state districts, including planning
31 district commissions, should be granted real
32 or quasi-legislative authority to undertake
33 other functions except when expressly
34 directed by their member jurisdictions,
35 including those towns not directly
36 represented in the entity.

37

38 VML urges a careful review of the statutes
39 concerning consolidation of local
40 governments to ensure (a) that citizen-

41 initiated petitions are signed by a reasonable
42 number of affected citizens who reside in
43 the jurisdiction, and (b) adequate periods of
44 time elapse between consolidation or
45 annexation actions. The Virginia Municipal
46 League supports the General Assembly's
47 provision of financial incentives to promote
48 consolidation of local government services
49 and cooperative agreements among local
50 governments.

51

52 **INTERGOVERNMENTAL ISSUES**

53 Local governments have a vital role in the
54 Commonwealth. They must have sufficient
55 powers and flexibility to meet this role. The
56 General Assembly should adopt legislation
57 to promote and expand, to the extent
58 necessary, municipal powers, to (a) enhance
59 the ability of local governments to provide
60 services required by their citizens, and (b)
61 allow local governments to meet their
62 responsibilities in state/local partnerships.

63

64 VML opposes intrusions into the way local
65 governments conduct their business,
66 including burdensome regulations relating
67 to:

- 68 1. meetings of governing bodies;
- 69 2. purchasing procedures;
- 70 3. matters that can be enacted by resolution
71 or ordinance;
- 72 4. procedures for adopting ordinances; and
- 73 5. procedures for filling vacancies on local
74 governing bodies.

75

76 State intervention in local affairs is only
77 warranted in significant matters where
78 regional or statewide issues that are of great
79 importance exist. No changes should be
80 made in the laws or regulations affecting

1 local government without substantial local
2 input from affected jurisdictions and
3 participation in developing those changes.

4

5 VML opposes legislation that:

- 6 1. bars courts from awarding attorney's
7 fees to local governments when a
8 frivolous suit is filed; and
- 9 2. eliminates the notice of claim
10 requirement found in Va. Code,
11 § 15.2-209.

12

13 Membership on all state and regional
14 commissions or committees dealing with
15 matters affecting local governments must
16 include local officials who represent a
17 demographic and geographic cross-section
18 of counties, cities, and towns.

19

20 VML supports legislation to transfer
21 responsibility from local governments to the
22 state government for the liability,
23 administration and cost of community
24 service options for persons upon whom
25 court costs and fines are levied.

26

27 **TOWNS**

28 The General Assembly and the executive
29 branch should recognize towns as essential
30 units of local government, with important
31 roles in providing services to citizens living
32 in a concentrated environment. As such,
33 towns with their centrality and economic
34 efficiency represent the future of the
35 urbanizing areas of the Commonwealth.
36 Towns should have clear and full authority
37 to be formed and to act in a timely manner
38 on matters which protect public health,
39 safety, and welfare.

40

41 The General Assembly should respect and
42 support the sovereignty, utility, and urban
43 powers of towns. No legislation should be
44 enacted that allows counties to usurp or
45 diminish the authorities of towns. Excise
46 taxes that counties are authorized to levy

47 generally must not apply within towns
48 without the explicit approval by the town's
49 governing body.

50

51 The General Assembly should scrutinize
52 bills dealing with laws of general
53 applications to local governments, to avoid
54 enacting any laws that could be sources of
55 possible conflicts between counties and
56 towns. The following list provides
57 examples of conflicts between towns and
58 counties exacerbated by legislative action:

59

- 60 1. taxation of town residents by county
61 governments at the same rate as that
62 applied to those living in the
63 county's unincorporated areas, when
64 comparable benefits and services are
65 not provided;
- 66 2. county imposition of a merchants'
67 capital tax on businesses located
68 within the town at the same rate as
69 that applied to businesses located in
70 unincorporated areas of the county,
71 when the town levies a business,
72 professional and occupational license
73 tax;
- 74 3. unequal town zoning and planning
75 authority for land straddling or
76 abutting town corporate boundaries
77 and unincorporated county areas;
- 78 4. funding of county sheriffs' and
79 deputy sheriffs' salaries by the State
80 Compensation Board and other state-
81 funded amenities not provided to
82 town police departments;
- 83 5. unequal statutory authority of towns
84 in relationship to that of cities and
85 counties; and
- 86 6. allowing county excise tax within a
87 town without approval of the town
88 government.

89

90 The General Assembly should recognize the
91 unintended consequences of inadvertently
92 omitting towns or cities or counties from

1 legislation. The state laws on local taxes
2 must allow towns to determine how tax
3 dollars collected from residents and
4 businesses of the town will be used.
5
6 Towns should retain the right to annex lands
7 and otherwise expand their boundaries.
8 Towns over 5,000 population should have
9 the right to become independent cities; and
10 cities should have the right to revert to town
11 status.

12 13 **ELECTION LAWS**

14 **Redistricting.** VML recognizes that while
15 redistricting is a political process, the
16 process should be conducted with the end
17 goals of ensuring a strong and responsive
18 representative form of government that
19 enables citizens with communities of like
20 interest to influence election outcomes
21 through participation in the political process.

22
23 VML supports redistricting reform,
24 including the use of a non-partisan
25 independent commission to draw state
26 legislative and Congressional lines based on
27 specified and consistent criteria, including
28 insofar as possible preservation of the
29 integrity of existing city, town, county and
30 precinct lines.

31 32 **Non-partisan local elections.**

33 VML opposes attempts to require that
34 candidates nominated by political parties for
35 local elections be identified by party labels
36 on ballots.

37
38 Non-partisan elections at the municipal level
39 are an outgrowth of the municipal reform
40 movement that began developing at the end
41 of the 19th century in reaction to corruption
42 at the local level. Another outgrowth of the
43 excesses of local political machines was the
44 development of the council-manager form of
45 government and the development of a civil
46 service personnel system. Nationwide,

47 about 75 percent of municipalities have non-
48 partisan elections. Virginia is not unique in
49 this regard.

50
51 There is not a partisan way of responding to
52 public safety, street improvements,
53 enforcing the codes, or taxation required for
54 the various services that the state requires
55 localities to offer (and to pay for). The
56 result of requiring party identification will
57 be increased partisanship at the local level,
58 which will not improve local governance.
59 In addition, requiring party identification
60 will hinder the ability of Federal Employees
61 including our Military to participate as local
62 elected officials.

63
64 **Administration of election laws.** Cities
65 and counties have very little control over the
66 administration of elections, yet pay the
67 majority of costs, including office overhead,
68 voting equipment, equipment storage and
69 security maintenance, training of staff, and
70 printing of ballots. Cities and counties also
71 pay a portion of the costs of the salaries for
72 registrars and members of electoral boards,
73 to include salaries for staff other than the
74 registrar, but have no direct connection to
75 the appointment of these officials. The state
76 should provide an adequate level of funding
77 for local election administration that is
78 commensurate with the State's extensive
79 control of the process. The General
80 Assembly should not increase the cost of
81 election administration without providing
82 state funding to pay for the increased
83 expenditures.

84
85 **Timing of municipal elections.** VML
86 opposes legislative attempts to require that
87 municipal elections be held in November.
88 Localities should continue to retain the
89 ability to determine if their municipal
90 elections are held in May or November.

91 92 **STATE AND FEDERAL MANDATES**

1 The state and federal governments must
2 provide adequate funding for any local
3 programs or responsibilities that are
4 mandated or expanded by state and federal
5 laws or regulations.

6
7 The federal and state governments should
8 not use project funding as a means of
9 forcing local land use decisions in
10 contravention to local land use plans. These
11 actions violate the principles of local
12 authority and weaken the local tax base.

13
14 Federal and state mandates must be reduced
15 when funding is reduced, so that localities
16 are not required to spend additional local
17 dollars to comply with the mandates.
18 Further, funds should be distributed in the
19 most efficient way possible with the least
20 regulatory control.

21
22 The Governor and General Assembly should
23 promote state-local partnerships by
24 requiring:

- 25 1. A review of mandates in specific
26 program areas to (a) establish the full
27 cost to local governments of
28 implementing mandates and (b)
29 develop an equitable basis for
30 determining state-local funding
31 responsibilities.
- 32 2. Completion of cost estimates for
33 proposed legislation prior to its first
34 full review by a legislative
35 committee, with legislation
36 negatively affecting local
37 governments' revenue-raising ability
38 being submitted to the Commission
39 on Local Government "COLG" for a
40 fiscal impact analysis.
- 41 3. Use of a performance-based
42 approach to mandates that (a)
43 focuses on outcomes, (b) offers
44 incentives for achieving state
45 objectives, and (c) gives local
46 governments autonomy to determine

47 the best way to achieve the desired
48 result.

- 49 4. Simplification of state reporting
50 requirements associated with
51 mandates, greater efficiency and
52 coordination, and making better use
53 of reporting technology.

54
55 The alarming tendency of state and federal
56 agencies to treat guidelines authorized by
57 enabling legislation as having the stature of
58 law itself must cease. In addition, the state
59 should avoid unessential and arbitrary
60 implementation of federal regulations.

61 **STATE AND LOCAL** 62 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

63
64 The state requires local governments to
65 provide certain services, such as education,
66 corrections, social services, health and
67 community mental health. The local
68 government does not have the option of not
69 being the state's service provider in these
70 areas. "State aid" to localities is the state's
71 payment for the implicit contractual
72 arrangement for this assignment of duties.
73 In addition, local governments must
74 contribute local funding to these services.

75
76 In addition to the state-mandated services,
77 localities provide other services that are
78 either necessary (water and sewer, police
79 and fire protection, etc.) or desired by
80 residents (parks and recreation, cultural
81 activities, etc.). Local governments need the
82 flexibility and resources to collect revenues
83 to meet all their responsibilities.

84
85 Two fundamental problems in Virginia's
86 intergovernmental structure are first, the
87 state does not fund at adequate levels,
88 existing services, particularly education, that
89 it requires local governments to provide; and
90 second, local officials have very limited
91 revenue options, which forces them to rely
92 heavily on real estate, personal property

1 taxes and other local revenue sources to pay
2 for services.

3
4 Further, to improve the relationship of the
5 state and local governments, the state
6 should:

- 7 1. Not restrict the taxing authority and
8 revenue sources of local
9 governments without local
10 concurrence.
- 11 2. Strengthen the partnership of the
12 state with local governments by
13 granting local government full
14 authority to deal effectively with
15 issues affecting their own locality.
- 16 3. Participate as a financial partner with
17 local governments in the costs of
18 education, including school
19 construction and renovation, and, as
20 an active partner, fully fund the
21 state's fair share of the costs of
22 education.
- 23 4. Follow specific procurement
24 procedures before purchasing
25 property, including adequate inquiry
26 into the purchase, public hearings
27 and notice, and notice of intent to
28 settle sent to the locality. In
29 addition, the state should consider
30 remuneration to the locality for the
31 loss of real estate taxes as well as
32 any loss in economic development
33 potential.

34
35 The General Assembly should continue its
36 involvement with and financial support of
37 the Virginia Institute of Government.

38 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

39 VML strongly supports the free flow of
40 information to citizens and the media
41 through the conduct of governmental affairs
42 at all levels in the open, in good faith
43 compliance with the Freedom of
44 Information Act. VML also supports efforts
45 to educate local government officials about
46

47 the Act, and the importance of extensive and
48 accurate reporting of government affairs.

49
50 Citizens have the right to have personal
51 information protected. Government also
52 must be able to control its work processes so
53 that public business can be conducted. It is
54 in the public's interest to conduct some
55 matters outside public view prior to official
56 action. Accordingly, VML strongly opposes
57 extending limitations on closed meetings
58 and exempt records, which would upset the
59 Act's careful balance among a fully
60 informed public, the protection of
61 individuals' privacy, the ability of
62 government to conduct its work and those
63 matters for which the premature release
64 would not be in the best interest of the
65 locality or its citizens.

66
67 In addition, localities should be able to
68 continue charging reasonable fees for any
69 and all records, including for research time
70 and for computer records that must be
71 provided under the Act to avoid shifting the
72 cost of copying from the requestor to the
73 general taxpayers. The Act should continue
74 to limit rights to documents to citizens of the
75 Commonwealth and news organizations that
76 publish here.

77
78 VML opposes legislation that would require
79 localities to record closed session in any
80 manner.

81 VML opposes legislation that would control
82 the time allotted for public comment at
83 public meetings. While VML supports
84 public comment, localities should have the
85 discretion to determine procedures for when
86 public comment should be taken.

87
88 VML opposes legislation to limit the use of
89 any legitimate means of communications
90 from one elected official to others, including
91 letters, emails and conversation. The

1 General Assembly should not exempt itself
2 from anything that it imposes on a locality.
3
4 State policy must assist local governments to
5 contact and notify their citizens in the most
6 efficient and cost-effective manners
7 possible. Ads required by the *Code of*
8 *Virginia* are increasingly more expensive to
9 run in the newspaper and often are only seen
10 by a decreasing number of citizens. The
11 current trend is for local newspapers to
12 reduce the number of times they are
13 published weekly and/or going to an online
14 platform. This has resulted in localities
15 needing to meet certain advertising
16 requirements with only expensive
17 newspapers available for legal notices.

18
19 A locality's internet presence, social media,
20 local cable access channels, local radio and
21 TV provide alternative methods to contact
22 the citizens much more broadly and
23 effectively than newspaper ads in many
24 areas of the Commonwealth. In addition,
25 the cost of contacting the citizens through
26 new technology can be much lower than
27 advertising in the newspaper. The state code
28 should be amended to allow local
29 governments electronic and other alternative
30 means of communicating with their citizens
31 when providing required legal notices.

32
33 In addition, small towns should be allowed
34 to use first class mail instead of newspaper
35 advertising to notify the citizens of
36 government actions such as advertising a
37 budget hearing or advertising a land use
38 hearing to save the citizens money and to
39 communicate more effectively with the
40 citizens.

41
42 **GOVERNMENTAL & MUNICIPAL**
43 **OFFICIAL LIABILITY**

44 VML calls upon Virginia's congressional
45 delegation to support legislation to restore
46 suits brought under 42 U.S.C. Section 1983

47 to traditional civil rights actions, and to
48 preclude the award of damages if the court
49 finds that the government or its officials
50 were acting in good faith.

51
52 Expanding liability and eroding immunities
53 at the state level across the nation have had a
54 chilling effect on the actions of local
55 government officials contributing to local
56 government insurance problems, creating
57 immense financial risks (particularly for
58 legal costs), and posing a substantial
59 obstacle to the provision of needed public
60 services.

61
62 The Virginia General Assembly should
63 strengthen and must maintain the principles
64 of sovereign immunity for local
65 governments and their officials.

66
67 VML strongly opposes bringing local
68 governments under the Virginia Tort Claims
69 Act. This action would seriously erode the
70 sovereign immunity now enjoyed by
71 Virginia local governments and lead to a
72 substantial increase in frivolous suits.

73
74 The tort reparations system in the U.S.
75 creates many difficulties in the
76 administration of justice. VML supports
77 efforts at the national and state levels to
78 address tort reform, such as limitations on
79 the tort liability of local governments in
80 areas where local governments do not enjoy
81 sovereign immunity.

82
83 The General Assembly should adopt
84 legislation to codify the proposition that real
85 property of local governments shall be
86 exempt from liens created by statute or
87 otherwise. This proposition has already
88 been recognized by the Virginia Supreme
89 Court for mechanics liens.

90
91 **PERSONNEL**

1 Management has the responsibility to ensure
2 that employment, training, and promotional
3 opportunities are provided without regard to
4 any unlawful discriminatory factor, qualified
5 persons with disabilities or any other factors
6 not related to job performance.

7 VML supports:

- 8 1. Compensability for work-related
9 heart/lung/cancer employee
10 disability benefits for any class of
11 employees should be determined by
12 establishing whether work or non-
13 work related risk factors are more
14 likely the primary cause of the
15 claimant's condition.
- 16 2. the current injury by accident
17 definition in the Virginia Workers'
18 Compensation Act.
- 19 3. the current Workers' Compensation
20 Act provisions for use of an
21 employer selected panel of
22 physicians to treat injured workers.
- 23 4. maintenance of the exclusive remedy
24 provisions of the Virginia Workers'
25 Compensation Act.
- 26 5. local governments' authority to
27 establish hours of work, salaries and
28 working conditions for local
29 employees.

30
31 VML opposes:

- 32 1. Any attempt to impose collective
33 bargaining or 'meet and confer'
34 requirements for public employers or
35 employees; and
- 36 2. Any attempt by the federal
37 government to stipulate grievance
38 procedures for state and local
39 employees, such as the police
40 officers bill of rights.

42 **Line of Duty Act**

43 The cost of the current Line of Duty Act is
44 not sustainable for either the state or local
45 governments.
46

47 VML supports recommendations and
48 options made by the Joint Legislative Audit
49 and Review Commission for the Line of
50 Duty Act program that would ensure the
51 fiscal sustainability of the program and
52 ensure that the benefits are available to those
53 who need and deserve them. Further, VML
54 supports a new, dedicated funding source to
55 pay for LODA benefits, but opposes any
56 funding approach that would rely on or
57 adversely affect existing local revenue
58 sources.

60 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS, LOCAL 61 GOVERNMENT PRINCIPLES**

62 VML sets forth the following principles to
63 guide any federal or state legislative action
64 regarding telecommunications issues.

- 65
66 1. Public Rights-of-Way. Local rights-
67 of-way are public property. The
68 rights-of-way contain numerous
69 utility and other facilities. Proper
70 management and maintenance of
71 rights-of-way are essential to ensure
72 public safety, to protect the integrity
73 of the property, to guarantee the
74 safety of workers and to maintain the
75 efficiency of local streets, utility
76 systems and transportation facilities
77 and networks. Private use of public
78 rights-of-way significantly increases
79 management responsibilities and
80 maintenance costs.
- 81
82 2. Franchise authority. Neither the
83 federal government nor the state
84 should enact any laws to shift the
85 award of franchises to use the public
86 rights of way from the local
87 governing body to any state or
88 federal agency. Individuals and
89 businesses in the community help to
90 buy and maintain rights-of-way
91 through their taxes. Rights-of-way
92 should not be used for private

1 purposes without approval by and
2 compensation to the local
3 government for the right to use the
4 space, and local governments must
5 have authority to control the rights-
6 of-way.

7
8 3. Equitable Taxation.

9 Telecommunications providers are
10 valued members of our corporate
11 community. All members of the
12 corporate community must pay taxes
13 on an equitable basis, as
14 appropriately determined by the local
15 government. No legislation should
16 restrict the ability of local
17 governments to impose equitable
18 taxes on telecommunications
19 providers.

20
21 4. Universal Service and Consumer

22 Access. Important educational and
23 community services are provided via
24 telecommunications.

25 Telecommunications providers must
26 be responsive to citizen needs and
27 concerns and provide appropriate
28 customer services to all segments of
29 our community so that disparities
30 due to income or geographic location
31 affecting citizen access to new
32 technology are minimized.

33
34 5. Competition. Local governments are

35 interested in healthy competition in
36 the field of telecommunications. To
37 ensure a competitively neutral and
38 non-discriminatory market, all
39 service providers must pay fair
40 compensation for the use of public
41 property. Governments should not
42 be forced to subsidize some
43 participants in this free-market
44 competition through lower-than-fair-
45 market charges or any other means.

46
47 6. Local Government as Customers.

48 Local governments are important
49 consumers of telecommunications
50 services. In many communities, the
51 local government is the single largest
52 customers of telecommunications
53 services through its government
54 offices, education facilities and
55 emergency communications. As
56 valuable customers, local
57 governments should be treated
58 equitably.

59
60 7. Private Equipment placed on Public

61 Facilities. Local governments
62 should continue to have the authority
63 to approve the location and fees for
64 any attachment or co-location of
65 communications infrastructure on
66 local government buildings and
67 facilities.

68
69 **TECHNOLOGY**

70 State law should allow all counties, cities,
71 and towns to make full and appropriate use
72 of modern technology to promote public
73 safety. Localities should have maximum
74 flexibility to contract with the private sector
75 to implement all aspects of such technology.
76 VML supports legislation that promotes and
77 protects the ability of localities to establish,
78 operate, and maintain sustainable broadband
79 authorities to provide essential broadband to
80 all communities throughout the
81 Commonwealth of Virginia.

82
83 Local governments should have authority to
84 regulate the use of unmanned aerial vehicles
85 in their jurisdictions insofar as is consistent
86 with FAA regulations. Especially when such
87 systems are utilized to support a local
88 governing body or authority authorized
89 under title 15.2 for purposes of inspecting
90 their own facilities, assessing damage
91 caused by natural or manmade disasters, and
92 by fire and rescue personnel for purposes of

1 assessing an emergency to which they are
2 responding.
3
4 Pursuant to the 1996 Telecommunication
5 Act, the cellular phone industry is
6 developing technology to provide for the
7 identification of the origin of cellular
8 emergency calls. Until this technology is
9 implemented and revenue sources have been
10 identified to finance it, the state police
11 should continue to handle the E911 calls
12 they currently handle. Next Generation 911
13 is vital to public safety in the
14 Commonwealth; we support this technology
15 as a funded mandate.

16

17 UTILITIES

18 Fundamental policies should be honored by
19 the state in promoting the delivery of utility
20 services by local governments and the
21 authorities they create:

22

- 23 1. Each provider of service must be free
24 to set its rates without interference
25 from other local governments or the
26 state.
- 27 2. Each local government providing
28 utility services must be able to
29 compete fairly with any other
30 providers without state interference.
- 31 3. Each local government that provides
32 utility services must be able to
33 manage its revenues and
34 expenditures related to the services
35 without state interference.

36

37 Virginia's localities and water and sewer
38 authorities must retain the ability to enforce
39 liens against landlords' properties for the
40 unpaid water and sewer bills of their tenants
41 to have the ability to collect monies owed.

42

43 Municipal utility systems must continue to
44 have the authority to set their own rates.
45 Any attempt by the State Corporation
46 Commission to regulate rates for utility

47 services furnished by local governments
48 would violate the Virginia Constitution.
49 Local governments that provide utility
50 services must continue to have the authority
51 to negotiate the rates, terms and conditions
52 for any attachments to or joint use of
53 municipally-owned utility infrastructure.
54 The safe and efficient operation of the
55 municipal utility requires that final approval
56 for any joint use or co-location on its
57 facilities remain with the locality.

58

59 The State Corporation Commission should
60 develop a structure to ensure that the
61 amounts that utilities can charge localities
62 and other entities for placing electric utility
63 lines and other facilities underground are
64 based on the most cost-effective,
65 competitive, yet safe methods.

66

67 II. PUBLIC SAFETY

68

69 VML supports legislation that preserves law
70 and order and promotes the safety, quality of
71 life and administration of justice within our
72 communities. The Commonwealth should
73 enhance its efforts to prevent juvenile crime,
74 minimize violence in the schools, reduce the
75 formation and operation of gangs by
76 providing funding for programs that prepare
77 our youth to be productive, responsible, self-
78 reliant members of society.

79

80 The state should continue to provide
81 assistance to localities in their efforts to
82 coordinate public safety activities including
83 emergency services.

84

85 VML supports legislation that will clearly
86 establish the relationships between State and
87 localities to assure efficient and appropriate
88 command, control and communications
89 during local emergencies.

90

1 Greater latitude should be given to localities
2 in encouraging innovative methods of
3 combating traffic violations and crime.

4
5 VML supports legislation that ensures our
6 children have the ability to carry, obtain and
7 receive sunscreen at their schools to protect
8 them from sunburn.

9
10 VML supports local jurisdictions efforts to
11 maintain animal shelters in a fiscally
12 responsible manner and does not support
13 any state or federal mandate that would
14 provide a financial burden on local animal
15 shelters.

16 17 **WEAPONS IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

18 VML supports legislation to allow local
19 governments to restrict carrying weapons in
20 any building where a local governing body
21 meets during the meeting, to the same extent
22 weapons are prohibited in public schools.

23 24 **COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**

25 VML requests both increased funding and
26 an equitable distribution formula for
27 services provided under the Comprehensive
28 Community Corrections Act (CCCA) and
29 the Pre-Trial Services Act (PSA). Since the
30 advent of these programs in 1995, caseloads
31 have effectively doubled at the local level,
32 while state resources have failed to meet the
33 caseload increases. These resources are
34 allocated to localities on a discretionary
35 grant basis. Given the statewide character of
36 this program, it is now time to allocate these
37 funds through an equitable formula that
38 recognizes regional costs and benefits of
39 these services.

40 41 **COURT FEES**

42 A user of the court system should not force
43 increased costs on the general population.
44 VML supports legislation to increase court
45 fees to pay for courthouse maintenance,

46 security, renovation and construction and
47 other court-related projects.

48 49 **COURT SECURITY**

50 The General Assembly should adopt
51 legislation making it clear that local judges
52 do not have the authority to order localities
53 to fund more deputy positions for court
54 security than are provided for in the State
55 Code and Appropriations Act.

56 57 **INTERNAL AFFAIRS** 58 **INVESTIGATIONS**

59 Legislation should be enacted to restrict the
60 use, in civil matters, of information gathered
61 in internal investigations.

62 63 **OVERCROWDING/STATE SUPPORT**

64 The state should live up to its commitment
65 to remove state prisoners from local jails.
66 The state should fully fund the per diem
67 reimbursement for all state prisoners.

68
69 Jails built by a single large locality should
70 be made eligible for the same state
71 reimbursement rate for construction as a
72 regional jail facility.

73
74 Local governments should not be forced to
75 pay for state prisoners. The state
76 reimbursement rate must be restored to an
77 amount that is fair to localities reflecting
78 actual costs.

79 80 **TRAINING ACADEMIES**

81 The state should fully fund all mandated
82 criminal justice training provided through
83 certified academies.

84 85 **VIOLENCE/TERRORISM**

86 The General Assembly should enable
87 localities to help communities deal with
88 violence and terrorism issues by:

- 89 1. reducing the accessibility of weapons
90 by criminals and persons with mental

- 1 illness that present a risk of harm to
2 themselves or others,
3 2. expanding state and local
4 cooperative efforts in neighborhoods
5 and localities,
6 3. promoting additional prevention and
7 intervention programs to deal with
8 4. youths who may adopt a violent way
9 of life, and
10 5. granting localities more flexibility to
11 handle problems of abandoned and
12 blighted structures.

13 **NOISE CONTROL**

14 Local government must retain the authority
15 to determine the appropriate measure for

16 establishing unacceptable levels of nuisance
17 noise and to enact local ordinances to
18 address its curtailment.

19
20 **TEXTING AND OTHER CELL PHONE
21 USE WHILE DRIVING**

22 The General Assembly should continue to
23 take steps to prohibit the use of cell phones
24 and other devices for texting, emailing and
25 other activities by a driver while operating a
26 motor vehicle.

27
28 The General Assembly should also assist
29 local governments in enforcing full attention
30 and time to driving ordinances.