



Your humble servants have descended on Richmond twice this year to plea for reduced spending. Suited up and primed on issues were Cranmer, McAndrew, Whitfield, and others. Over 40 letters were dispensed to the Northern Virginia delegation with mixed results. FCTA lobbyists observed the following reactions: Keam seemed mortified, Plum repulsed, and Bulova (son of Sharon) intrigued.

There is a general air of smug and overstuffed satisfaction after pols passed a record tax increase. All were saved, but for two GOP incumbents that voted for the tax increase.

The sales tax is up 33% (from 4.5 to 6%) since 2000. How has your life improved?

Issues will include:

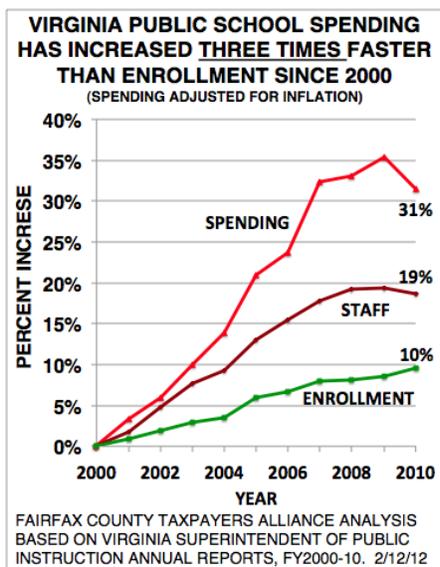
The Medicaid expansion- barely mentioned in the list of bills. This will be presented by the left as a use it or lose it fed give away.

School spending- see graph below. The new governor is intending to “go big” with your wallet. There are bills to promote school choice and relief for the home schooled. One is a paltry \$500 tax credit. Fairfax County spends over \$12,000 per child so wouldn't a \$5,000 credit save us \$7,000 per child? Indiana has started a similar program with no regrets. Why not Virginia?

See more on bills and vote for your favorites: www.richmondsunlight.org

You can click on a committee link and copy/paste FIRE on a bill you select

<http://www.richmondsunlight.com/committee/senate/commerce/>



More savings ideas:

Increase the retirement age ... to 70.

High deductible catastrophic medical insurance. Many contractors have gone to \$3k while the state and county have low deductibles.

Limit salary increases to what is needed to compete with the private sector.

Abolish the Va. Dept. of Education; rather than guarantee a quality education for each student, it enables statewide mediocrity at high cost to the taxpayer.

Stop subsidizing college curriculums with high unemployment rates for recent graduates.

Medicaid should not be a right - have families accept more of the cost of long-term care for parents and stop trying to replace private charity and churches with government programs that are easily defrauded.

Phase out welfare incentives for out-of-wedlock births (40 percent of American births are to unmarried mothers)

FCTA core members routinely attend town halls, school board, and supervisor meetings. We ask tough questions about budget issues. Most of the attendees seek more spending and are welcomed. We speak out for less spending and pols attempt to intimidate us. Below is a report from Charles MacAndrew, a 40+ year FCTA member with 20+ years on the board.

Last Saturday at 11am, Rob Whitfield and I attended a two hour town hall meeting at the Sully Government Center. There were about 40 people in attendance. State Senator Chap Peterson and Delegate Jim LeMunyon gave the presentation. After their speeches, they had a question and answer period.

The items discussed were as follows:

1. **MDEICAID EXPANSION** – Senator Peterson explained all of the benefits of expanding Medicaid for approximately 400,000 people. While he appears not to be a strong advocate of this expansion as the Governor, Senator Janet Howell, and Delegate Ken Plum, he did give us a comprehensive review of the reasons for expansion. From FY08 to FY14, Medicaid has grown in VA. by 45%. Medicaid is a program that the State pays 50% and the Federal Government pay the other 50%. If the expansion occurs, the Federal Government will pay 100% for the first three years and 90% for the next eight years. Then VA. would, in 2021, have to pay 10%. Medicaid will be expanded to cover children. According to Peterson, VA. **is losing \$5 million per day or \$2.1 BILLION over three years by not allowing this expansion.** In FY 2014, Medicaid will make up almost **22% of the State budget or over \$8 BILLION.** I asked Peterson several questions on this program, some of which I stated at the Northern VA. General Assembly session at the Fairfax Government Center on Saturday 1/2/14. I told him that Medicaid should FIRST be reformed by pursuing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in this expensive program. I then mentioned that this program **should be for only the poor people, handicapped or disadvantaged and NOT for the middle class and the rich!** As it is, a widow can end up in a nursing home with Alzheimer's pushed into Medicaid because she has run out of savings BUT still retains their own home as my mother-in-law did in Annandale that was valued under \$400,000. But VA. has a home equity exemption of \$536,000 which is outrageous not to take this BEFORE Medicaid starts paying for the nursing home costs. These middle class people should be forced to use a "reverse mortgage" or some type of agreement to use up their value of their home before Medicaid has to pay. I clearly stated that the Medicaid requirements should make the person spend down ALL of their assets before Medicaid steps in EXCEPT where there is a spouse. Mr. Peterson said that I had some good points. Mr. LeMunyon stated that he opposes Medicaid expansion. He feels that if the Federal Government eventually runs out of funding, VA. will have to cough up more money for Medicaid.
2. **TRANSPORTATION** –; Delegate LeMunyon talked about all of the current road improvements being made in Fairfax County. He mentioned opening the shoulder lane of I-66 anytime it is needed especially when congestion gets bad. He mentioned the **VDOT Public Hearing on 1/30/14 at 6:30 at Oakton High School that will cover I-66 planning.** He talked about the widening of U.S. 50 west of Rte. 28 Sully Road whereby the widening of the eastbound lanes will be completed at the end of 2014 and the westbound lanes will be completed by the summer of 2015. Stringfellow Road widening from U.S. 50 Lee Jackson Highway to U.S. 29 Lee Highway will be completed in the summer of 2015. Improvements to the Rte. 28/I-66 interchange redesign have been prepared and soon the detained traffic analysis along with the environmental study is nearly complete as this interchange needs considerable improvement. While considerable funds in the first year of the new money went mainly to METRORAIL including Metrorail cars and new equipment, the second year, the roads will be prioritized with VDOT and our Northern VA. politician's participation, we should begin to see some improvements. Rob Whitfield asked Jim LeMunyon some good questions and I will let him explain this.
3. **INCOME TAX INEQUALITY** – LeMunyon stated that the VA. tax code has had a provision that taxes 5 & 3/4% on the first \$17,000 which has hit middle and lower taxpayers hard. He will submit a bill to correct this inequality in the tax code by having this code adjusted to inflation, that is, the Consumer Price Index.

4. **ETHICS REFORM –**; Peterson stated that he supports ethics reform which has, for many years, allowed top officials to accept generous gifts from corporations and other donors that may be LEGAL but UNETHICAL! He feels that the Governor will make this another priority to resolve this session. He wants limitations on gifts and contributions.

5. **SCHOOL TESTING –**; LeMunyon wants to revise the tremendous amounts of testing currently conducted at all public schools throughout VA. He wants to reduce the 34 or so number of tests each year. He will present a bill to correct this.

Thank you for your continued support

Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance

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