

# 2024 Transit + Rail Advocacy Day & Big BBQ Bash

Jan. 22, 2024 in Richmond



VIRGINIA  
TRANSIT  
ASSOCIATION

## AGENDA

9:30 a.m.	Coffee & Breakfast	Capitol House Room 3	1000 Bank St. (Government Center Pulse Station)	Coffee and light breakfast from Meriwether's.
9:45 a.m.	Advocacy Briefing	Capitol House Room 3	1000 Bank St. (Government Center Pulse Station)	<p><b>Hon. Deloris McQuinn</b>, <i>Delegate – District 81, Virginia House of Delegates</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Mark R. Warner</b>, <i>U.S. Senator (D-VA)</i></p> <p><b>Ann McGrane</b>, <i>Senior Program Manager - Transit Technology, NVTC</i></p> <p><b>DJ Stadtler</b>, <i>Executive Director, VPRA</i></p>
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Day on the Hill	General Assembly Bldg.	201 N. 9th St. (Government Center Pulse Station)	Visit with representatives & drop off transit resources. VTA is providing printed materials at the morning event.
12 p.m.	House & Senate Convene	The Capitol	1000 Bank St.	Sit in the galleries of the House or Senate chambers. VTA might even get a shoutout from the floor!
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Big BBQ Bash Reception	Main Street Station	1500 E. Main St. (Main Street Station Pulse Station)	<p><b>Hon. Deanna Reed</b>, <i>Mayor, City of Harrisonburg; President, VTA</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Scott Surovell</b>, <i>Majority Leader &amp; Senator – District 34, Virginia State Senate</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Jennifer DeBruhl</b>, <i>Director, DRPT</i></p> <p>Enjoy a BBQ dinner buffet catered by <a href="#">Oak &amp; Apple</a> and beverage bar. Vegetarian/vegan BBQ option available.</p>

# KNOW-BEFORE-YOU-GO



## WAYS TO ADVOCATE

**Attend the Morning Briefing** for actionable information to share with your representatives.

VTA is distributing **Advocacy Day packets** with a [Transit & Rail report](#), a [customizable grip card](#) and info about “the Better Bus Stop Bill.” **Your organization can bring labels no larger than 3.75"x3.75" to place on the card OR we will provide them.**

Reach out to **set a meeting on Jan. 22** with your local representatives by calling or sending an email to your legislator about who you are and why you want to meet with them. If you don't hear back straight away, be sure to make a follow-up call.

Advocates can also visit with their representatives' staff and leave materials without setting a meeting.

VML has a great guide with [Tips for Effectively Communicating with Legislators](#).

**Sit in the galleries of the House and Senate Chambers** while in session at The Capitol.

**Attending the Big BBQ Bash** evening reception is an excellent networking opportunity to engage with other political and transit industry representatives.



## GETTING AROUND

Advocacy Day is walkable!

Download [Transit App](#) for planning & tracking GRTC bus rides.

Utilize [parkopedia.com](#) to find paid parking OR use your hotel's parking. The GA website also has [parking recommendations](#).



## NAVIGATING THE CAPITOL

### **Brochure & Map of Capitol Square**

Please use the public entrance for the **Capitol on Bank Street & General Assembly Building on East Broad Street**. Prepare for [security screenings](#) at both.

### **How to find Capitol House Room 3**

**Download VPAP's General Assembly app** for a directory of Legislators.

**GAB Floor Directory**.  
**Senate Directory**.  
**House of Delegates Directory**.

### **Who is my Legislator?**

Use your organization's address to find out who represents you.

**What's on the docket** that day.



## FOOD

We are serving coffee and light breakfast at the Morning Briefing.

### **LUNCH RECOMMENDATIONS**

- [Meriwether's at GAB](#)
- [Meriwether's Market in Truist](#)
- [Capital Ale House](#)
- [Secret Sandwich Society](#)

### **COFFEE**

- [Meriwether's at GAB](#)
- [Sefton Coffee Co.](#)
- Starbucks at the Omni & Marriott hotels
- Dunkin Donuts at Canal & 6th Streets

### **DINNER**

Enjoy a BBQ dinner buffet catered by [Oak & Apple](#) and beverage bar at the evening reception. Vegetarian/vegan BBQ option available.



## RECEPTION TICKETS

**VTA members, event sponsors, legislators and their staff attend the evening reception for free.**

**Non-members** can purchase reception tickets at [vatransit.com/advocacyday](http://vatransit.com/advocacyday).

# VIRGINIA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

From FY 2021 to FY2022, Virginia's transit ridership grew **54 percent** and our Amtrak ridership grew **73 percent**.

In **FY 2022**, **77.4 million** public transit trips, **1.6 million** Amtrak trips, and over **40,000** Virginia Breeze (intercity bus) trips were taken in the Commonwealth, equaling over **216,000** mass transit trips taken every day.



## 2023

# Impact of Transit & Rail in Virginia

## Transit & Rail Connects the Commonwealth:



**78 percent**  
Virginians



**2.7 million**  
Jobs



**70 percent**  
Higher education  
students

## Transit & Rail Grows our Economy



**\$9.63 billion**  
Economic benefits  
generated annually



**23,300+**  
Jobs created/sustained  
each year



**\$16.4 Million**  
Roadway maintenance  
savings

## Transit & Rail Improves our Environment



**1.1 Billion**  
Passenger miles  
off our roads



**12.4 Million**  
Gallons of fuel  
not burned



**110,000+**  
Metric tons of CO<sup>2</sup>  
emissions not released

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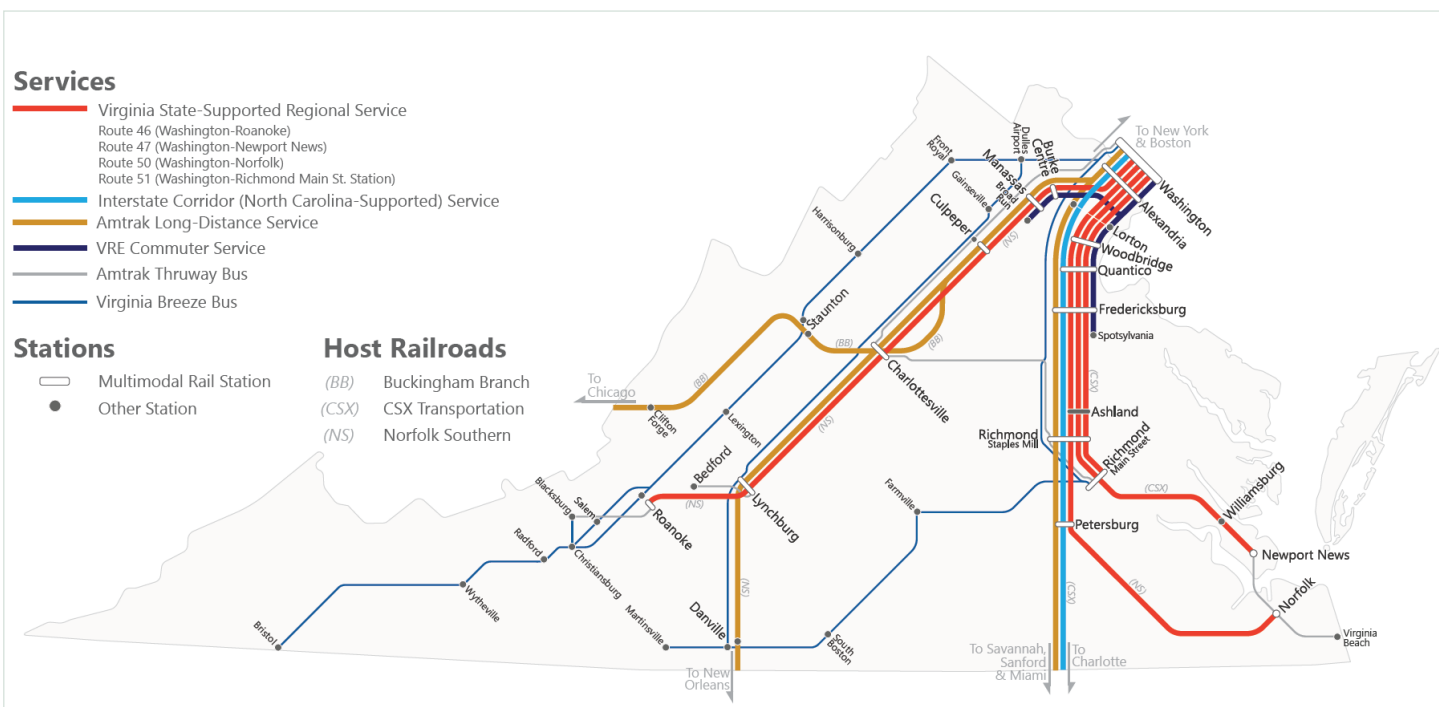
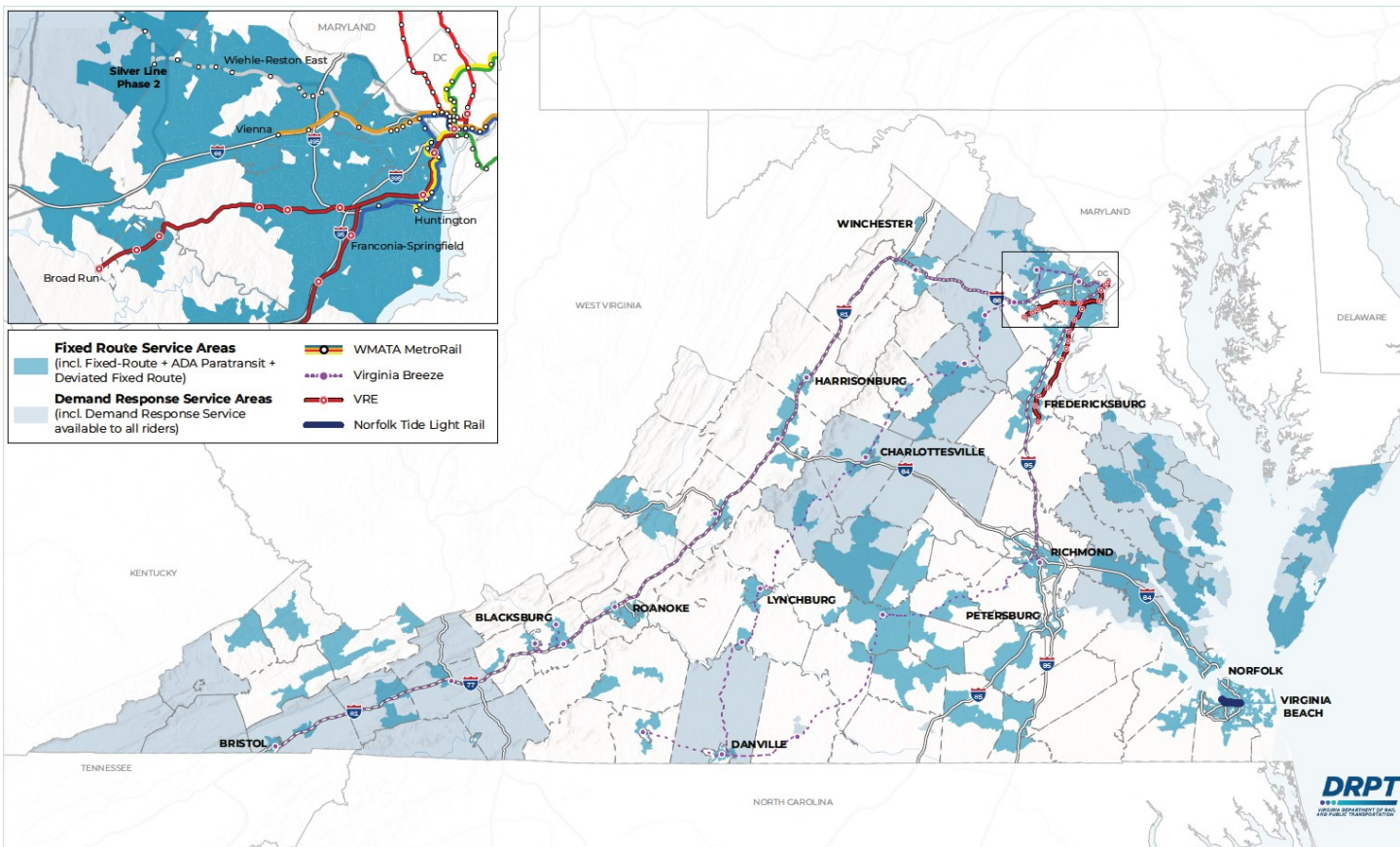


2023

Impact of Transit &  
Rail in Virginia

# Maps of Public Transit Service and Intercity Rail/Bus Routes

Maps created by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation



# Ridership Statistics

## FY 2022

Amtrak Station (Intercity Rail)	FY 2022
Ashland	21,894
Petersburg	33,311
Richmond - Main Street (2004)	74,794
Richmond - Staples Mill	303,204
Newport News	70,645
Norfolk (2013)	129,791
Williamsburg	48,083
Alexandria	211,971
Burke Centre (2010)	12,786
Fredericksburg	72,354
Lorton (Auto-Train)	269,381
Manassas	28,823
Quantico	16,174
Woodbridge	18,994
Charlottesville	125,270
Clifton Forge	1,475
Culpeper	13,816
Danville	5,765
Lynchburg	48,326
Roanoke (2018)	66,721
Staunton	4,748

Virginia Breeze Route (Intercity Bus)		FY 2022
Valley Flyer	Connects Blacksburg and Washington, D.C., with stops in Christiansburg, Lexington, Staunton, Harrisonburg, Front Royal, Dulles International Airport, and West Falls Church	22,893
Highlands Rhythm	Connects Bristol with Washington, D.C., with stops in Wytheville, Radford, Christiansburg, Salem, Harrisonburg, Dulles International Airport, and West Falls Church	6,134
Piedmont Express	Connects Danville and Washington, D.C., with stops in Altavista, Lynchburg, Amherst, Charlottesville, Culpeper, Warrenton, Gainesville, and Dulles International Airport	5,129
Capital Connector	Connects Martinsville and Washington, D.C., with stops in Danville, South Boston, Farmville, and Richmond	5,930
<b>Annual Passengers</b>		<b>40,086</b>

**Annual Trips** 1,578,326

Transit Service - Fiscal Year 2022	On Demand	Commuter Bus	Bus	Bus Rapid Transit	VanPool	Light Rail	Metro Rail	Commuter Rail	Ferry	Total Ridership
Metro (Virginia Portion)	196,077		11,926,896				23,203,703			35,326,675
Art Bus (Arlington County)	42,610		1,772,823							1,815,433
Bay Transit	119,573									119,573
Blacksburg Transit	26,196		3,241,640							3,267,836
Blackstone Area Bus Service			24,049							24,049
Bristol VA Transit	826		34,487							35,313
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission/BRITE Bus	7,050		155,683							162,733
Charlottesville Area Transit			1,156,514							1,156,514
DASH Bus (Alexandria)	26,988		3,019,825							3,046,813
Danville Transit	49,868		191,058							240,926
CUE Bus (Fairfax City)			536,110							536,110
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation			846,468							846,468
District Three Public Transit	56,345		86,824							143,169
Fairfax Connector Bus System			7,214,551							7,214,551
Farmville Area Bus	5,746		71,935							77,681
Four County Transit			106,986							106,986
FXBGO! (Fredericksburg)			179,874							179,874
Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC)	14,941		431,684							446,625
GRTC (Richmond)	254,892		6,612,969	1,576,119	116,546					8,560,526
Valley Metro (Roanoke)	63,328		1,071,150							1,134,478
Greensville Emporia Transit System			5,433							5,433
Hampton Roads Transportation (HRT)	318,171		5,150,682		48,029	701,471			213,737	6,432,090
Harrisonburg Transit	32,274		1,327,799							1,360,073
JAUNT	157,027	31,270								188,297
Lake Area Bus	11,777									11,777
Loudoun County Transit	12,310	149,701	272,284							434,295
Mountain Empire Older Citizens Transit	112,975									112,975
Petersburg Area Transit	6,240		397,846							404,086
Potomac and Rappahannock (OmniRide)	2,820	615,859	601,604		526,341					1,746,624
Pulaski Area Transit	2,258		25,108							27,366
RADAR Transit/Unified Human Services Transportation System	56,904									56,904
Radford Transit			129,679							129,679
Town of Altavista (Campbell County)			14,878							14,878
Town of Bluefield/Graham Transit			29,128							29,128
Town of Chincoteague			3,001							3,001
Virginia Railway Express								822,440		822,440
Virginia Regional Transit	38,007		123,930							161,937
Star Transit (Accomack-Northampton)	5,190		65,470							70,660
Suffolk Transit	1,897		73,369							75,266
Williamsburg Area Transit	17,360		670,047							687,407
Winchester Transit	10,212		124,011							134,223
York County Transit			60,494							60,494
<b>Annual Passengers</b>	<b>1,649,862</b>	<b>796,830</b>	<b>47,756,289</b>	<b>1,576,119</b>	<b>690,916</b>	<b>701,471</b>	<b>23,203,703</b>	<b>822,440</b>	<b>213,737</b>	<b>77,411,366</b>

# Impact of Public Transit and Intercity Rail/Bus Service

Data is derived from multiple sources including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak, Virginia Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Department of Energy, and US Census Bureau.

## Transit & Rail Connects the Commonwealth:



**78 percent**  
Virginians



**2.7 million**  
Jobs



**70 percent**  
Higher education

## Transit & Rail Grows our Economy



**\$9.6 billion**  
Economic benefits  
generated annually



**23,300+**  
Jobs created/sustained  
each year



**\$16.3 Million**  
Roadway maintenance  
savings

## Transit & Rail Improves our Environment



**1.1 Billion**  
Passenger miles  
off our roads



**12.4 Million**  
Gallons of fuel  
not burned



**110,000+**  
Metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>  
emissions not released



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## Visitor Information

Capitol Square is a public park that changes with the seasons, the General Assembly Sessions, and the bustle of Richmond's vigorous downtown.

Beginning in January of each year, the Square pulses with activity as legislators from all parts of Virginia convene to conduct the business of the people.

Throughout the year, visitors enjoy the magnificent grounds, walkways, monuments and magic of the historic Square. School children and tourists from around the globe use the Square as a starting point to visit downtown and statewide historical attractions.

### Operating Hours

The Capitol building is open to visitors 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mon-Sat and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Capitol Square is open to the public from 6:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. daily.

### Tours

Free one-hour guided tours begin Monday through Saturday no later than 10:00 a.m. for walk-in visitors (9:00 a.m. for groups by appointment), with the last tour starting at 4:00 p.m. On Sunday, guided tours are available beginning at 1:00 p.m., with the last tour starting at 4:00 p.m. In addition, self-guided tours are available during operating hours each day.\* Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Individuals and small groups are invited to tour the Capitol on their own or with a tour guide. Guided tours for groups of 10 or more may be arranged by calling Capitol Guides at (804) 698-1788.

The Capitol's introductory film *Keepers of the Flame* is available for viewing on demand at <http://virginiacapitol.gov/kotf>

### Entrance

Visitors may temporarily enter the Capitol at the West Entrance.

### Executive Mansion

Home of Virginia's Governor and First Family since 1813, the Executive Mansion is the oldest governor's residence still used for its original purpose. Guided tours are available on a limited basis and vary according to the season. Call (804) 371-8687 for more information or to schedule a group tour.

\*Times subject to change



Photography, Design, & Illustrations of Capitol and Interiors: Dick Kirkland, House of Delegates Clerk's Office  
Map images: Copyright Richmond Times-Dispatch; used with permission  
1831 engraving of Capitol: Valentine Richmond History Center  
All other images: The Library of Virginia

# The Virginia State Capitol



"Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government."

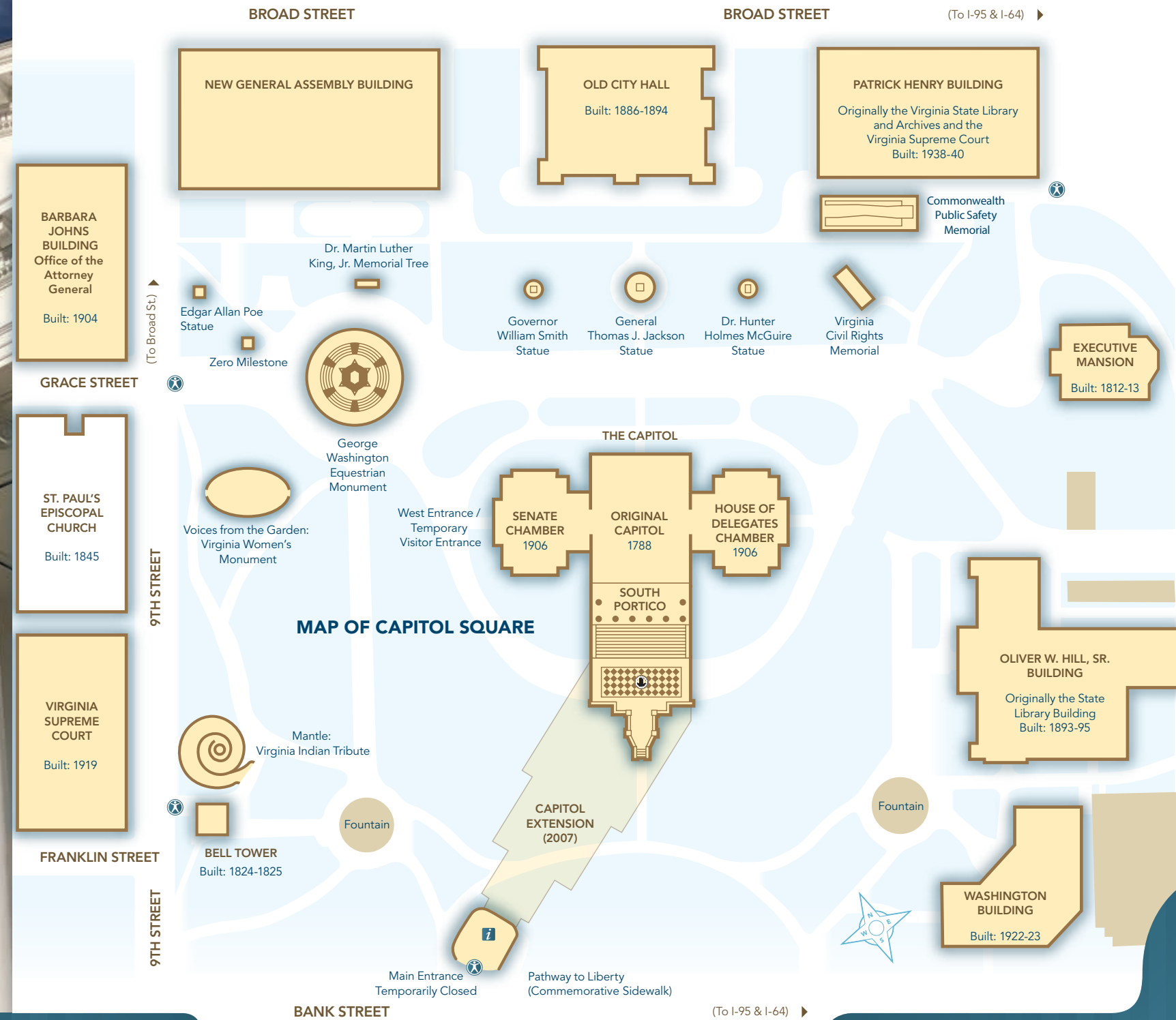
Thomas Jefferson

### It All Began in Virginia

American self-government began in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, and it continues to thrive at the Capitol today.

The Virginia General Assembly convenes here annually on the second Wednesday in January for 60 calendar days in even-numbered years; 45 days in odd-numbered years. Citizen legislators represent the interests of over 8.5 million Virginians.

Forty State Senators are elected for four-year terms. The Lieutenant Governor is the President and presiding officer of the Senate. The Senate elects a senior member as President pro tempore and the Clerk, who serves at the pleasure of the Senate. The House of Delegates has 100 members, who are elected every two years. The Speaker of the House is elected from and by the membership, and the Clerk is elected by the membership, each for a two-year term.



## The Virginia State Capitol

1000 Bank Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
[www.virginiacapitol.gov](http://www.virginiacapitol.gov)  
(804) 698-1788

rev. Summer 2022

"This building is, beyond comparison, the finest, the most noble, and the greatest in all America."

A Visitor to the Capitol from France, 1796

This Capitol is a living landmark to American political ideals and a civics classroom for future citizens of the Commonwealth and the Nation.

For more information about Capitol Square over time please visit <https://virginiacapitol.gov/capitol-square>

## A Noble Experiment

### A Home for Virginia's General Assembly

The first session of the Virginia legislature took place in Jamestown in 1619, a year before the first Pilgrim arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The legislature met in churches, homes, a college, taverns and statehouses in Jamestown and Williamsburg for 160 years. In 1780 the capital was moved to Richmond. The General Assembly met in two frame warehouses at 14th and Cary Streets and appropriated funds to build a permanent home for the new seat of government. Lawmakers began meeting in the new Capitol in 1788.

### Jefferson's Architectural Vision



It was 1785, two months into his tenure as Ambassador to France, when Thomas Jefferson agreed to help design Virginia's Capitol—from afar. Inspired by the Maison Carrée in Nîmes, France, and based on classical Roman temple design, Mr. Jefferson's Capitol, atop

Shockoe Hill, is made of brick and covered with stucco. The Ionic columns on the South Portico contain the original pine tree center posts. The cornerstone was laid in 1785 when Patrick Henry was governor. The completed building became a centerpiece for the city and state. In 2013, Virginia's Capitol was featured in a nationwide TV documentary that noted an esteemed panel of historians and architects had chosen it as one of "10

Buildings that Changed America".

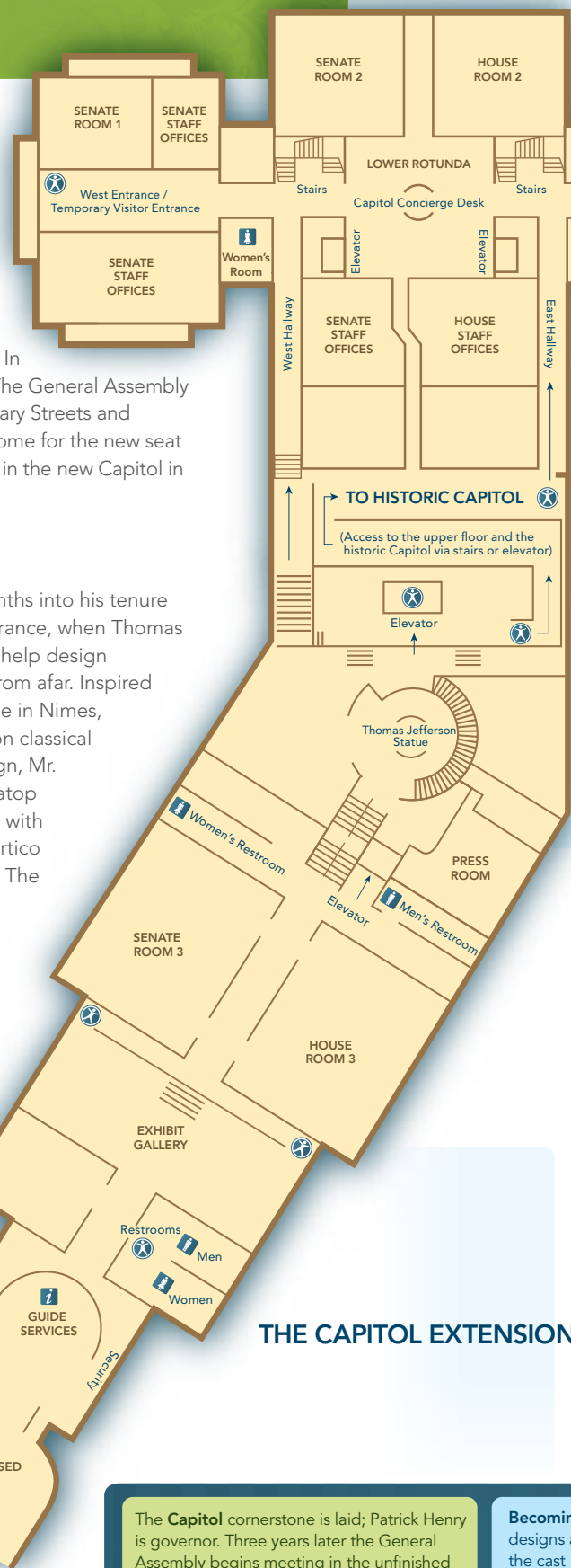
### The Rotunda

In the center of the Capitol stands the two-story Rotunda, featuring

likenesses of the eight Virginia-born presidents. A dramatic interior dome and skylight illuminate Jean-Antoine Houdon's marble statue of George Washington. In 1785, Houdon visited the General at Mount Vernon, took detailed body measurements, and made sketches. He coated Washington's face with oil and covered it in plaster to make a life mask. The completed life-sized statue stands 6'2" and is considered a perfect likeness.

### CAPITOL BUILDING PUBLIC ENTRANCE

Bank St. at 10th St.



### THE CAPITOL EXTENSION

### FLOOR PLANS OF THE CAPITOL

**HISTORIC CAPITOL 1ST FLOOR (Meeting rooms and offices)**

**HISTORIC CAPITOL 2ND FLOOR (Tours)**

Originally a courtroom, the **Old Senate Chamber** displays "The Arrival of the First Permanent English Settlers Off Jamestown Island, May 13, 1607" by Griffith Baily Coale, and "Storming of a British Redoubt at Yorktown by American Troops" by Eugene Louis Lami.



In the **Old Hall of the House of Delegates**, the Bill of Rights was ratified into the U. S. Constitution. Aaron Burr was tried for and acquitted of treason, and Robert E. Lee assumed command of the Virginia forces.



The **Jefferson Room** contains a large full-length portrait of Thomas Jefferson by George Catlin, the original plaster model of the Capitol, commissioned by Jefferson and built by Jean-Pierre Fouquet, and an 18th-century clock given to the Commonwealth by Lady Astor.



### The Burning of Richmond

When the South fell in 1865 and the capital city of the Confederacy was in flames, citizens fleeing the fires along the James River assembled in Capitol Square as a place of refuge. The Capitol and Executive Mansion escaped destruction. President Abraham Lincoln and his son, Tad, visited the day after the fall of Richmond. Lincoln would be assassinated 10 days later.



### Virginia Civil Rights Memorial

The "Virginia Civil Rights Memorial" commemorates events beginning in 1951, when 16 year old Barbara Johns led a student walk-out to protest the deplorable conditions in her segregated high school. Bronze figures depict the student walk-out, legal and religious leaders who supported the students' cause, and a group of individuals of all races walking confidently into the future.



### Creating Constitutions

The Capitol is an historic meeting place for amending and creating new constitutions expressing our most fundamental laws. In 1791 the proposed Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution became law of the land when the Virginia Assembly cast the deciding votes in their favor. In 1829 the "Convention of Giants" (including Madison, Monroe and Marshall) met here and created a new Constitution for Virginia. Five of Virginia's constitutions have been created in this building, as recently as 1970.

### Virginia Indian Tribes

Even before European settlement, Virginia Indians have governed themselves through tribal councils, a form of representative government older than the General Assembly. Today, the Commonwealth of Virginia officially recognizes 11 Indian tribes: the Cheroenhaka, Chickahominy, Chickahominy -- Eastern Division, Monacan, Nanssemond, Nottoway, Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Upper Mattaponi, Patowomeck, and Rappahannock. Visit the newly completed "Mantle: Virginia Indian Tribute" next to the Bell Tower in Capitol Square.



### The Seal of Virginia

In the Summer of 1776, a committee of four — George Wythe, George Mason, Richard Henry Lee and Robert Carter Nicholas — drew from classical Roman ideals to design a seal for the newly formed Commonwealth of Virginia.



Emphasizing their independence from Britain, the committee selected the Roman goddess Virtus, representing freedom, valor and heroism, and the Latin phrase, "Sic Semper Tyrannis" — Thus Always to Tyrants — for the Seal of Virginia. This phrase became the state motto.

### Governor L. Douglas Wilder

The inauguration of the nation's first elected African-American governor was held here in 1990. L. Douglas Wilder, a grandson of slaves, was sworn in as Virginia's 66th Governor.



### A Name Fit for A Queen

Sir Walter Raleigh may have suggested the name for Virginia around 1584 after the powerful Queen Elizabeth I of England. Also known as the Virgin Queen, she was an advocate for religious tolerance, literature, theater and music.

### Thomas Jefferson, Architect of Liberty

Standing larger-than-life inside the plaza of the Capitol Extension, the bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson serves as a focal point and welcome to visitors as they prepare to enter the historic Capitol building he designed. Completed and dedicated in 2012, the privately funded statue depicts Jefferson at the age of 42. He holds in his hands one of his architectural drawings for the building that would become the Virginia State Capitol.



### Architectural Inspiration

The Virginia State Capitol introduced the Classical Revival temple style to the modern world. The first statehouse designed in the new Republic, it has inspired countless public buildings for over 200 years. The Capitol was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960.

### What is a "Commonwealth"?

A "Commonwealth" is a government based on the consent of the people and guided by the rule of law. Virginia evolved from a Royal Colony into a Commonwealth with a new written constitution in 1776. Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Kentucky also are Commonwealths.

### Notable Visitors to Capitol Square

Included among the hundreds of thousands of visitors to Capitol Square are many historical figures and notable personalities.

Three days after his famous "Iron Curtain" speech, Winston Churchill joined General Dwight D. Eisenhower for a speech to a joint session of the General Assembly in 1946.

Andrew Jackson, Winfield Scott, Meriwether Lewis and Washington Irving were spectators and reporters at the treason trial of Aaron Burr in 1807. Chief Justice John Marshall presided.

The **Marquis de Lafayette**, a Revolutionary War hero, was made a full citizen of Virginia by an Act of Assembly. A bust of the Frenchman, sculpted by Houdon, is displayed in the Rotunda. Lafayette visited the Capitol in 1824.

Presidents George Washington, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, James K. Polk, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft and Gerald Ford all came calling during their terms of office.

Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Woodrow Wilson, Dwight Eisenhower and Bill Clinton visited the Capitol either before or after their presidencies.

Other notable visitors include Charles Dickens, Charles Lindbergh, Lady Astor, Henry James, Frederick Law Olmsted, Daniel Webster, Daniel Boone, Jefferson Davis, John James Audubon, Muhammad Ali, Margaret Thatcher, Vice President Al Gore and Queen Elizabeth II.

### Capitol Timeline

1785

1813

1816

1825

1850

1858

1861 - 1865

1870

1906

1964

2007

The **Capitol** cornerstone is laid; Patrick Henry is governor. Three years later the General Assembly begins meeting in the unfinished building, which is finally completed in 1798.

**Becoming a Square.** French immigrant Maximilian Godefroy designs a landscaped park around the Capitol. Two years later the cast iron fence is added, creating the 12-acre Capitol Square. The original fence, designed by Paul Alexis Sabbaton and installed in 1819, remains in place today.

**Homage to The Revolution.** A dedication ceremony is held for the George Washington Equestrian Monument on the northwest corner of Capitol Square. Joining the General will be statues of Andrew Lewis, representing Colonial Times; Patrick Henry for The Revolution; George Mason for the Bill of Rights; Thomas Jefferson, Independence; Thomas Nelson, Finance; and John Marshall, Justice. The monument is completed in 1869.

**The Capitol Disaster.** Sixty-two are killed and another 251 injured when the third floor court room, overcrowded with citizens wishing to hear the verdict in a contested election case, collapses into the empty House of Delegates chamber below.

**Hyphens** joining the wings to the historic Capitol are enlarged to create more work space for legislators.

The **Executive Mansion** is completed. It remains the nation's oldest Governor's residence in use and is a National Historic Landmark.

The **Bell Tower** is completed to house the public guard, predecessor of today's Capitol Police.

**Notman Landscape Plan.** Sculpting the Square are the meandering walkways, native trees and shrubs designed by Scottish immigrant, master architect and landscaper, John Notman. Its Picturesque design predates Central Park by almost a decade.

**The Confederate Congress.** The building serves as the Capitol of the Confederacy and as the State Capitol of Virginia during the Civil War. Robert E. Lee takes command of the Virginia State forces here in 1861, and Jefferson Davis is inaugurated as Confederate President on the Square in 1862. Ex-president John Tyler and General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson lie in state here during the war.

The **East and West Wings**, designed by John Kevan Peebles to house new chambers for the House of Delegates and Senate, are completed at a cost of \$250,000.



**The Capitol Restoration and Expansion Project** is completed at a cost of \$104.5 million. Historic Capitol interiors are restored to their appearance when the wings were added in 1906. An underground extension provides 27,000-sq.-ft. of additional space while preserving the exterior beauty of Mr. Jefferson's Capitol.



# General Assembly Building

## Floor Directory

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### Lower Level

House Room A  
Tunnel Entrance to Capitol

### 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Information  
Capitol Police Security Screening  
Commonwealth Room  
Constituency Center  
Dining  
Press Room

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

House Committee Operations  
House Rooms B and C  
House North and South Subcommittee Rooms  
House Briefing Room  
House Burgess Room

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Senate Committee Operations  
Senate Rooms A, B and C  
Senate Subcommittee Room

### 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Division of Legislative Services  
House Information Systems  
Senate Briefing Room  
Senate Fiscal and Human Resources

### 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Senate Member Offices  
Senate Post Office  
Senate Subcommittee Room  
Senate Support Services

### 6<sup>th</sup> Floor

Senate Member Offices  
Senate Subcommittee Room North and South

### 7<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Member Offices  
House North and South Conference Rooms

### 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Member Offices  
House 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Meeting Room

### 9<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Member Offices  
House 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Meeting Room

### 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Member Offices  
House 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Meeting Room

### 11<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Member Offices  
House Human Resources  
House Finance  
House Post Office  
House Support Services

### 12<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Appropriations Chair & Vice Chair  
House Appropriations Room  
House Appropriations Staff  
House Training Room

### 13<sup>th</sup> Floor

Senate Finance and Appropriations Room  
Senate Finance and Appropriations Staff  
Senate Information Systems

### 14<sup>th</sup> Floor

House Speaker  
House Majority and Minority Leaders  
Senate Leadership  
Senate Leadership Conference Room  
Speaker's Conference Room

Legislative Bill Room - 1st floor, Parking Deck - Enter at 9th and Broad Street

# Tips for Effectively Communicating with Legislators

Local leaders have always played a crucial role in explaining to state legislators how the actions they take at the General Assembly affect Virginia’s communities. The 2024 session will bring one of the largest classes of freshmen members in recent history – it will be more important than ever for local leaders to communicate their reasons for opposition to, or support of, specific legislation.

## Written communications

A well-written letter or email is one of the best ways to introduce yourself and make your legislators aware of your thoughts and opinions about a particular issue. Here are some tips for getting your message across effectively:

- **Be brief.** Legislators have many demands on their time. They appreciate communications that are short and to the point.
- **Put the message in your own words.** Group emails, form letters and petitions don’t have the same impact as personal, informed opinions.
- **Address your message to a specific legislator or legislators.** Depending on your message, you may want to write to the sponsor of a bill, certain members of a committee, or your own legislators. Don’t address your message to the entire legislature.
- **Give any sources of information** that you use to make your point.
- **Include your contact information** so they have a way to respond.
- **After legislation is introduced:**
  - **Identify bills** by their number, title, and sponsor.
  - **Explain your position** on the bill and ask for the legislator’s support or opposition.

Outside of a legislative session, the legislative branch *does not* maintain staff or facilities through which constituents may contact their legislators. Instead, constituents may contact legislators directly through any of the means listed on their individual webpages.

Scan the QR codes below to access the member lists and click on a legislator’s name to view their contact information.

### Senate of Virginia



### Virginia House of Delegates



**NOTICE:** Legislators are publicly elected officials. Communications with legislators involving legislative business may be considered a “public record” pursuant to Virginia law. As such, email sent or received, its sender and receiver, and the email’s contents and attachments, may be subject to public disclosure, except as otherwise provided by Virginia law.

## In person

When meeting with senators or delegates:

- **Be brief.** A short conversation is all that is needed to make a big impression.
- **Have the bill numbers.** Being able to reference specific legislation keeps the conversation on track.
- **Explain your concern.** It's not enough to say you like or dislike a particular piece of legislation. You should be prepared to say why.
- **Have a specific ask:** This is your chance to make sure they understand that you're not asking for something they *should* do, you're asking for something they *must* do.
- **Reference your locality.** Be sure to remind the legislator that you represent or work for their constituents from a particular town, city, or county. An invitation to visit is always a great way to make this point.
- **Have a business card ready.** You may need to leave it with their assistant. Write the bill number that you want to discuss on the back.
- **Follow up as soon as possible.** A well-written letter or email is one of the best ways to thank your legislator for meeting with you and to remind them of your thoughts and opinions about a particular issue.

**Save the date:** The next Local Government Day will be February 1, 2024, at the Richmond Downtown Marriott. This is a great opportunity to meet with your senators and delegates.

## VML is your resource. Use it!

VML is available throughout the year to help with your locality's legislative needs. For assistance with developing a legislative agenda, crafting draft legislation, building key talking points, or other issues, contact your VML lobbying team.

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# Download VPAP's General Assembly app



# How a Bill Becomes a Law in Virginia

## Bills may originate in either the House of Delegates or the Senate.

**A Delegate**, as requested by constituents, **prepares to introduce legislation**. (For example: Permitting the governing bodies of localities to prohibit the sale and use of certain fireworks)



The Delegate then explains exactly the proposal he/she has in mind to a staff attorney in the Division of Legislative Services. **A staff attorney checks existing law and the constitutionality of the proposed legislation.**



**The bill is then drafted by the Division of Legislative Services.** Draft copies of the bill are made and delivered to the Delegate.



**The Delegate signs his/her name on the bill and introduces it** by laying the original and duplicate copies on the desk of the Clerk of the House of Delegates.



**The bill is ordered printed and referred by the Speaker to the appropriate Standing Committee.** (The House of Delegates has 14 Standing Committees and the Senate has 11 Standing Committees.)



**The members of the Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns-in public session-study, discuss, and vote on the bill.**

**The Committee then reports (“approves”) the bill**, without amendments, to the House of Delegates.



**First Reading: The bill title is printed in the Calendar** (the daily printed agenda of business) **or is read by the Clerk of the House of Delegates.**



**Second Reading:** The next day the bill title appears in the House Calendar. Bills are considered in the order in which they appear in the Calendar. **The Clerk of the House of Delegates reads the title of the bill.**



**A bill on second reading is amendable.** The bill is explained by its patron (Delegate), who answers any questions that may be asked. By voice vote, the House of Delegates votes to engross the bill and pass it to its third reading.

**A bill that has passed the second reading with or without amendments is engrossed.**

If amendments are adopted, the bill is reprinted in its engrossed form for passage.



**Third Reading:** The next day, the engrossed bill title appears in the House of Delegates calendar on third reading. **The bill is read by title by the Clerk.** By a **recorded vote**, the bill is passed by the House of Delegates.

**Communication: When passed, the bill is sent to the Senate** either by the Clerk of the House of Delegates in a communication or by a Delegate in person, informing the Senate that the bill has passed the House of Delegates and requesting the concurrence of the Senate.



**In the Senate: The bill goes through substantially the same procedure as it did in the House of Delegates.**

The bill is read by title a first time, then the bill is referred to a Standing Committee, considered and reported by the Standing Committee, read a second time and a third time before passage by a constitutional majority.



**If there are differences between the House of Delegates and Senate, a Committee of Conference is created to resolve them.**



**After the bill has been passed by both houses of the General Assembly, it is printed as an enrolled bill, and examined and signed by the presiding officer of each house.**



**The bill is sent to the Governor for approval**, where the Governor may 1) sign the bill into law; 2) amend the bill and return it to the General Assembly for approval; 3) veto the bill and return it to the General Assembly, where the House of Delegates and the Senate may override the veto

by a two-thirds vote of both houses; or, 4) take no action and the bill becomes law without the Governor’s signature.



**After being signed by the Governor, the bill is sent to the Clerk of the House of Delegates (Keeper of the Rolls of the Commonwealth) and is assigned a Chapter number.** All Chapters of a Session are compiled and bound as the Acts of Assembly.



**Bills enacted at a Regular Session** (or the Reconvened Session which follows) **are effective the 1<sup>st</sup> day of July following adjournment of the Regular Session**, unless another date is specified.



**Bills enacted at a Special Session** (or Reconvened Session) **are effective the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the fourth month following the adjournment of the Special Session**, unless another date is specified.



The General Appropriations Act is usually effective July 1<sup>st</sup> and Emergency Acts become effective when signed by the Governor.

