

Federal Funding & Legislative Principles

114th Congress

Adopted December 2, 2014

PRIORITY PRINCIPLES (see also “*Recommended Strategies for 114th Congress*”)

Overall Federal Funding and Sequestration

Principles for Sequestration legislation:

- Support a balanced approach to federal deficit reduction solutions, acknowledging that federal assistance to state and local governments can help mitigate further layoffs and that federal investments in state and local infrastructure projects help produce private sector jobs and improve our competitiveness. (113th Congress position)
- Oppose deficit reduction actions that shift costs to localities, impose unfunded mandates, or pre-empt local programs and taxing authority. (113th Congress position)
- Support a proactive approach to repositioning the County in anticipation of possible long-term reductions in federal funding, leveraging the County’s location in the National Capital Region, well-educated workforce, and strong business climate to attract additional federal facilities, consolidations of personnel, and increased government contracting opportunities (including expansion of cybersecurity contracting and other agency consolidations). (113th Congress position)
- Support timely federal budget decisions, in order to eliminate uncertainty that is detrimental to the Northern Virginia economy, which is closely tied to the federal government. (113th Congress position)
- Support maintaining the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds as a critical tool generating investments in vital public infrastructure for localities, saving state and local governments nationwide hundreds of billions in interest costs over the last century. (113th Congress position.)

BRAC

Principles for BRAC-related legislation:

- Support the inclusion of sufficient funds to address the planning, infrastructure, and transportation issues raised by the relocation of over 21,000 defense workers to Fort Belvoir, resulting from the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC). (113th Congress position)
- Ensure sufficient funding for the transportation improvements required to implement this federal plan, and appropriate consultation between the Army and Department of Defense and local governments on planning and land use decisions, which are critical priorities. (113th Congress position)
- Ensure sufficient funding for other BRAC impacts, including significant increases in students to Fairfax County Public Schools. (113th Congress position)
- Support required coordination with host communities for all relocations (including to leased spaces) for moves of large groups, or for the aggregation of personnel through multiple minor moves, so that proactive planning can occur and the County can be well-positioned to receive additional federal personnel in the future. (113th Congress position)
- Require that the BRAC Commission or other appropriate body analyze the transportation impacts of any future BRAC recommendations, both on the facility and the surrounding community, before final recommendations are made. (113th Congress position)

Transportation

Principle for Transportation funding:

- The level of federal investment in the nation’s transportation infrastructure, including both maintenance of the existing system and expansion, must increase significantly. Investments in transportation are necessary for a strong economy, and in the current climate, could help spur growth. Northern Virginia’s need for transportation solutions for all modes will continue to grow in size and scope. Fairfax County has taken actions to substantially increase local funding for transportation infrastructure and service. Recently, the Commonwealth has as well, but the federal government must also do its part, as future generations will pay the price for the current inaction. (113th Congress position)

Principles for Transportation legislation:

- Urge Congress to appropriate the annual portion of the \$1.5 billion in federal funds authorized for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)’s critical capital needs (\$150 million per year for 10 years). Each of the WMATA signatory jurisdictions has approved the Compact amendments required for WMATA to qualify for these federal funds and the non-federal matches have been identified. (113th Congress position)

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- The Washington metropolitan region is projected to continue to grow over the coming decades, placing more pressure on a Metro system already nearing capacity. To address this need, Metro has proposed a number of initiatives called Metro 2025, including: enhancement of rush-hour capacity by upgrading to the use of all eight-car trains; expansion of high-volume rail stations to ease congestion; and, completion of the bus Priority Corridor Network. Additional resources are critical to ensuring the success of this effort, as WMATA prepares to purchase the train cars necessary for increased capacity needs. Further, improvements to the system's core capacity are needed before any future extensions can be considered. Federal investment in Metro 2025 is essential to keeping Metro and the Washington Metropolitan region moving forward. *(New position)*
- Support legislation creating permanent parity between the level of transportation benefits provided for transit and for parking. *(113th Congress position)*

Principles for the next Surface Transportation Program Authorization:

- Support coordination with local governments and regional entities as USDOT develops rules to establish performance measures and standards for numerous programs. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support language included in current authorization giving priority to highway transportation funding for evacuation routes surrounding military facilities. *(113th Congress position)*
- Greater decision-making authority for determining how transportation funding is spent should be given to metropolitan areas and local governments. *(113th Congress position)*
- Safety must continue to be an important focus of transportation projects. *(113th Congress position)*

Social Safety Net

Principle for Social Safety Net funding:

It is the responsibility of government at all levels – federal, state, and local – to help Americans who are unable to fully meet their own needs. As a result of current economic hardships, those needs are greater now than ever. Healthy and productive individuals, families, and communities are the foundation of the United States' present and future security and prosperity, and ensuring this foundation requires a strong partnership among all levels of government to maintain the critical safety net.

In assessing potential federal cuts to the social safety net, the County will consider the significance of the impact, both fiscally to the County and the potential magnitude of the impact on individuals living at subsistence levels, in accordance with the following objectives:

- Support programs that help residents of Fairfax County meet their basic needs, from nutrition programs to homelessness prevention and affordable housing;
- Support programs that get Americans back to work and support economic development, including job training and child care;
- Support programs and funding streams that provide local flexibility to meet the needs of a changing and challenging economic climate, while avoiding penalties to localities that exhibit prudent fiscal management;
- Support programs that promote school readiness for at-risk children;
- Support programs that protect the health and well-being of vulnerable residents;
- Oppose changes that shift additional responsibilities to localities, weakening the federal/state/local partnership, particularly in a state where financial support for the social safety net tends to be minimal;
- Support adequate federal funding to meet federal mandates, as costly federal mandates must be accompanied by appropriate funding, or at a minimum, adequate flexibility to ensure the success of priority programs.

Principles for Human Services/Education legislation:

- Fully fund costs of mandates and support flexibility and additional resources to carry them out, such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). *(113th Congress position)*
- Support elimination of the current "prior use" rule for tax credits on school renovation and reconstruction, which disallows these credits when the building is rehabilitated and used in the same manner as before the rehabilitation. This could provide a tool for rehabilitating aging County schools. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support incentives for affordable housing creation and preservation. *(113th Congress position)*

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- Support federal funding initiatives that will advance research, surveillance, reporting, and diagnostics for Lyme disease. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support funding which improves access to affordable, quality child care for families with low income, including increases to the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Head Start. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support efforts to improve access to affordable immunosuppressant drug coverage for kidney transplant patients. Patients with end stage renal disease are already provided special Medicare coverage, but while Medicare already covers immunosuppressant drugs for transplant patients under age 65, coverage is only for a three-year period. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support federal funding to the states for adult protective services as well as funding for state long-term care ombudsman programs. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support timely investigation by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services into Medicaid-funded transportation service provider Logisticare, in order to resolve ongoing complaints stemming from consistent poor performance and ensure adequate service is restored. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support close monitoring of implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), ensuring provision of critical health coverage, an efficient allocation of resources and a smooth transition to a new health care landscape, while providing clear direction and appropriate incentives for consumers and employers, and avoiding both service reductions and restrictions on access to care. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support full funding for Impact Aid, which provides funding to school divisions that educate federally connected students. Though Fairfax County educates significant numbers of children whose parents are employed in military, civilian or related positions, the funding received through this program is a small fraction of the actual cost of providing quality K-12 education. *(New position)*
- Support federal reimbursement for costs associated with educating unaccompanied minors placed in Fairfax County by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). *(New position)*
- Support lifting the cap on the number of Public Housing units that may participate in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Rental Assistance Demonstration program. Converting the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority's (FCRHA) Public Housing properties to Section 8 funding under this program would provide for a more stable funding platform and potentially finance capital improvements for these properties. The 60,000 unit cap on the number of units that may participate under current law limits access to this program. *(New position)*

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Relocation

Principles for Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Relocation legislation:

- Support relocation of the FBI headquarters to a site in Fairfax County with close proximity to transit and numerous transportation options, in order to mitigate transportation impacts while encouraging redevelopment and job growth in the County. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support relocation of the FBI to existing federal land within Fairfax County, and oppose actions that remove property from the County's tax rolls. *(113th Congress position)*

CONTINUING PRINCIPLES

Public Safety – Gangs

Principles for Gang legislation:

- Support greater federal efforts to assist localities with gang prevention or intervention programs. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support stronger prevention measures. *(113th Congress position)*

Public Safety – Weapons

Principles for Weapons legislation:

- Support efforts to reauthorize the federal assault weapons ban included in the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. *(113th Congress position)*

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Energy/Climate Change

Principles for Energy/Climate Change legislation:

- Support legislation providing funding for state and local governments to address issues related to global climate change, including energy conservation, use of renewable energy sources (including waste to energy), green buildings and vehicles, reduced emissions, and greenhouse gases. (113th Congress position)
- Support funding and incentives to increase research and development for emerging energy efficient and renewable technologies. (113th Congress position)

Environment

Principles for Environmental legislation:

- Support incentives and innovations that encourage environmental preservation and resource conservation. (113th Congress position)
- Support incentives for open space preservation. (113th Congress position)
- Support adequate funding to local governments and achievable timelines for any new federal environmental regulations or mandates, particularly requirements related to the Chesapeake Bay watershed. (113th Congress position revised)

Homeland Security/Emergency Operations

Principles for Homeland Security/Emergency Operations legislation:

- Support greater funding for “high risk” areas such as Northern Virginia and Fairfax County. (113th Congress position)
- Support timely delivery of funds and ways to achieve greater flexibility for use of funds, while maintaining strong accountability standards. (113th Congress position)

Immigration

Principles for Immigration legislation:

- Support stricter federal action to improve the enforcement of federal immigration laws and policies by federal agencies. (113th Congress position)
- Oppose actions that would compromise the County’s ability to deliver local government programs and services that benefit or protect the community as a whole. (113th Congress position)
- Oppose legislation that would mandate local governments to enforce federal immigration laws, especially in the area of law enforcement. (113th Congress position)

Elections

Principles for Elections legislation:

- Support security and reliability of elections equipment and results. (113th Congress position)
- Oppose costly, unfunded mandates for elections equipment and unrealistic timelines for implementation of new federal mandates. (113th Congress position)
- Support sufficient federal funding to assist localities in implementing any new federal mandates for elections equipment, including accessibility requirements. (113th Congress position)
- Monitor potential impacts of the Supreme Court decision striking down Section IV of the Voting Rights Act, which eliminated the requirement that changes to Virginia’s election laws be “pre-cleared.” (113th Congress position)

Local Taxation

Principles for Local Taxation legislation:

- Preserve existing local taxing authority. Encroachment upon local authority skews local accountability and hampers efforts to provide for constituent needs in the most cost effective and efficient manner. (113th Congress position)

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- Support legislation allowing local governments to participate in the Federal Offset Program, which would improve the ability of local governments to collect delinquent local taxes by offsetting the owed taxes with reductions in the federal income tax refunds of the delinquent individual. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support legislation to allow states to collect sales and use taxes on sales made over the internet by those retailers without a physical presence in that state (often referred to as the Marketplace Fairness Act), with consideration given to mitigating compliance burdens on smaller online businesses. These tax payments are already required under current Virginia law, but compliance with this requirement is very limited. Passage of such legislation would play a key role in transportation funding in Virginia, as it was included as part of the transportation funding package enacted in 2013. *(New position)*

Telecommunications/Communications

Principles for Telecommunications legislation:

- Oppose any preemption or circumvention of local governments' historical control over land use decisions and oppose any attempt to eliminate local governments' right to charge, on a non-discriminatory basis, fair and reasonable compensation for use of public property. *(113th Congress position)*
- Oppose any reduction or diminution of local government authority to: address consumer needs; regulate consumer services; and negotiate and enforce cable franchises that include provisions such as redlining prohibitions, franchise fees, public, educational, and governmental channels and financial support, customer service provisions, and technical construction standards. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support the allocation of additional 700MHz radio frequency spectrum for public safety. Also support sufficient federal funding to ensure deployment of wireless public safety broadband data communications networks. *(113th Congress position)*

Land Use

Principles for Land Use legislation:

- 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. *(113th Congress position)*
- The County supports the concept that disputes over land use authority are local in character and should be solved at the local level. Further, the County requests that the development community and regional entities discuss any concerns or problems with the County before seeking legislative solutions. *(113th Congress position)*

Federal Contracting

Principles for Federal Contracting legislation:

- Support efforts to streamline and increase efficiency and productivity in federal government operations, by maximizing the strengths of both federal contractors and federal government employees. Such efforts to strike this balance should be accomplished in a thoughtful, open process that is not arbitrary in nature. *(113th Congress position)*
- Support the critical partnership that exists between the public and private sectors in the conduct of federal government operations. This is particularly important in Fairfax County, where federal employees and federal contractors each contribute significantly to the local and state economy. *(113th Congress position)*