



BETTER COMMUNITIES THROUGH SOUND GOVERNMENT

2022 GENERAL LAWS POLICY STATEMENT

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

6 7 **I. EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT**

8 9 **GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE**

10 The General Assembly should allow significant diversity among municipal charters and not
11 impose uniformity.

12
13 The General Assembly should promote the sharing of the economic, social, cultural, fiscal and
14 educational benefits and burdens of urbanization and gentrification among all local governments
15 involved.

16
17 The addition of sub-state and special district governments should be controlled. New districts
18 should not be created by the General Assembly unless local governments are unable to furnish
19 services. In addition, no sub-state districts, including planning district commissions, should be
20 granted real or quasi-legislative authority to undertake other functions except when expressly
21 directed by their member jurisdictions, including those towns not directly represented in the
22 entity.

23
24 VML urges a careful review of the statutes concerning consolidation of local governments to
25 ensure (a) that citizen-initiated petitions are signed by a reasonable number of affected citizens
26 who reside in the jurisdiction, and (b) adequate periods of time elapse between consolidation or
27 annexation actions. The Virginia Municipal League supports the General Assembly’s provision
28 of financial incentives to promote consolidation of local government services and cooperative
29 agreements among local governments.

30 31 **INTERGOVERNMENTAL ISSUES**

32 Local governments have a vital role in the Commonwealth. They must have sufficient powers
33 and flexibility to meet this role. The General Assembly should adopt legislation to promote and
34 expand, to the extent necessary, municipal powers, to (a) enhance the ability of local

35 governments to provide services required by their citizens, and (b) allow local governments to
36 meet their responsibilities in state/local partnerships.

37
38 VML opposes intrusions into the way local governments conduct their business, including
39 burdensome regulations relating to:

- 40 1. meetings of governing bodies;
- 41 2. purchasing procedures;
- 42 3. matters that can be enacted by resolution or ordinance;
- 43 4. procedures for adopting ordinances; and
- 44 5. procedures for filling vacancies on local governing bodies.

45
46 State intervention in local affairs is only warranted in significant matters where regional or
47 statewide issues that are of great importance exist. No changes should be made in the laws or
48 regulations affecting local government without substantial local input from affected jurisdictions
49 and participation in developing those changes.

50
51 VML opposes legislation that:

- 52 1. bars courts from awarding attorney's fees to local governments when a frivolous suit is
53 filed; and
- 54 2. eliminates the notice of claim requirement found in Va. Code,
55 § 15.2-209.

56
57 Membership on all state and regional commissions or committees dealing with matters affecting
58 local governments must include local officials who represent a demographic and geographic
59 cross-section of counties, cities, and towns.

60
61 VML supports legislation to transfer responsibility from local governments to the state
62 government for the liability, administration, and cost of community service options for persons
63 upon whom court costs and fines are levied.

64 65 **TOWNS**

66 The General Assembly and the executive branch should recognize towns as essential units of
67 local government, with important roles in providing services to citizens living in a concentrated
68 environment. As such, towns with their centrality and economic efficiency represent the future
69 of the urbanizing areas of the Commonwealth. Towns should have clear and full authority to be
70 formed and to act in a timely manner on matters which protect public health, safety, and welfare.

71
72 The General Assembly should respect and support the sovereignty, utility, and urban powers of
73 towns. No legislation should be enacted that allows counties to usurp or diminish the authorities
74 of towns. Excise taxes that counties are authorized to levy generally must not apply within
75 towns without the explicit approval by the town's governing body.

76
77 The General Assembly should scrutinize bills dealing with laws of general applications to local
78 governments, to avoid enacting any laws that could be sources of possible conflicts between
79 counties and towns. The following list provides examples of conflicts between towns and
80 counties exacerbated by legislative action:

- 81
82 1. taxation of town residents by county governments at the same rate as that applied to those
83 living in the county’s unincorporated areas, when comparable benefits and services are
84 not provided;
85 2. county imposition of a merchants’ capital tax on businesses located within the town at the
86 same rate as that applied to businesses located in unincorporated areas of the county,
87 when the town levies a business, professional and occupational license tax;
88 3. unequal town zoning and planning authority for land straddling or abutting town
89 corporate boundaries and unincorporated county areas;
90 4. funding of county sheriffs’ and deputy sheriffs’ salaries by the State Compensation Board
91 and other state-funded amenities not provided to town police departments; and
92 5. unequal statutory authority of towns in relationship to that of cities and counties.
93

94 The General Assembly should recognize the unintended consequences of inadvertently omitting
95 towns or cities or counties from legislation. The state laws on local taxes must allow towns to
96 determine how tax dollars collected from residents and businesses of the town will be used.
97

98 Towns should retain the right to annex lands and otherwise expand their boundaries. Towns over
99 5,000 population should have the right to become independent cities; and cities should have the
100 right to revert to town status.

101 **ELECTION LAWS**

102 **Redistricting.** VML recognizes that while redistricting is a political process, the process should
103 be conducted with the end goals of ensuring a strong and responsive representative form of
104 government that enables citizens with communities of like interest to influence election
105 outcomes through participation in the political process.
106

107 **Non-partisan local elections.**

108 VML opposes attempts to require that candidates nominated by political parties for local
109 elections be identified by party labels on ballots.
110

111 Non-partisan elections at the municipal level are an outgrowth of the municipal reform
112 movement that began developing at the end of the 19th century in reaction to corruption at the
113 local level. Another outgrowth of the excesses of local political machines was the development
114 of the council-manager form of government and the development of a civil service personnel
115 system. Nationwide, about 75 percent of municipalities have non-partisan elections. Virginia is
116 not unique in this regard.
117

118 There is not a partisan way of responding to public safety, street improvements, enforcing the
119 codes, or taxation required for the various services that the state requires localities to offer (and
120 to pay for). The result of requiring party identification will be increased partisanship at the local
121 level, which will not improve local governance.
122

123 In addition, requiring party identification will further hinder the ability of Federal Employees
124 including our Military to participate as local elected officials.
125

126 **Administration of election laws.** Cities and counties have very little control over the
127 administration of elections, yet pay the majority of costs, including office overhead, voting
128 equipment, equipment storage and security maintenance, training of staff, safety of staff, and
129 printing of ballots. Cities and counties also pay a portion of the costs of the salaries for registrars
130 and members of electoral boards, to include salaries for staff other than the registrar, but have no
131 direct connection to the appointment of these officials. The state should provide an adequate
132 level of funding for local election administration that is commensurate with the State’s extensive
133 control of the process. The General Assembly should not increase the cost of election
134 administration without providing state funding to pay for the increased expenditures.

135
136 Localities often use schools as polling places and support the continuation of schools as polling
137 places.

138 139 **STATE AND FEDERAL MANDATES**

140 The state and federal governments must provide adequate funding for any local programs or
141 responsibilities that are mandated or expanded by state and federal laws or regulations.

142
143 The federal and state governments should not use project funding as a means of forcing local
144 land use decisions in contravention to local land use plans. These actions violate the principles
145 of local authority and weaken the local tax base.

146
147 Federal and state mandates must be reduced when funding is reduced, so that localities are not
148 required to spend additional local dollars to comply with the mandates. Further, funds should be
149 distributed in the most efficient way possible with the least regulatory control.

150
151 The Governor and General Assembly should promote state-local partnerships by requiring:

- 152 1. A review of mandates in specific program areas to (a) establish the full cost to local
153 governments of implementing mandates and (b) develop an equitable basis for
154 determining state-local funding responsibilities.
- 155 2. Completion of cost estimates for proposed legislation prior to its first full review by a
156 legislative committee, with legislation negatively affecting local governments’ revenue-
157 raising ability being submitted to the Commission on Local Government “COLG” for a
158 fiscal impact analysis.
- 159 3. Use of a performance-based approach to mandates that (a) focuses on outcomes, (b)
160 offers incentives for achieving state objectives, and (c) gives local governments
161 autonomy to determine the best way to achieve the desired result.
- 162 4. Simplification of state reporting requirements associated with mandates, greater
163 efficiency and coordination, and making better use of reporting technology.

164
165 The alarming tendency of state and federal agencies to treat guidelines authorized by enabling
166 legislation as having the stature of law itself must cease. In addition, the state should avoid
167 unessential and arbitrary implementation of federal regulations.

168 169 **STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

170 The state requires local governments to provide certain services, such as education, corrections,
171 social services, health and community mental health. The local government does not have the

172 option of not being the state’s service provider in these areas. “State aid” to localities is the
173 state’s payment for the implicit contractual arrangement for this assignment of duties. In
174 addition, local governments must contribute local funding to these services.

175
176 In addition to the state-mandated services, localities provide other services that are either
177 necessary (water and sewer, police and fire protection, etc.) or desired by residents (parks and
178 recreation, cultural activities, etc.). Local governments need the flexibility and resources to
179 collect revenues to meet all their responsibilities.

180
181 Two fundamental problems in Virginia’s intergovernmental structure are first, the state does not
182 fund at adequate levels, existing services, particularly education and law enforcement, that it
183 requires local governments to provide; and second, local officials have very limited revenue
184 options, which forces them to rely heavily on real estate, personal property taxes and other local
185 revenue sources to pay for services.

186
187 Further, to improve the relationship of the state and local governments, the state should:

- 188 1. Not restrict the taxing authority and revenue sources of local governments without local
189 concurrence.
- 190 2. Strengthen the partnership of the state with local governments by granting local
191 government full authority to deal effectively with issues affecting their own locality.
- 192 3. Participate as a financial partner with local governments in the costs of education,
193 including school construction and renovation, and, as an active partner, fully fund the
194 state’s fair share of the costs of education.
- 195 4. Follow specific procurement procedures before purchasing property, including adequate
196 inquiry into the purchase, public hearings and notice, and notice of intent to settle sent to
197 the locality. In addition, the state should consider remuneration to the locality for the loss
198 of real estate taxes as well as any loss in economic development potential.

199

200 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

201 VML strongly supports the free flow of information to citizens and the media through the
202 conduct of governmental affairs at all levels in the open, in good faith compliance with the
203 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). VML also supports efforts to educate local government
204 officials about the Act, and the importance of extensive and accurate reporting of government
205 affairs.

206

207 Any proposed FOIA legislation should be reviewed by the FOIA Council prior to being enacted.

208

209 The use of electronic meetings should be allowed during a state of emergency when social
210 distancing is a necessity. VML supports the option of local and regional bodies to meet
211 electronically with public participation without a state of emergency in place.

212

213 Citizens have the right to have personal information protected. Government also must be able to
214 control its work processes so that public business can be conducted. It is in the public’s interest
215 to conduct some matters outside public view prior to official action. Accordingly, VML strongly
216 opposes extending limitations on closed meetings and exempt records, which would upset the
217 Act’s careful balance among a fully informed public, the protection of individuals’ privacy, the

218 ability of government to conduct its work and those matters for which the premature release
219 would not be in the best interest of the locality or its citizens. VML opposes legislation that
220 would require localities to record closed session in any manner.

221
222 In addition, localities should be able to continue charging reasonable fees for any and all records,
223 including for research time and for computer records that must be provided under the Act to
224 avoid shifting the cost of copying from the requestor to the general taxpayers. The Act should
225 continue to limit rights to documents to citizens of the Commonwealth and news organizations
226 that publish here.

227
228 VML opposes any further legislation that would control the time allotted for public comment at
229 public meetings. While VML supports public comment, localities should have the discretion to
230 determine procedures for when public comment should be taken.

231
232 VML opposes legislation to limit the use of any legitimate means of communications from one
233 elected official to another, including letters, emails and conversation. The General Assembly
234 should not exempt itself from anything that it imposes on a locality.

235
236 State policy must assist local governments to contact and notify their citizens in the most
237 efficient and cost-effective manners possible. Ads required by the *Code of Virginia* are
238 increasingly more expensive to run in the newspaper and often are only seen by a decreasing
239 number of citizens. The current trend is for local newspapers to reduce the number of times they
240 are published weekly and/or going to an online platform. This has resulted in localities needing
241 to meet certain advertising requirements with only expensive newspapers available for legal
242 notices.

243
244 A locality's internet presence, social media, local cable access channels, local radio, and TV
245 provide alternative methods to contact the citizens much more broadly and effectively than
246 newspaper ads in many areas of the Commonwealth. In addition, the cost of contacting the
247 citizens through new technology can be much lower than advertising in the newspaper. The state
248 code should be amended to allow local governments electronic and other alternative means of
249 communicating with their citizens when providing required legal notices.

250 VML supports the statewide expansion of Virginia Code Section 15.2-2204 language that applies
251 to planning district 23 dealing with newspapers who fail to publish a proper public notice.

252
253 In addition, small towns should be allowed to use first class mail instead of newspaper
254 advertising to notify the citizens of government actions such as advertising a budget hearing or
255 advertising a land use hearing to save the citizens money and to communicate more effectively
256 with the citizens.

257
258 **GOVERNMENTAL & MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL LIABILITY**

259 VML calls upon Virginia's congressional delegation to support legislation to restore suits
260 brought under 42 U.S.C. Section 1983 to traditional civil rights actions, and to preclude the
261 award of damages if the court finds that the government or its officials were acting in good faith.

262

263 Expanding liability and eroding immunities at the state level across the nation have had a chilling
264 effect on the actions of local government officials contributing to local government insurance
265 problems, creating immense financial risks (particularly for legal costs), and posing a substantial
266 obstacle to the provision of needed public services.

267
268 The Virginia General Assembly should strengthen and must maintain the principles of sovereign
269 immunity for local governments and their officials.
270

271 VML strongly opposes bringing local governments under the Virginia Tort Claims Act. This
272 action would seriously erode the sovereign immunity doctrine and lead to a substantial increase
273 in frivolous suits.
274

275 The tort reparations system in the U.S. creates many difficulties in the administration of justice.
276 VML supports efforts at the national and state levels to address tort reform, such as limitations
277 on the tort liability of local governments in areas where local governments do not enjoy
278 sovereign immunity.
279

280 The General Assembly should adopt legislation to codify the proposition that real property of
281 local governments shall be exempt from liens created by statute or otherwise. This proposition
282 has already been recognized by the Virginia Supreme Court for mechanics liens.
283

284 **PERSONNEL**

285 Management has the responsibility to ensure that employment, training, and promotional
286 opportunities are provided without regard to any unlawful discriminatory factor, qualified
287 persons with disabilities or any other factors not related to job performance.

288 VML supports:

- 289 1. the current injury by accident definition in the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.
- 290 2. the current Workers' Compensation Act provisions for use of an employer selected panel
291 of physicians to treat injured workers.
- 292 3. maintenance of the exclusive remedy provisions of the Virginia Workers' Compensation
293 Act.
- 294 4. local governments' authority to establish hours of work, salaries, and working conditions
295 for local employees.
- 296 5. VML continues to support the current rules for work-related disability benefits.
297

298 VML opposes:

- 299 1. Any attempt to require collective bargaining or 'meet and confer' requirements for public
300 employers or employees; and
- 301 2. Any attempt by the federal government to stipulate grievance procedures for state and
302 local employees, such as the police officers bill of rights.
303

304 **Line of Duty Act**

305 The cost of the current Line of Duty Act is not sustainable for either the state or local
306 governments.
307

308 VML supports recommendations and options made by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review
309 Commission for the Line of Duty Act program that would ensure the fiscal sustainability of the
310 program and ensure that the benefits are available to those who need and deserve them. Further,
311 VML supports a new, dedicated funding source to pay for LODA benefits, but opposes any
312 funding approach that would rely on or adversely affect existing local revenue sources.

313 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND BROADBAND - LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
314 **PRINCIPLES**

315 VML sets forth the following principles to guide any federal or state legislative action regarding
316 telecommunications issues.

317
318 VML supports legislation that promotes and protects the ability of localities to establish, operate,
319 and maintain sustainable and affordable broadband authorities to provide essential broadband to
320 all communities throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- 321
- 322 1. Public Rights-of-Way. Local rights-of-way are public property. The rights-of-way
323 contain numerous utility and other facilities. Proper management and maintenance of
324 rights-of-way are essential to ensure public safety, to protect the integrity of the property,
325 to guarantee the safety of workers and to maintain the efficiency of local streets, utility
326 systems, and transportation facilities and networks. Private use of public rights-of-way
327 significantly increases management responsibilities and maintenance costs. Any private
328 use of public rights-of-way should be valued at fair market value.
329
 - 330 2. Franchise authority. Neither the federal government nor the state should enact any laws
331 to shift the award of franchises to use the public rights of way from the local governing
332 body to any state or federal agency. Individuals and businesses in the community help to
333 buy and maintain rights-of-way through their taxes. Rights-of-way should not be used
334 for private purposes without approval by and compensation to the local government for
335 the right to use the space, and local governments must have authority to control the
336 rights-of-way.
337
 - 338 3. Equitable Taxation. Telecommunications providers are valued members of our corporate
339 community. All members of the corporate community must pay taxes on an equitable
340 basis, as appropriately determined by the local government. No legislation should restrict
341 the ability of local governments to impose equitable taxes on telecommunications
342 providers.
343
 - 344 4. Universal Service and Consumer Access. Important educational and community services
345 are provided via telecommunications. Telecommunications providers must be responsive
346 to citizen needs and concerns and provide appropriate customer services to all segments
347 of our community so that disparities due to income or geographic location affecting
348 citizen access to new technology are minimized.
349
 - 350 5. Competition. Local governments are interested in healthy competition in the field of
351 telecommunications. To ensure a competitively neutral and non-discriminatory market,
352 all service providers must pay fair compensation for the use of public property.

353 Governments should not be forced to subsidize some participants in this free-market
354 competition through lower-than-fair-market charges or any other means.

- 355
- 356 6. Local Government as Customers. Local governments are important consumers of
357 telecommunications services. In many communities, the local government is the single
358 largest customers of telecommunications services through its government offices,
359 education facilities and emergency communications. As valuable customers, local
360 governments should be treated equitably.
- 361
- 362 7. Private Equipment placed on Public Facilities. Local governments should continue to
363 have the authority to approve the location and fees for any attachment or co-location of
364 communications infrastructure on local government buildings and facilities.
- 365
- 366 8. Broadband and Local Governments. VML appreciates Governor Ralph Northam’s
367 efforts to make affordable broadband access available to all Virginians. VML believes
368 there are several ways to achieve this goal and no one technology or method of delivery
369 should be chosen as the answer for our geographically-diverse states. While public-
370 private partnerships between a local government and a broadband provider may be the
371 right approach for some communities, a municipal government broadband authority
372 owning and operating a new project may be better for others. State grants should allow
373 localities, groups of localities, municipal broadband authorities and public-private
374 partnerships to submit applications for state grants without prejudice to the applicant.
- 375
- 376 9. 5G. The current 5G statutes have eroded the authority of localities to charge fair
377 market value, add appropriate screening, and control placement of these facilities along
378 with added undue burdens in the form of shot clocks and limited review of applications.
379 VML supports the ability of localities to ensure that their communities retain their unique
380 character to include regulating these structures, particularly in historic areas.

381
382 **TECHNOLOGY**

383 State law should allow all counties, cities, and towns to make full and appropriate use of modern
384 technology to promote public safety. Localities should have maximum flexibility to contract
385 with the private sector to implement all aspects of such technology.

386 Next Generation 911 is vital to public safety in the Commonwealth; we support this technology
387 as a funded mandate.

388

389 Local governments should have authority to regulate the use of unmanned aerial vehicles in their
390 jurisdictions insofar as is consistent with FAA regulations. Especially when such systems are
391 utilized to support a local governing body or authority authorized under title 15.2 for purposes of
392 inspecting their own facilities, assessing damage caused by natural or manmade disasters, and by
393 fire and rescue personnel for purposes of assessing an emergency to which they are responding.

394
395 **UTILITIES**

396 Fundamental policies should be honored by the state in promoting the delivery of utility services
397 by local governments and the authorities they create:

398

- 399 1. Each provider of service must be free to set its rates without interference from other local
400 governments or the state.
401 2. Each local government providing utility services must be able to compete fairly with any
402 other providers without state interference.
403 3. Each local government that provides utility services must be able to manage its revenues
404 and expenditures related to the services without state interference.
405

406 Virginia’s localities and water and sewer authorities must retain the ability to enforce liens
407 against landlords’ properties for the unpaid water and sewer bills of their tenants by having the
408 ability to collect monies owed. No further limits should be placed on this authority.
409

410 Municipal utility systems must continue to have the authority to set their own rates. Any attempt
411 by the State Corporation Commission to regulate rates for utility services furnished by local
412 governments would violate the Virginia Constitution.

413 Local governments that provide utility services must continue to have the authority to negotiate
414 the rates, terms, and conditions for any attachments to or joint use of municipally-owned utility
415 infrastructure. The safe and efficient operation of the municipal utility requires that final
416 approval for any joint use or co-location on its facilities remain with the utility .
417

418 The State Corporation Commission should develop a structure to ensure that the amounts that
419 utilities can charge localities and other entities for placing electric utility lines and other facilities
420 underground are based on the most cost-effective, competitive, yet safe methods.
421

422 **II. PUBLIC SAFETY**

423

424 VML supports legislation that preserves law and order and promotes the safety, quality of life
425 and administration of justice within our communities. The Commonwealth should provide
426 funding for programs that prepare our youth to be productive, responsible, self-reliant members
427 of society by enhancing its efforts to prevent juvenile crime, minimize violence, and reduce the
428 formation and operation of gangs.
429

430 The state should continue to assist localities in their efforts to coordinate public safety activities
431 including emergency services.
432

433 VML supports legislation that will clearly establish the relationships between State and localities
434 to assure efficient and appropriate command, control, and communications during local
435 emergencies.
436

437 Greater latitude should be given to localities in encouraging innovative methods of combating
438 traffic violations and crime.
439

440 VML supports local jurisdictions efforts to maintain animal shelters in a fiscally responsible
441 manner and does not support any state or federal mandate that would provide a financial burden
442 on local animal shelters.
443

444 **MARIJUANA-RELATED POLICE TRAINING**

445 Virginia Police Chiefs share great concern that the Commonwealth may experience sky-rocketing
446 roadside fatalities and accidents with injury, as evidenced in states where marijuana became legal
447 prior to 2021. The ramifications of this sudden change in the law make it imperative that resources
448 for marijuana-related police training be prioritized for the following reasons:

- 449
- 450 • There are fewer than 10 qualified DRE (Drug Recognition Experts) in the state of
451 Virginia. To be certified for DRE, officers must attend a combination of approximately
452 120 hours of classroom instruction and apprenticeship in the field.
- 453 • Due to staffing shortages, agencies lack time to send officers to the required DRE classes
454 even if funding and training are available
- 455 • Ambiguous laws on legal traffic stops and field sobriety will likely result in prosecutorial
456 challenges due to lack of training in roadside testing methods, no per se limit for
457 presumption of impairment for drugged driving, and the absence of an approved
458 instrument to test levels of drugs in the blood. Additional training is also needed for
459 prosecutors to achieve successful outcomes in court for drugged driving offenses.
- 460

461 **VML supports significant and immediate resources for marijuana-related police training.**

462 **COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**

463 VML requests both increased funding and an equitable distribution formula for services provided
464 under the Comprehensive Community Corrections Act (CCCA) and the Pre-Trial Services Act
465 (PSA). Since the advent of these programs in 1995, caseloads have effectively doubled at the
466 local level, while state resources have failed to meet the caseload increases. These resources are
467 allocated to localities on a discretionary grant basis. Given the statewide character of this
468 program, it is now time to allocate these funds through an equitable formula that recognizes
469 regional costs and benefits of these services.

471 **COURT FEES**

472 A user of the court system should not force increased costs on the general population. VML
473 supports legislation to increase court fees to pay for courthouse maintenance, security,
474 renovation and construction and other court-related projects.

476 **COURT SECURITY**

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

481 **INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATIONS**

482 Legislation should be enacted to restrict the use, in civil matters, of information gathered in
483 internal investigations.

484 **OVERCROWDING/STATE SUPPORT**

485 The state should honor its commitment to remove state prisoners from local jails.
486 The state should fully fund the per diem reimbursement for all state prisoners.

487

490 Jails built by a single large locality should be made eligible for the same state reimbursement rate
491 for construction as a regional jail facility.

492
493 Local governments should not be forced to pay for state prisoners. The state reimbursement rate
494 must be restored to an amount that is fair to localities reflecting actual costs.

495

496 **TRAINING ACADEMIES**

497 The state should fully fund all mandated criminal justice training provided through certified
498 academies.

499

500 **VIOLENCE/TERRORISM**

501 The General Assembly should enable localities to help communities deal with criminal issues by:

- 502 1. expanding state and local cooperative efforts in neighborhoods and localities,
- 503 2. promoting additional prevention and intervention programs to deal with
504 youth who may adopt a violent way of life, and
- 505 3. granting localities more flexibility to handle problems of abandoned and blighted
506 structures.