

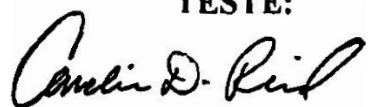
INTRODUCED: November 9, 2020

A RESOLUTION No. 2020-R060

As Amended

To endorse, for the City of Richmond, legislative proposals set forth within the document entitled “City of Richmond Legislative Proposals for the Virginia General Assembly 2021 Regular Session, Revised,” to request the Richmond delegation to the General Assembly of Virginia to take legislative action consistent with and in vigorous support of such recommendations; to support other legislative action recommendations; and to encourage other organizations and individuals to support such recommendations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrons – All Members of Council  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A TRUE COPY:**  
**TESTE:**  
  
**City Clerk**

PUBLIC HEARING: DEC 14 2020 AT 6 P.M.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That this Council hereby endorses as priorities for the City of Richmond the legislative proposals set forth in the document entitled “City of Richmond Legislative Proposals for the Virginia General Assembly 2021 Regular Session, Revised,” a copy of which is attached to this resolution. The Council respectfully requests that the Richmond delegation to the General Assembly of Virginia take legislative action consistent with and in vigorous support of such proposals and encourages other organizations and individuals to support these proposals.

AYES: 9 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED: DEC 14 2020 REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_ STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney

**THROUGH** Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Joyce L. Davis, Council Policy Analyst  
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

**COPY** All Members of Council  
Tabrica Rentz, Interim Deputy City Attorney  
Meghan Brown, Deputy Council Chief of Staff

**DATE** November 4, 2020

**PAGE/s** 1 of 1

**TITLE** CITY OF RICHMOND LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2021 VIRGINIA  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**RECEIVED**  
By Barbara Fore at 7:23 am, Nov 05, 2020

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance**  **Resolution**

**REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON**

All Members of Council

**SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE**

Government Operations

#### ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

A Resolution is requested to endorse, the City of Richmond's legislative proposals set forth within the document entitled, "2021 City of Richmond Legislative Proposals for the Virginia General Assembly".

#### BACKGROUND

A Resolution is requested to endorse, the City of Richmond's legislative proposals set forth within the document entitled, "2021 City of Richmond Legislative Proposals for the Virginia General Assembly," to request the Richmond delegation to the General Assembly of Virginia to take legislative action consistent and in vigorous support of such recommendations; to support other legislative recommendations and to encourage other organizations and individuals to support such recommendations. The requested introduction date is November 9, 2020.

#### FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact Yes  No

Budget Amendment Required Yes  No

Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact \$ 0

Attachment/s Yes  No

**City of Richmond Legislative Proposals  
for the  
Virginia General Assembly 2021 Regular Session**

**Requests for Legislation**

**CHARTER**

**Exclusion of Mayor's Designees from City Council Closed Sessions** – The City requests that the its Charter be amended to authorize the City Council to limit attendance at any closed session of the City Council to only its members and designated staff (Contingent upon final approval of Council Resolution).

**HOUSING**

**Blighted/Derelict Property Taxation** – The City requests authorization to adjust the qualifying criteria that authorizes a locality to tax blighted properties and derelict structures differently by classifying them as a separate class of property for local real property taxation. As currently structured, the criteria for qualification in the statute only includes Petersburg and Emporia. We are asking that the criteria be adjusted to capture the City of Richmond.

**TRANSPORTATION/MOBILITY/VISION ZERO**

**Use of Radar Enabled Cameras** – The City request that the authority to use radar-enabled speeding and red-light cameras be expanded to include business and residential districts. Legislation was enacted in the 2020 General Assembly session permitting their use in posted school crossing zones and work zones.

**Bicycle Traffic Requirements** –The City requests that cities and towns be authorized to permit bicyclists to treat a stop sign as a yield sign and a red-light traffic signal as a stop sign on highways maintained by the locality.

**TAXATION**

**“Games of Skill” (Gray) Machines** – Should the General Assembly continue to allow the operation of “games of skill” machines beyond June 30, 2021, the City requests legislation requiring a 15% ‘add-on’ to the 19% tax that localities receive through the COVID-19 Relief Fund for qualifying, economically distressed localities. Additionally, the City requests the authority to regulate the placement and the quantity of such machines in the City.

**Policy Statements**

**EDUCATION**

**Public Education Funding** - Significant progress was made in public education funding during the 2020 Regular Session. However, much of that progress has subsequently been deferred due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City believes the 2021 General Assembly session should focus on restoring the deferred funding for public education, including increasing the At-Risk Add-On, while continuing to mitigate the ongoing impact of COVID-19. The City fully supports the RPS 2021 State Legislative Priorities for funding as adopted by the Richmond School Board.

**Broadband** - Broadband coverage and affordability is a pervasive issue that has far-reaching implications for K-12 education and lifelong learning. The City urges and supports a concentrated governmental effort to ensure broadband coverage is both available and affordable to those that are most in need.

#### **HOUSING (AFFORDABILITY, EVICTION, GENTRIFICATION AND BLIGHT)**

**Affordability and Gentrification** - The City requests and supports General Assembly actions to provide local governments with all possible tools to deal with the impacts of a market that, on the one hand, is vibrant, and on the other is driving home prices upward to the point of being unaffordable for a vast majority of residents. The City needs to increase the supply of affordable housing. The Commonwealth can encourage this by providing local governments additional sources for financing and encouraging all possible resources to leverage federal dollars to the benefit of affordable workforce and senior housing. Any and all tools to encourage private developers and non-profits to develop, construct and/or rehabilitate housing that is affordable should be incentivized by the state. This includes specific support for:

- Enactment of a state tax credit program that works in tandem with the federal Low Income Tax Credit (LITC) program and is specifically for affordable housing.
- Authority to establish a local Homestead Property Tax Exemption program/ordinance that would allow a lump sum deduction from the assessed value of a residential single-family home based on a fixed deduction amount that is set by the local governing body on an annual basis.

**Housing Trust Fund** - The City supports the restoration of funding and increased funding for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund that was deferred due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City also supports changes that would provide greater flexibility in using a portion of the Fund to match local housing trust funds to support innovative housing projects and low-and moderate-income housing projects that are located in areas experiencing extreme shortages of such housing.

**Transformation of Public Housing** – The City is supportive of and encourages all possible sources of funding from the state and federal government for the transformation of public housing by providing financial assistance and tools for public housing redevelopment and infrastructure improvements.

**Evictions** - As the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare an already exacerbated eviction problem in the Commonwealth, especially in the City of Richmond, further work needs to be done to create a healthier balance between those seeking to obtain or maintain adequate housing and those with housing to offer. The City of Richmond City Council is supportive of the following items:

- Prohibiting evictions for lease violations based on a local nuisance ordinance;
- Requiring a provision in leases for early lease termination for medical reasons for senior or disabled tenants;
- Lowering the statutory maximum amount a landlord may require as a security deposit in a lease from two months to the equivalent of one month's rent;
- Requiring eviction records be sealed within a specified amount of time and automatically expunged where cases are dismissed or decided in favor of the tenant;
- Requiring that tenants facing eviction for reasons other than nonpayment of rent be entitled to legal counsel;
- Allowing localities to enact an ordinance(s) requiring all residential rental property owners register each unit owned and require contact information for the owner or an individual designated by the owner, as well as an ordinance that would allow localities to recoup the costs of maintaining the registry from registrants.

## **SOCIAL/HUMAN SERVICES**

**Wrap Around Child Care**– The City supports efforts to provide seamless, affordable access to quality wraparound early childhood services for at-risk families – including home visiting, subsidized childcare, and preschool through increased funding and improved state and local service delivery systems.

**Mental Health** – The City supports additional funding in FY 2022-2023 for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to include: community based, recovery-focused mental health, substance abuse and emergency/crisis stabilization services; drug treatment facilities for individuals that have addiction problems but who are currently housed in jails or prisons; and mental health training, communication training for prison and jail staff.

**Virginia Grocery Investment Fund - Food Deserts**– The City supports “full” funding of \$5 million for the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund to include financial and technical support for businesses to expand and ensure greater access to healthy food for residents of the Commonwealth. In the 2020 session, \$3.5 million was requested and half was received.

## **TAXATION**

**Cannabis and Cannabinoid Tax**– The City supports authorizing localities to implement a point of sale tax on cannabis and cannabinoid products packaged and sold as a nutritional supplement. The point of sales tax rate should not exceed any existing sales tax rate imposed on tobacco products by the locality.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

**Street Maintenance Funding and Formula** – The City supports increased funding for the State’s urban street maintenance program. Further, the City supports changes in the statutory provisions for the urban street maintenance funding formula by employing a state-of-the-art asset management approach that uses life cycle costs, pavement and bridge conditions, and recognizes on-street parking lanes and turning lanes, to allocate maintenance funding to cities and towns.

**Lowering the Threshold for Reckless Driving in 25 mph Zones** – The City supports legislation that would lower the charge for reckless driving in 25 mph zones to 10 mph over the speed limit rather than the current 20 mph over the speed limit.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

**Combined Sewer Overflow** – The 2020 General Assembly passed a “Title 1” bill that requires the Richmond CSO to submit to DEQ, by July 1, 2021, an interim plan detailing all actions they can initiate by July 1, 2022, to address the requirements of any consent special order issued by the State Water Control Board (the Board) regarding the CSO system; and, by July 1, 2024, a final plan detailing all actions they will take to satisfy such requirements. The bill also requires that Richmond CSO initiate and complete activities pursuant to both plans in specific timeframes. It also requires that CSO provide detailed progress reports to DEQ annually, including the funding history of the CSO system and future funding needs, along with funding requests. DEQ is to transmit such information, along with appropriate supplementary information, to the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources; the Virginia delegation to the Chesapeake Bay Commission; the Secretary of Natural Resources; and the Governor by January 1 of each year. The Governor is to take into account these reports during the preparation of the biennial budget bill and any subsequent amendments. The General Assembly may take such reports into account

in enacting the general appropriation act and may evaluate and modify project deadlines on a biennial basis beginning in 2022. The bill also provides that the Board may consider granting a requested extension of planned deadlines if the General Assembly has not provided such extension, and if the owner or operator has exhausted all reasonable options and failed to secure funding to meet project deadlines. **The City of Richmond DPU will comply with all requested data points and urges the General Assembly to follow through with funding to complete the projects.**

**Stormwater Local Assistance Funding** - The City supports increased state funding for stormwater infrastructure improvements. More funding from the state is needed to help Richmond maintain its existing current infrastructure and build new infrastructure. The Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) should receive more funding beyond \$50 million and cost matching between the state and localities should be reexamined as this model is not equitable for smaller, independent cities with lower tax bases.

**Green Building Codes** – The City supports authorizing local governments to adopt building code amendments applicable to new construction or renovations of existing buildings which increase energy conservation, water conservation, or environmental protections.

**Participation in Federal Pace Program** - The City supports enabling legislation that would allow the Commonwealth to participate in the Residential - Property Assessed Clean Energy program (PACE program). Residential PACE is a federal Department of Energy program that allows homeowners to finance energy efficiency, renewable energy and other eligible improvements on their homes using private sources of capital. PACE programs are typically enabled through state legislation and authorized at the local government level. Municipalities may directly administer residential PACE programs, or through public-private partnerships with one or more PACE providers.

**Brownfields Fund** – To begin remedying the effects of environmental injustice, the City supports authorizing funds provided through the Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund (§ 10.1-1237) for use in the assessment and remediation of public housing that was constructed over former solid waste landfills or other hazardous sites.