

The Fairfax County FEDERATION

of Citizens Associations

Established 1940

December 2008

THE BULLETIN

Volume 58, Number 3

General Membership Meeting



Thursday, December 18, 2008

7:30 p.m.

**Packard Center Main Conference Room
4022 Hummer Road, Annandale**

**Topic: Adoption of the Federation
2009 Legislative Program**



2009 Membership Meetings

January 15, 2009 7:30 p.m.
Education in Fairfax County

February 19, 2009 March 19, 2009

April 16, 2009 May 21, 2009

June 18, 2009



Federation Board Meetings

*Board meetings are held at the Packard Center
Main Conference Room*

4022 Hummer Road, Annandale

January 22 March 5 April 23

May 28 June 25

7:30 p.m.



2008 Citizen of the Year Nominations

Nominations are being accepted for the 2008 Citizen of the Year Award. Nomination forms are available on the Federation website: www.fairfaxfederation.org. If you know an individual whose contributions and accomplishments have benefited the residents of Fairfax County, we invite you to nominate them for this prestigious commendation. The deadline for submissions is January 16, 2009. If you have questions, or for additional information, contact John Jennison, Award Selection and Banquet Committee Chair, at 703-591-5586 or via email at jennisonjohn@aol.com.

President's Message

I hope everyone one enjoyed their Thanksgiving holiday. In our home, my children and their spouses (plus assorted in-laws) attended, and my wife and I enjoyed seeing the family together again for the brief time that we could all manage.

Now that Thanksgiving is over, the Federation turns to two important matters, the upcoming General Assembly session and the County's annual budget. The Federation Board met in November, and with the help of our First Vice President Charles Dane, put together the draft legislation program in this month's *Bulletin*. It felt funny for anyone other than Sally Ormsby to be preparing it, as she had done so for as long as any of us can remember. Charlie did an excellent job in preparing the draft, with various committee chairs and district council representatives reviewing items within their expertise.

The document contained herein is subject to the membership's vote. If you see areas you believe should be modified, please send me a written draft of your proposed modification or addition prior to our December meeting so they can be included in the meeting agenda. Our legislation review meeting always attracts interest and for that reason, it is one of the few meetings in which we don't invite guest speakers - the meeting always runs long as we review every item. For reference purposes, if you'd like to see positions taken last year, please check our website: www.fairfaxfederation.org/resolutions/ResolutionLegislativeProgram2008RevApp071213.pdf.

Whatever positions we adopt, we ensure our Fairfax County legislative delegation receives the program, as well as our Board of Supervisors. I will also make an oral presentation to the delegation in January. It's always impressive to hear the input of the various organizations at that public hearing - but the Federation's testimony is usually different than most in that we comment on a wide variety of areas. I'll close my coverage of the legislation program reminding our membership that we're looking for someone to serve as the legislation chair on a permanent basis. If you're interested, please get in touch with me or drop Charlie a note to get an idea of the effort involved.

As mentioned earlier, the budget is another area where we again look at the entirety of the county proposal, rather than focus on one area as so many other organizations tend to do. I understand that various supervisors and district councils have empowered budget review task forces, but our review is one of the few that is countywide in nature. Filling in for Sally as Budget Committee Chair are three co-chairs: Carey Campbell, Kosmo Tatalias, and Charlie Hall. If anyone would like to join them on the Budget Committee, please contact them at: FedBudgetChr2008@fairfaxfederation.org.

For those of you who will not be able to make our December meeting, let me be one of the first to extend wishes for a joyous holiday season and a healthy and happy new year!

Jeff Parnes, President
FedPres2008@FairfaxFederation.org

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations Membership Meeting of November 13, 2008

DRAFT MINUTES

(for approval at the December 18, 2008 membership meeting)

The November 13 membership meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) President Jeff Parnes introduced the Chair of the Environment Committee, Flint Webb, who arranged the evening's presentation.

Program

Flint Webb introduced the first of two speakers, Jim McGlone, Urban Forest Conservationist for the Virginia Department of Forestry, who spoke about the spread of the emerald ash borer and its devastating effect on ash trees. Mr. McGlone is responsible for a region that includes Fairfax County, Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax City. Before turning to the emerald ash borer, he noted that he is eager to work with citizens associations on any of the following: developing management plans for trees in common areas owned by HOAs; educational programs on tree care; blurbs for association newsletters on tree-related topics; help with tree planting events, building rain gardens, and other community activities; and a limited amount of advice to homeowners. He is available on evenings and weekends.

The emerald ash borer is an insect that only attacks ash trees, which in Fairfax County means white ash or green ash. (Despite the name, mountain ash is not an ash tree.) Unlike other pests that attack only sick ash trees, the emerald ash borer attacks healthy ones, too. Its eggs are laid on the bark. When the eggs hatch, the larvae bore into the ash tree and eat the cambria underneath the bark, girdling the tree. The cambria is a vital part of the ash, and the damage is eventually fatal. An affected tree can be treated for some time with a yearly injection or root soak with specific systemic pesticides. Emerald ash borers leave small D-shaped holes about 1/8-inch in size in the bark and no "frass" or pupal case near the hole. If you can easily see the holes, they are probably not from an emerald ash borer. There are also characteristic patterns under the bark.

The emerald ash borer is from Northeast Asia - Korea, Japan, Manchuria, far eastern Russia, and parts of Mongolia. It reached the United States in 1998 in Detroit, probably in packing material. It radiated out from Detroit and Michigan to other states, including Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Maryland, and - within the last several months - Mississippi, Wisconsin, Quebec, and Virginia. In 2003, a nursery in Prince Georges County, Maryland, ordered ash trees from Kentucky, an unaffected area. The Kentucky nursery filled out the order with infested trees from Michigan. Some of the infested trees were planted at Colvin Run Elementary School in Fairfax County. When the problem was discovered years later, those trees were removed, as were all ash trees within a certain radius. That outbreak was successfully eradicated. But it was a temporary success. There are now several unrelated outbreaks in the county. Last July, the emerald ash borer was identified in Herndon. There are separate infestations in Newington, at a townhouse complex, and in Bailey's Crossroads, where the emerald ash borer was identified in August. Every tree in the Herndon outbreak was affected; in the Newington outbreak, it is every other tree so far.

Foresters are trapping some borers with glue traps, flat hanging squares that may be purple or green and should be left

undisturbed. Emerald ash borers can fly 1/2 to 2 miles in a year, but they move much greater distances through firewood, nursery stock, and some wood chips. NASCAR has a public education program to warn against transporting firewood. Because of the infestation, there is now a legally enforced quarantine on hardwood firewood, wood chips, ash nursery stock, and ash roundwood from northern Virginia, including Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Fauquier Counties. Legal penalties for breaking the quarantine are severe and can include federal prison time.

Ash trees account for 1.5 percent of the Virginia forest resource, but tend to be scattered within forests rather than grouped together. However, in residential use there are many ash street trees, which may be the only trees on some streets. About 40 million trees have already been lost in Michigan. (In Detroit, ash trees were brought in to replace street elm trees after Dutch elm disease.) Fairfax County has 1.8 million ash trees. The ecological impact of the loss of the ash trees is unknown, although at least one species, the grey ash sphinx moth, is dependent on them and would become extinct without ash trees.

Homeowner associations that own common areas, and individual homeowners, should make a plan. First, determine if you have ash trees on your property, and do not plant any new ash trees. If you find that you have ash trees, plan ahead for the need to remove them after they die (for example, set aside money for new trees). However, do not remove the ash trees if they are still in good health. Consider interplanting replacement trees now; for best results, plant seedlings, not nursery stock. Avoid monoculture; plant different kinds of trees from different genuses and families. Mr. McGlone recommends against planting maple, which makes up 25 percent of urban forest, as there is already a threat to maples from the Asian long-horn beetle in the New York area.

Mr. McGlone also answered questions on oak tree decline and environmental stresses on trees, such as air pollution and mixture of very dry periods with heavy rain. It was suggested he

(see **DRAFT MINUTES** - continued on page 3)

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road, Annandale VA 22003

www.fairfaxfederation.org

2008-2009 President: Jeffrey M. Parnes

Newsletter Editor: Carol A. Hawn

The Bulletin is the newsletter of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations. It is usually published monthly, with the exception of July and August. The purpose is to provide information to member communities, federal, state, and local officials, and other interested persons in Fairfax County. Articles reflect the view of their author and may be reprinted with the use of the following citation: "The Bulletin of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations".

Please contact Carol Hawn at 703-266-6872 or cahawn@verizon.net with name and address changes, comments, or suggestions.

Federation Meeting Cancellation Policy

If either Fairfax County Government or Schools are closed after 12:00 noon the day of a Federation membership meeting, or if it is announced that Fairfax County Government or Schools will be closed the day after a scheduled Federation membership meeting due to inclement weather or other emergency, the Federation will not hold that event. This does not pertain to regularly scheduled closures. Membership meetings will not be rescheduled, although speakers may be asked to attend an upcoming meeting. We will make every attempt to post the cancellation on www.fairfaxfederation.org or you can call 703-266-6872 for more information.

(DRAFT MINUTES - continued from page 2)

may wish to connect with the Federation district council representatives to connect with associations through the councils as well.

Flint Webb introduced the next speaker, Roger Diedrich, who is active with the Cool Counties and Cool Neighborhoods initiatives. He is also the Mantua representative to the Federation and the Providence District Representative to the Fairfax County Trails and Sidewalks Committee. He began by reviewing the origin of the Cool Neighborhoods idea. The related Cool Counties initiative was launched in July 2007 by the Sierra Club, Fairfax County, and King County, Washington, at the National Association of Counties meeting. The goal is to offer concrete guidance and information to counties that set the goal of reducing carbon emissions by 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050. There are now 33 cool counties (that is, counties that have signed up for this pledge through the program) in 16 states, and 5 such counties in Virginia.

In our region, residential uses account for 42 percent of emissions and companies and industry account for 43 percent. Electricity is responsible for 56 percent of emissions, gasoline for 33 percent, and natural gas for 11 percent. At the county level, there have been efforts to reduce carbon emissions by reducing the number of SUVs in the county fleet and adding hybrids and encouraging mass transit, bike and walking trail use, recycling, and green building projects.

The Cool Neighborhoods initiative takes the effort to the household and neighborhood level. Under this plan, a household that reduces its carbon emissions by 2 percent a year will be recognized by the county as a "cool neighbor." If 20 percent of the homeowners in a neighborhood receive this recognition, it is recognized as a "cool neighborhood." Households that are already 20 percent below the county average will also be designated as "cool neighbors."

The hope is to reach out to community leaders such as HOA boards to set up a plan for those in a neighborhood who wish to participate. The plan would include a block captain for every 70 or so households, to track who has chosen to participate and what they're doing, and to report the results each year to the county for recognition. The program is flexible about what constitutes a neighborhood; for example, it might be organized through a church, synagogue, or mosque, or it might be along one street.

Individuals who choose to participate would take the following steps: inventory their existing household emissions through a simple calculator worksheet; select and implement actions to reduce emissions, which can be quite simple changes; and monitor annual progress. Typically, assessing current emissions requires a few records, many of which are available online: record of the home's electricity consumption over 12 months, natural gas or oil consumption over 12 months, the water used in the last four quarters, and estimated gasoline or diesel use, including lawn mowers and similar equipment, as well as vehicles. To learn more, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties/neighborhoods.

Roger Diedrich took questions on participation by Boy Scout and Girl Scouts as part of a project, privacy concerns, the possibility of adding financial incentives, and the position on this issue held by the candidates for the Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

Business Meeting

- a. President Jeff Parnes asked that the minutes be approved

for the previous membership meeting of October 16. The minutes were prepared by Scott Schlegel and Charles Dane. The minutes, as amended, were unanimously approved.

b. At the suggestion of President Jeff Parnes, those present introduced themselves to the group.

c. The Treasurer's Report was received and filed by unanimous consent.

d. Under Old Business, President Jeff Parnes noted that the positions of Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary remain vacant. In addition, the positions of Human Services, Legislation, and Public Safety Chairs are vacant and also need to be filled.

e. Also under Old Business, Charles Dane, as head of the Education Committee, gave an update on the status of the possible Fairfax County Public Schools consolidation of administrative offices by purchasing the former Red Cross building. The purchase will require approval of a bond by the Board of Supervisors. At issue is the declining cost of real estate since the July appraisal of the property.

f. Under New Business, Charles Dane is acting as Legislative Chair. He has asked for information from the county and school staff on last year's package, so that we can remove items that were accomplished and make appropriate factual modifications. He also noted that those who have suggested additions to the package should forward them to him. The draft will be reviewed at the November 20 Board meeting and distributed in the *Bulletin*.

g. Flint Webb, Chair of the Environment Committee, noted that the Council of Governments has adopted a climate change plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The goal is to reduce the projected levels in 2020 by 80 percent (as opposed to reducing emissions from some measured level in the past). He also noted he attended the Green Breakfast on headwaters protection for streams, the Achieving an Energy-Efficient Virginia meeting on legislative ideas, and would be attending the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Commission's Technical Advisory Committee, to which he is the Federation representative.

h. Don Hinman, Chair of Association Services Committee, stated that the county now has the draft of the brochure providing a guide to new communities in navigating the bond release process, on which he and Jim Colby worked. He expects it to be released soon on the Web, and possibly in print.

i. Kosmo Tatalias, Chair of the Budget Committee, noted that the advertised 2010 budget is expected to be released on time at the end of February. He will need help in updating our review and response, and would like to meet individually with the Federation Committee chairs. The departments are in the process of briefing the Board of Supervisors with 5, 10, and 15 percent cuts, and may need to propose more. President Jeff Parnes asked all committee chairs to look over their area of the county budget and to look over last year's Federation budget resolution.

j. President Jeff Parnes reported he has contacted the Washington Post about the Citizen of the Year banquet and been advised that he needs to send a formal letter to follow up the co-sponsorship request. He also urged everyone to submit nominations for Citizen of the Year.

(see *DRAFT MINUTES - continued on page 4*)

(DRAFT MINUTES - continued from page 3)

k. Charles Dane, Chair of the Education Committee, noted that, without a change in last year's county transfer, the school budget faces a shortfall that was \$157 million in July and has grown to \$223 now. This is partly because of the loss of another \$50 million in state funding. In addition, the increase in the number of students is in the thousands, partly due to students leaving private schools to enroll in public schools. The budget shortfall will result in increases in class size, reduction in the number of high school classes offered, reduction in some athletic programs and summer schools, as well as administrative and transportation reductions. If the county cuts funding for school clinic aids, resource officers and after-school programs, FCPS may have to pick up some of these costs and carry out further academic cuts. The Education Committee met on November 11 and thinks that the Federation should come out with a position to maintain the real estate tax payment by the average homeowner at last year's level, and for the County Executive to recommend that the Board advertise a greater range of possible tax rates, to maintain flexibility.

l. In his role as Membership Chair, Charles Dane reported there are currently 35 paid member associations and discussed keeping the contact information current.

m. Bill Hanks, the Chair of the Resolutions Committee, reported that, acting as Corresponding Secretary, he had forwarded the Federation's recent resolution honoring Sally Ormsby to all the Supervisors, calling for October 26, 2009, the 73rd anniversary of Sally Ormsby's birth, to be named Sally Ormsby Day.

n. Kosmo Tatalias, as Webmaster, asked all chairs and district council representatives to provide updated information for their part of the website.

o. Art Wells reported from Braddock District that there was a lines of business and budget process presentation at a recent Braddock District meeting organized by Sharon Bulova. He reported that the next Braddock District Council meeting, on November 18, would be on the Tysons Land Use report and on the possible purchase of the second FCPS administrative building. The big news in Braddock, he said, has been Supervisor Bulova's announcement of her candidacy for the Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

p. There were no other district council reports, except that President Jeff Parnes noted that the Area Plans Review Task Force for Sully is starting.

Next Membership Meeting: December 18, 2008. 2009 Legislative Package, Acting Federation Legislative Chair Charles Dane

Next Board Meeting: November 20, 2008

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Congratulations

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations congratulates former Federation President Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly, elected last month to the U.S. House of Representatives in Virginia's 11th Congressional District. Gerry most recently served as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. We wish him well.

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations 2009 DRAFT LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

(for discussion and adoption at the December 18, 2008 meeting)

PRIORITIES *(in alphabetical order)*

Conservation - Land conservation

Education - Funding of state and federal mandates for K-12 education

Governance - Reversal of the strict interpretation of the "Dillon Rule"

Infrastructure - Funding of critical local transportation and education infrastructure needs

Land Use - Protection of local land use authority

Tax Structure - Modernization of state and local tax structures

Taxation Authority - Equal taxing authority for counties, cities and towns

CONSERVATION

LAND CONSERVATION. Support establishment of **annual dedicated funding** of \$50 million, or two (2) percent of the General Fund budget, for natural resources without jeopardizing funding education and transportation, to include acquisition of land and conservation easements to be used as open space, such as natural areas, watersheds, farmland, forests, parks, and historic sites. (continued from 2000)

*Rationale: Virginia is the **only** state on the East Coast without dedicated funding for acquisition of open space. In 2004-2006, Virginia budgeted \$2.5 million annually for natural resources and added another \$10 million in 2005. Governor Kaine announced in June 2006 that he would like Virginia to conserve 400,000 acres of Virginia land as open space.*

EDUCATION

a. FUNDING FOR K-12 MANDATES. Support legislation requiring state funding to reflect realistic costs for meeting state mandates such as the Standards of Quality (SOQ), the Standards of Learning (SOL), and the Standards for Accreditation (SOA), as well as federal mandates such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. (continued from 2005)

Rationale: The Commonwealth budget approved in 2005 provided total increases in funding for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) amounting to \$28.4 – an increase from 19% to 20% of the FCPS budget. The General Assembly should increase such funding for to reflect cost increases related to re-benchmarking of state standards.

Federal funding for IDEA is slightly less than one-half of the 40% promised when the mandate to educate all children with disabilities was legislated, and funding for NCLB is significantly less than what is needed to raise the achievement of all students. The General Assembly should adopt resolution and strategies to encourage Congress to increase funding for IDEA and NCLB or provide more flexibility to states and school districts in meeting federal mandates. (2006)

(see **Draft Legislative Program** - continued on page 5)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 4)

b. [NEW] RELIEF FROM STATE MANDATES. Support General Assembly relief from existing unfunded mandates. (2009)

Rationale: Given the significant projected FCPS budget shortfall, relief from State mandates would help preserve some important programs.

GOVERNANCE

DILLON RULE. Support modification of the "Dillon Rule" to grant to local jurisdictions those governing powers not expressly reserved to the Commonwealth or the federal government. (continued; revised 2002)

Rationale: The Commonwealth of Virginia practices a strict interpretation of the decision of federal Judge John F. Dillon of Iowa more than a century ago whereby local governments have only those powers expressly granted by the state or "indispensable to the declared objects and purposes of the corporation" (locality). Considering the significant growth in population and local jurisdictions in Virginia over the past century, this parsimony in local governing powers prevents local elected officials from being able to enact local ordinances to manage their communities effectively and efficiently.

INFRASTRUCTURE

a. STATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

(1) Virginia should increase its insignificant financial support for school construction, renovation, and debt service and allow localities to approve alternative sources of funding such as impact fees in addition to land proffers or increases in sales tax after approval by referendum.

Rationale: Virginia ranks near the bottom of states in financial support for school capital improvements although mandated and incentive programs require additional space or renovations, i.e., special education, reduced class size, Limited English Speaking (LEP) services, alternative programs for disruptive students, and applications of instructional technology.

(2) Support legislation for the use of Virginia's unallocated Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Fund to be expressly used for state school capital construction and renovation of elementary, secondary and high schools with such funds to be distributed to local school districts on the basis of average daily membership.

Rationale: The Tobacco Master Settlement Fund is intended to reimburse the taxpayers for the past expenditures for medical treatment of tobacco-related illnesses. The reimbursement of expenditures for school construction would guarantee the return of the Fund to the local communities and aid the increased education programs to deter smoking by children.

b. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING. Support continuing legislative action at the federal, state and local levels to obtain the necessary funding from a variety of sources, including appropriate public-private partnerships, to allow for implementation of currently adopted transportation plans. (continued, revised 2006, 2007)

Rationale: The transportation funding shortfall in Northern Virginia in 1993 was \$5.6 billion. The TransAction 2030 report of 2006 by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) projects a cost of \$30 billion to meet the needs of the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) by 2030; additional

recommended improvements would cost an additional \$16.6 billion, making the total cost \$46.6 billion in 2005 dollars. Broken down on an annual cost basis, the need is nearly \$2 billion annually. (2007)

The 2001 Alternative Transportation and Land Use Activity Strategies (ATLAS) Study suggests the following potential funding strategies for Northern Virginia: split-rate tax districts; tax increment financing; distance-based fees; regional funding authority; priority funding areas; congestion pricing; parking pricing; proffers; and community development authorities. The Metropolitan Washington Transportation Planning Board has recommended several potential sources: increased fuel tax; tolls on new highways; increased sales tax; 1.0 percent income tax; and a payroll tax.

c. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING FORMULA. Support continuing state and local legislative actions to assure increased state transportation funds for Northern Virginia in general and to Fairfax County in particular. (continued)

Rationale: While the 2007 General Assembly enacted new revenue sources for transportation infrastructure, i.e., HR3202, they fall far short of the actual funding needs to meet the goals of the Virginia Six-Year Program and the Northern Virginia TransAction 2030 program goals and projects. However, HR3202 now provides even less funding for transportation projects due to the repeal of the "abuser fees" provision and the February 2008 Virginia Supreme Court decision striking down the taxing power of the regional taxing authorities. (revised 2008)

d. METRO FUNDING. Support an increase in the federal and state shares of funding for Metro capital and operating costs and a regional dedicated funding source for the Metro system capital, operations and maintenance programs. (continued from 2001, revised 2005)

Rationale: The state of Maryland pays the full cost of Maryland's share of the Metro system whereas Virginia pays only a small part of Northern Virginia's share. There is an additional two (2)-cent gasoline tax in Northern Virginia, the proceeds of which are dedicated to Metro funding.

The 2007 General Assembly session approved the required \$50m Northern Virginia contribution - from NVTA funds - to be matched with District of Columbia (DC) and Maryland funds in order to obtain federal funds of \$150m annually over ten years, as part of the Metro funding reauthorization bill sponsored by Congressman Tom Davis. This provision was passed by Congress as part of the Amtrak Reauthorization Bill.

The Washington area is the only major metropolitan region in the country without a dedicated funding source for its Metro system. Portions of the Washington Metrorail system are now 30 years old and badly in need of major maintenance. Also, the Red and Orange lines are at capacity during commuting hours. The \$1.5 billion Metro Matters capital program provides 185 new buses and 120 rail cars, but the ten-year program calls for 300 rail cars and 460 buses to serve the system adequately. (revised 2009)

LAND USE

LAND USE AUTHORITY. Oppose any diminution of local land use authority, either by further limiting the scope of local regulatory authority or by creating new and more elaborate land use regulatory structures. (continued from 1999)

Rationale: Land use authority should remain with the local (see Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 6)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 5)
 jurisdictions. At the same time, there should be regional consideration of land use plans and issues. This supports a Fairfax County legislative position.

TAX STRUCTURE

a. LOCAL AND STATE TAX POLICIES. Support a comprehensive restructuring and modernization of the Commonwealth's state and local tax policies. (continued from 1999)

Rationale: Reform of the state-local tax system, a long-standing Federation position and priority, is necessary to relieve heavy dependence on the real property tax. While studied by legislative committees for many years, no real solution has been forthcoming. The 2004 General Assembly increased the general sales tax by half a cent and reduced the sales tax on food but gave counties only an increase in one revenue source - the tax on cigarettes.

b. LOCAL SHARE OF STATE TAX REVENUES. Support the enactment of legislation to revise the state and local tax structure in Virginia to return a portion of state income tax revenue to local governments for their unrestricted use until such time as the General Assembly revises the taxation structure in the Commonwealth to ensure fairness to local governments. (1999; revised 2001 and 2002)

Rationale: One method for localities to receive general revenues through other than real and personal property taxes is through a share of the state income tax.

c. LIMITATION. Strongly oppose state-imposed limits on local real property taxing authority. (2004)

Rationale: There has been much discussion during political campaigns about "capping" the annual increase in residential real estate taxes. With the increasing heavy dependency on real property tax revenue to fund local government operations, such a limitation would have severe consequences in the provision of services by the County. Real property taxing authority should remain a purely local power because it is the only revenue source over which a county has sole authority.

TAXATION AUTHORITY

a. LOCAL TAXING AUTHORITY. Support state legislation to grant counties the same taxing authority as cities and towns but oppose requiring counties to assume responsibility for construction and maintenance of roads. (continued from 1998; revised in 2004)

Rationale: Currently cities and towns can increase sales and use tax on certain products and services without conducting a voter referendum, as must be done by counties before taking such action. This legislation would enable counties to increase taxes on transient occupancy (hotels and motels), food and beverage (restaurants), and admissions without referendum, thereby enabling them to reduce reliance on property taxes for revenue. The 2004 General Assembly increased the transient occupancy tax but dedicated the revenue to tourism and economic development (Visit Fairfax).

b. ADDITIONAL LOCAL TAX OPTIONS. (1) Support rescission of the current state legislation authorizing a local income tax for transportation purposes only. (2) Reduce general reliance on real and personal property tax as the primary local revenue base by authorizing local government bodies options to levy (a) a piggy-back income tax, (b) a piggy-back sales tax, (c) a

piggy-back gasoline tax. (1998; revised 2003, 2008, and 2009)

Rationale: (1) Enacted in 1991, the legislation authorizing a local income tax for transportation purposes, through referendum, requires that the tax supplement, not supplant, current local investment in transportation projects. (2) Current reliance on real and personal property taxes to raise approximately three-fourths of each year's County revenue stream places an undue burden on property owners when alternative revenue sources used in other states could be made available. Piggy-back tax approaches provide revenues with a near-zero local government collection cost. Approximately 12% of new local sales and gasoline tax revenues generated would be paid by pass-through customers who now benefit from Fairfax County government budgeted initiatives without paying for any share of those benefits.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

CITIZEN INTERESTS

a. VIRGINIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. Support assurance of open government and citizen access to government, its administration and operations. (continued from 1999)

Rationale: Supports an open governmental process with access by citizens to all aspects of its operation except for those areas expressly exempt.

b. SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES. Support prohibition of smoking in buildings open to the public except for those retail establishments that are exclusively devoted to the sale and use of tobacco products. (2007)

Rationale: Studies have shown that second-hand tobacco smoke can affect one's health. Therefore, public buildings should have a "no smoking" policy.

c. LIVING WAGE. Support, in concept, legislation to authorize Fairfax County to require County contractors to provide a living wage to employees. (2007)

Rationale: Nearly nine (9) percent of Fairfax County households have incomes under \$25,000 per year. The high cost of living makes it particularly difficult for low-income workers to meet their basic needs. If state enabling legislation is required, the Federation applauds this effort.

d. MINIMUM WAGE. Support an increase in the minimum wage in annual increments of \$1.00 per hour until the minimum hourly wage of \$8.15 is achieved. From that point in time, index the minimum hourly wage to the CPI increase. (2007; revised 2008)

Rationale: In May 2007, Congress approved and the President signed a bill to increase the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour over the coming two years. Because it is impossible to support self or family on the minimum wage, even \$8.15 per hour would not enable a person or family to rise above the poverty level.

e. [NEW] EARLY VOTING. Support legislation to enable qualified voters to vote absentee in person without providing an excuse or reason for not being able to vote in person on Election Day while retaining all present statutory specific reasons enabling a voter to cast an absentee ballot for those persons who vote absentee by mail. (2009)

Rationale: Early voting would enhance voter participation.

(see *Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 7*)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 6)

f. RESTON TOWN STATUS. Recommend that a task force be convened within the current legislative session comprised of affected interests, including: General Assembly members, Fairfax County government, and key referendum stakeholders, and co-chaired by a representative of each of the following: Reston Citizens Association, the County of Fairfax, and the General Assembly, to address the mechanical issues of how the self-governance of Reston should be implemented, identify and analyze the options, and make recommendations as to the governance of the proposed Town of Reston. (2008, revised 2009)

Rationale: The Code of Virginia (§15.2-817) prohibits the establishment of any new towns within the boundaries of an urban county with more than 200 people per square mile. More than 3,600 Reston residents signed a petition asking the General Assembly to authorize a referendum on whether Reston should become incorporated as a town.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND SERVICES

a. COMMERCIAL VEHICLES IN NEIGHBORHOODS. Support amendment of *Virginia Code 46.2-1224* to expand the types of commercial vehicles subject to local prohibition of parking on public streets in residential neighborhoods. (continued from 1998; revised 2005)

Rationale: Fairfax County would support legislation to enable it to restrict parking of mid-size commercial vehicles on neighborhood streets.

b. LIBRARIES. Support removal of the population cap on state aid to libraries. (2006)

Rationale: According to state Code, the formula for state aid to public libraries is based on population, square miles served, and local effort. The current formula allocates \$0.30 per resident up to the first 600,000 residents and \$0.10 per resident above that population. Only Fairfax County suffers from this criterion.

c. OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES. Strongly oppose legislation that imposes unreasonable limitations on volunteer directors or trustees of homeowner associations or that imposes state authority upon associations other than that imposed by state corporation law. (continued from 2001)

EDUCATION

a. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK YOUTH/ GANG PREVENTION. Support continuing coordination of resources and activities among local, state, and federal agencies and with local nonprofit and community organizations aimed at prevention of gang violence and in support of comprehensive after-school programs, other prevention measures and academic enrichment programs. (2005; revised 2008)

Rationale: Two of the strongest predictors of adolescent substance abuse and other behavioral disorders are academic difficulties and unsupervised time after school. Although gang activity predominantly occurs in the community, it spills back into the schools and constitutes safety threats to students and staff.

b. COLLEGE CREDIT INITIATIVE. Support legislation that will encourage and help fund partnerships between school divisions and higher education to allow high school students to earn college credit and facilitate their pursuit of technical training for industry certifications. (2005)

Rationale: Growth of the Governor's Commonwealth College Course Collaborative and FCPS partnerships with Northern

Virginia Community College (NVCC) and George Mason University (GMU) will require state and/or federal funding to minimize the financial burdens on students and families of such enriched high school opportunities.

c. EARLY EDUCATION. Support additional state and federal investments in pre-kindergarten education and child care programs, which will improve school readiness and reduce the costs of remedial education and social services, especially for children from low-income families, without creating an additional unfunded mandate. (2006)

Rationale: Thirty years of research have demonstrated that every dollar invested in early education for children from low-income families produces \$7 in cost avoidance for remedial and LEP instruction, and health and social services. Additional funding would provide training for pre-school programs and daycare providers so that more education and fewer maintenance activities are provided in daycare settings.

d. HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING. Support efforts to provide adequate and equitable funding for all state institutions of higher education. In addition, fund NVCC and GMU at a level equivalent to that for other state institutions. In addition, the state should develop and fund a higher education Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to support growth projected through 2010. The state should fund a new Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) adjustment for GMU faculty and staff. (Revised 2002; 2005 and 2006)

Rationale: Access to higher education is essential for economic development, preparing a skilled work force, and the continuing education needed for global competition in an information society. GMU and NVCC impact significantly the economic, educational, and cultural vitality of Northern Virginia, but should be funded at a level equivalent to similar state institutions. GMU is funded at a level less than for other doctoral-degree granting, research institutions in Virginia. Lack of adequate funding has caused increased costs of tuition and fees, an economic burden on families. Additional facilities are badly needed to accommodate a greatly increased number of students within the coming decade. GMU is having a difficult time recruiting and retaining staff, and a COLA adjustment appears the most equitable method of continuing to improve their position.

e. PUBLIC SCHOOL CALENDAR.

(1) Support legislation permitting local school boards to set the opening day of school in accordance with the consensus of the local community. (2005)

(2) Support inclusion in the current law the following important reasons for opening school prior to Labor Day: "additional effective instruction to students prior to assessments of academic achievement, the provision of appropriate summer remediation programs for students, and increased professional development opportunities for staff." (2006)

Rationale: The Code of Virginia mandates that schools open after Labor Day although over half of the school divisions received waivers to open as much as three weeks earlier. Repeal of the "King's Dominion" law would allow setting the school calendar to allow additional instruction prior to assessments of academic achievement, extended-year calendar options, and provision of stronger summer programs for student remediation and professional development. (revised 2009)

f. REFORM OF STATE AND FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS.

(see Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 8)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 7)

- (1) Align and revise state and federal accountability systems to ensure high stakes decisions for students and schools are made on the basis of valid tests and procedures, reasonable SOL passing scores, and professional judgment; and that the analyses of data required by NCLB are used to help rather than punish students and schools. (2002; revised 2005)
- (2) Target access to public school choice and supplemental services to individuals within subgroups that fail to achieve NCLB benchmarks. (2006; revised 2009)

Rationale: Although SOL test scores have risen as a result of curriculum alignment, familiarity with the tests, and intensive remediation efforts, there is evidence that students and schools in poor and minority communities are more likely to fail to graduate and their schools to lose accreditation and federal funding. Such results will punish these students, schools and communities without eliminating the causes of failure and will doom the standards movement, which has the potential to strengthen education at every level. In addition, the NCLB requirements for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) have created situations where schools that meet Virginia's high standard are subject to federal sanctions, such as loss of funding, because of unreasonable requirements such as standardized testing of students who understand little English or children with severe disabilities. (revised 2009)

g. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS.

- (1) Support FCPS's position on NCLB, i.e., "support the use of "linguistically appropriate" alternative assessments for qualified LEP students that are comparable to existing Standards of Learning (SOL) examinations and are appropriate, valid and reliable".
- (2) Support development and use of alternate assessments for students with disabilities that are necessary to demonstrate their mastery of SOL content, as well as development and use of alternate assessments that are linguistically appropriate for LEP students and that yield accurate information on these students' mastery of subjects other than English.
- (3) Support requiring LEP students to participate in regular SOL testing only when their English language proficiency level is adequate for them to demonstrate their master of subjects other than English. (2008)

Rationale: Virginia's SOL tests were developed for native-English-speaking students and are extremely challenging for students learning English. According to FCPS, studies consistently show that LEP students need, on average, at least five (5) years of instruction in English to acquire the academic English language skills necessary to succeed on standard content area examinations.

Per FCPS, "This would ensure that LEP students are being tested on subject matter knowledge rather than on their English language proficiency. Virginia has already successfully implemented a "plain English" mathematics assessment for LEP students and should develop similar versions for every SOL examination".

Alternative testing methods or instruments should be available for those students who, because of their disabilities, require such approaches to demonstrate their mastery of SOL content. However, the use of such substitute methods or instruments must not lower evaluation standards.

h. MODIFICATION OF CALCULATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS. Support modifying achievement calculations for subgroups such that students that students who are members of multiple subgroups do not have a disproportionate impact on accountability results. (2008)

Rationale: Many FCPS students are multi-ethnic, and NCLB determines pass or failing schools based on 26 categories, many of them ethnic categories.

i. SALARY COMPETING FACTOR. Support FCPS position on supporting use of a cost of competing factor in the SOQ reimbursement formulas in recognition of the higher salaries paid by school boards in identified locations in order to attract and retain skilled teachers and other personnel within its competitive local regional wage market. (2008)

Rationale: According to FCPS, the State differential covers approximately 740 categories and includes all agencies with State classified employees in Northern Virginia. The instructional rate was last increased in 1996 based on a 1995 JLARC report, and the non-instructional rate was last increased in 2004 to reach the rate recommendation made in 1995.

j. [NEW] ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION. Support common sense reauthorization and funding of federal accountability program including NCLB. (2009)

Rationale: Common sense revision will "ensure fair, accurate, and meaningful assessments of student achievement" as well as "making certain that any interventions appropriately address the academic needs of a school" [FCPS Legislative Program].

Currently, as a sanction for failing to meet NCLB targets, all students within a "failing" school are provided access to additional school choices. In many cases, this includes large numbers of students who are achieving at or above benchmarks. Allowing such students the choice of leaving the underperforming school will result in a lower average score for the remaining students.

ENVIRONMENT

a. CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION ACT.

- (1) Oppose any legislation that weakens the Act. (continued)
- (2) **Water Quality Improvement Fund.** Support increased funding for the Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF), preferably with a dedicated source of revenue to ensure continued funding. (2007)

Rationale: In 1997, the General Assembly passed the Water Quality Improvement Act that established the WQIF. The fund provides grants for the purpose of reducing the amount of nutrients entering the Chesapeake Bay. Both non-point sources such as agricultural operations and point source discharges such as wastewater treatment facilities are eligible for grants from the WQIF. The Virginia 2006-2008 budget provided \$100 million per year for WQIF but the estimated need for this program through 2025 is \$2.3 billion for upgrade of sewage treatment plants and other programs.

b. ENDOCRINE DISRUPTOR AND HORMONE WATER POLLUTION. Urge research and ensuing legislation that would mitigate endocrine disruptor pollution in Virginia waters. (2008)

Rationale: Endocrine disruptor compounds (EDCs) inhibit the regulation of biological processes related to growth, development

(see Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 9)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 8)
and reproduction that have impacts on marine life and human health. This is a complex, highly technical and very important issue that needs immediate attention through research and development of remedies. Pollution from pharmaceuticals is also a problem and may be partially responsible for multi-antibiotic resistant infections.

c. ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION. Support legislation that will encourage energy conservation and the use of renewable energy generation, including an enactment of a Renewable Portfolio Standard. (2008; revised 2009)

Rationale: Most energy conservation projects will pay for themselves in less than five years so providing advice and low cost energy saving equipment such as CFL light bulbs will not only reduce our demand for fossil fuel-generated electricity but also save money for Virginia residents. Similarly, encouraging distributive renewable generation will decrease the risk of power disruptions due to natural disasters or malicious activity. Both energy conservation and distributive energy production will lessen the need for new transmission lines.

(1) Support enactment of a Renewable Portfolio Standard. (2009)

Rationale: Establishing a Renewable Portfolio Standard will address climate change. Furthermore, renewables are clean and getting cheaper while conventional sources are risky and increasing in cost.

(2) Support legislation to amend the Virginia Public Utilities Act to encourage the purchase of energy saving products by consumers by allowing and encouraging utility companies in Virginia to provide capital costs for cost-effective purchases of energy saving equipment and to be repaid through utility bills. (2009)

Rationale: The initial capital costs for energy saving equipment makes it difficult for home owners and businesses to make the changes that can decrease energy demand. Utility companies have historically made money by selling electricity or natural gas and therefore it is not in their best interest to help customers.

d. PETROLEUM TANK FARMS. Support the phased relocation of the Pickett Road Tank Farm to a more appropriate location; also support legislative initiatives, such as allowing a maximum number of tanker truck trips to and from tank farms located in or near densely populated areas; state and local authority for additional safety requirements for bulk petroleum storage; increased state authority to regulate intrastate pipeline safety; and strengthening, codification, and enabling state and/or local agencies' enforcement power of nuisance laws. (2008)

Rationale: Governor Wilder appointed a Governor's Advisory Commission on the Pickett Road Tank Farm following discovery in September 1990 of a massive oil spill of an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 gallons of hydrocarbons from the Texaco facility at the tank farm. Among the recommendations in the Commission's report of December 18, 1992 was relocation of the tank farm to a more appropriate location. The tank farm is located in a completely developed area with 400 tanker trucks a day going to and from the facility. Oil spill incidents and the addition of ethanol trucking have brought renewed urgency to this issue of safety and environmental degradation. The increased use of ethanol in gasoline mixtures requires truck transport of ethanol to the tank farm. (revised 2009)

e. SOLID WASTE. Support federal legislation that would allow

states and localities to place restrictions on interstate transfer of solid waste, including medical and nuclear waste. (continued)

f. STREAM AND GROUNDWATER PROTECTION. Support legislation requiring the state to require pollution prevention measures, erosion and sedimentation controls, and storm water management facilities in state projects and programs. (continued)

g. UNDERGROUND UTILITIES. Support legislation to encourage utility companies to install lines underground and to convert aerial lines to underground facilities. (revised 2007)

Rationale: This would reduce the number of power and other utility outages created by storms causing overhead utility lines to break and would improve the appearance of our communities. Also, life cycle cost analyses may show that underground facilities are more cost efficient than aerial facilities.

h. UTILITY EASEMENTS. Support legislation that would require new or replaced utility lines (subsurface and aerial) to be located in commonly shared easements and to be balanced in consideration of both aesthetic and economic impacts, with siting approved in consultation with local officials. (continued from 1999)

HUMAN SERVICES

a. ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS. Support adequate state funding for essential human services programs that offer protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation and that assist people in achieving and maintaining independence and self-sufficiency. (2005)

Rationale: Federal or state statutes mandate many of these programs while other, non-mandated programs provide assistance for residents who lack the resources to help themselves.

b. HUMAN TRAFFICKING. Support legislation to establish the practice of human trafficking and such trafficking for the purposes of commercial sex acts as felonies and to provide for restitution to victims and liability by the business entity. (2008)

Rationale: Two bills passed the 2007 General Assembly, one providing certain human trafficking-related actions as Class 5 felonies and the other creating a legislative Commission on the Prevention of Human Trafficking to address all aspects of human trafficking and to develop and coordinate the implementation of a State Plan. The latter bill has a sunset of July 1, 2009.

LAND USE

a. ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE. Support legislation to enable Fairfax County to adopt an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance to ensure an orderly and coordinated land development and supportive infrastructure program, including transportation and schools. Oppose any effort to add language obligating local governments to provide such facilities within a restrictive time frame set by the General Assembly. (continued)

b. ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS. Support legislation to enable Fairfax County to consider architectural standards as part of development proposals. (continued from 2001)

Rationale: Counties are authorized to have Architectural Review Boards for consideration of architectural features in historic districts only.

(see *Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 10*)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 9)

c. BRAC IMPACTS. Support state funding to assist with the costs of providing the infrastructure, including rail, to accommodate the several thousand new employees who will be assigned to Fort Belvoir and nearby areas plus those employees who will be moved there from other Northern Virginia locations. (2008)

Rationale: Most of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) funding in the current state budget was provided to Virginia Beach to prevent closure of the Oceana Naval Base. With minimal funding by the federal government, Northern Virginia must look to the state government for financial assistance.

d. PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS. Support the existing legal process that reviews protection of private property rights on a "case by case" basis. (continued)

e. PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS. Support a state Revolving Fund for the acquisition of historic properties, environmentally significant areas and natural open spaces and the application of protective easements prior to their resale. (continued from 2000)

Rationale: This would enable and ensure protection of these valuable properties without requiring them to be owned and maintained by the public sector over the long term.

f. [NEW] MAINTAIN PRESENT PROFFER PROVISIONS. Oppose any change in the present proffer provisions delegated to the County. (2009)

Rationale: During the 2008 General Assembly session, a bill to restrict proffers to a dollar amount was introduced and at a level that would have resulted in far less value than the amount that Fairfax County and developers have been willing to negotiate.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

a. HOUSE OF DELEGATES SUBCOMMITTEES. Strongly oppose the 2006 House Rule 18 that allowed subcommittees to act on bills without an open public process or a (recorded or unrecorded) vote and encourage House Leadership to rescind that rule to make subcommittee meetings open to public participation and formally record all votes. (2007)

Rationale: In 2006, House Leadership waived the requirement for subcommittees to have an open process on bills before them or to vote, either informally or recorded, before deciding action on a bill. This is not democratic or fair because it limits public input, blocks transparency of the legislative process and obscures accountability of member voting records. This does not apply to the Senate, which has its own rules for committee business.

b. LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING. Support review of the Virginia legislative redistricting process. (2007)

Rationale: The legislative redistricting process should be fair and ensure competitive districts.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL ISSUES

REGIONAL PLANNING. Support legislation to strengthen regional planning and cooperation through Regional Commissions by amending Virginia Code 15.2, Chapter 42, to delete the exclusion of planning districts which have multi-state councils of government. (continued from 1998)

PUBLIC SAFETY

a. ASSAULT WEAPONS. Enable local jurisdictions to regulate the sale of assault weapons. (continued; revised 2006)

b. DANGEROUS WEAPONS. Enable Fairfax County to regulate possession of dangerous weapons in public parks and County-owned or leased facilities or properties. (continued from 2000; revised 2006)

c. FIREARMS. Support increased penalties for illegal gun sales and for gun sales to minors. Also, support background checks for all gun sales, including sales at gun shows. (continued; revised 2004)

TAXATION AND FINANCE

a. BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE (BPOL) TAX. Ensure that any state or local legislation that might eliminate exemptions to the BPOL tax does not remove the current exemptions for non-profit organizations. (continued from 1998)

b. COURT-RELATED SALARIES. Support increased state funding of salaries for magistrates, District Court employees, probation officers and public defenders. (2006)

Rationale: There are local higher-than-normal turnover rates in magistrate (23%) and probation officer (20%) positions. Some attorneys will no longer serve as public defenders because of very low pay rates. Localities can supplement magistrate and probation staff compensation. In fiscal year 2006, Fairfax County funded a 25% supplement to magistrates even though compensation is a state obligation.

c. JAIL OPERATIONS. Support full state reimbursement to localities for the actual cost of confinement of State inmates in local jails. (2006)

Rationale: The current state reimbursement, established nearly 20 years ago, is \$8 per day and rises to \$14 per day on the 61st day after a court-ordered conviction (when state law requires state prisoners to be transferred to state facilities). The actual cost of housing, feeding and other services for inmates is \$125 per day.

d. PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX. Support action by the General Assembly to repeal the personal property tax cap on reimbursement to localities of \$950 million per annum. (2005)

Rationale: The General Assembly tax changes in 2004 included the cap on personal property tax reimbursement to localities at \$950 million, which will soon have an impact on local revenues because of inflation. The Commonwealth must act to ensure that localities have a revenue source to replace this loss.

e. FEDERAL AND STATE MANDATES. Support full funding by the federal and state governments of all federal and state mandates, respectively, on local government. (continued from 1999; revised 2007)

f. TWO-YEAR BUDGETING. Support allowing local governments and school divisions to adopt biennial (two-year) instead of annual operating budgets. (2005)

Rationale: A biennial budget process for localities and school divisions would mirror the state's two-year budget, afford a longer time frame for financial planning, allow more time for program review and evaluation, and could be less expensive and time consuming than annual budgeting.

g. [NEW] SOLAR ENERGY TAX CREDITS. Support reinstating the State solar tax credit for residences and
(see *Draft Legislative Program - continued on page 11*)

(Draft Legislative Program - continued from page 10)
businesses with a maximum credit of \$1,000 per year. (2009)

Rationale: This action would encourage increased use of solar energy, a renewable resource, and reduce to use of carbon-based fuels.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES. Ensure that any legislation protects the zoning powers of local government, ensures the public's right to be heard on proposed facilities regardless of whether the land is publicly or privately owned, protects the environment and communities, and restricts the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) ability to allow construction of telecommunications facilities without prior approval of the affected locality's land use and/or zoning authority. (continued)

TRANSPORTATION

a. PLANNING. Support legislation to ensure consistency and conformity among local, subregional, Washington metropolitan regional and state short- and long-range land use and transportation plans. (continued)

b. SAFETEA-LU AND CLEAN AIR ACT AMENDMENTS (CAAA). Support implementation strategies to assure efficient and cost effective compliance with all mandated SAFETEA-LU (2005) and CAAA requirements; assure adoption of all necessary actions to prevent potential loss of federal transportation funds, including support for Air Quality/Congestion Management Plans developed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), i.e., the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. (continued)

c. STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS. Support legislation to direct VDOT to require vehicles in a jurisdiction with the Urban County Executive form of government to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks at unsignalized intersections on roads with speed limits of less than 35 miles per hour. (2008)

Rationale: The lack of a law requiring vehicles to stop for pedestrians in denoted crosswalks is very unsafe. For example, Arlington County, which builds, maintains and oversees its roadway network, has such a requirement. All urban areas need this requirement.

d. TRUCK SAFETY. Support increased enforcement of truck safety laws, including inspections. (continued from 1999; revised 2005)

e. [NEW] HIGH SPEED RAIL. Support a study to evaluate the use of bonds for high speed rail along major transportation rights-of-ways. (2009)

Rationale: Rail corridors would provide construction jobs, increase revenue, reduce air pollution, and reduce delays on roads and at airports.

If you have any questions or would like more information regarding the draft 2009 Legislative Program, please contact Charles Dane, Acting Legislative Committee Chair, at 703-323-7847.

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Fiscal Year 2010 Property Tax Rate Recommendation

(for consideration and action at the December 18, 2008 Federation membership meeting)

WHEREAS, the fiscal year (FY) 2009 Fairfax County government budget included an increase in the real property tax rate from \$.89 to \$.92 per \$100 of real property assessment; and

WHEREAS, the \$.92 rate was designed to raise approximately the same total dollars on a slightly smaller total value of assessed property in Fairfax County as the \$.89 rate had raised for FY 2008; and

WHEREAS, the impact for the average residential property owner in Fairfax County was a tax bill of approximately the same dollar amount in FY 2009 as in FY 2008; and

WHEREAS, the total of real property tax assessment values in Fairfax County has continued to decline; and

WHEREAS, the present total projected shortfall in funding the Fairfax County Public School programs and Fairfax County services is presently estimated to exceed \$530M; and

WHEREAS, the magnitude of the projected shortfall even given a tax rate increase to provide the same revenue from residential property as last year will result in serious reductions in County Services and Educational effectiveness. Without this tax rate increase, the program reductions necessary to balance the budget will result in unacceptable decreases in services and programs.

WHEREAS, a higher tax rate in FY 2010 would be required to raise the same total property tax revenue as in FY 2009;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association petition the County Executive to include in his published FY 2010 budget an increased real residential property tax rate sufficient to raise, as a minimum, the same dollar revenue provided in the FY 2009 budget. The average residential property owner in Fairfax County would receive a tax bill for approximately the same dollar amount in FY 2010 as in FY 2009.

Snow Removal in Fairfax County

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is responsible for removing snow and ice from the thousands of miles of public roads in Fairfax County. Clearing is done on a priority basis, with interstates and high volume roads cleared first. Once the most heavily traveled roads and emergency routes are adequately clear, snow crews move to less-traveled roads and subdivisions. Please contact VDOT at **703-383-8368**, TTY 711, for further information about snow removal operations.

Fairfax County
FEDERATION
of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003

**Membership
Meeting**

Thursday,
December 18th

7:30 p.m.

The Packard Center
4022 Hummer Road
Annandale

*Topic: The 2009
Legislative Program*

Contents of this Issue	
<i>President's Message / Announcement of December 18, 2008 Meeting</i>	1
<i>Draft Minutes of November 13, 2008 Membership Meeting</i>	2 - 4
<i>2009 Draft Legislative Program</i>	4 - 11
<i>Proposed Resolution - FY 2010 Property Tax Rate Recommendation</i>	11

Directions to the

Packard Center, located in Annandale Community Park

Take I-495 (Capital Beltway) to Little River Turnpike (Route 236 - Exit 52B);
go east toward Annandale.

Turn left at the first stop light onto Hummer Road.

Go 200 yards to the entrance of Annandale Community Park, which is on the left.

Keep right to the large parking lot.

Please use the left entrance into the Packard Center Building, and use the doorbell to enter.

Wishing you and yours Happy Holidays and a Peaceful New Year

www.fairfaxfederation.org