

Response to Questions on the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: What are the specific duties of the Legislative Director and Liaison? What direct benefit does this position provide to the citizens of Fairfax County? What other options are available for these functions to be performed? What are the costs of this position as well as any related overhead costs?

Response: Under the direction of the County Executive, the Legislative Director serves as the County's chief legislative advocate and principal liaison with federal and state officials; oversees development of the Board's annual program of state and federal legislative and budgetary initiatives and positions; directs the lobbying activities of County staff and private firms retained by the County during the annual Virginia General Assembly, Congressional sessions and throughout the year; manages countywide review and analysis of proposed legislation and reports to the Board, its Legislative Committee, and the County Executive on potential impacts to the provision of County services; at the request of the Board, develops legislation and positions statements to address specific problems identified by constituents; develops strategies to acquire and retain legislative authority necessary for the County in a Dillon Rule state to meet the needs of citizens; collaborates with other jurisdictions and regional and state organizations to leverage necessary advocacy resources.

The Legislative Liaison performs a series of duties under the direction of the Legislative Director: participates in the development, implementation, and advocacy of the Board's annual legislative program, with particular emphasis on federal activity, a function recently added at the direction of the Board; researches, evaluates and drafts proposed County appropriation requests, position statements and correspondence for presentation to the Legislative Committee and the Board; monitors and reports on federal legislation; coordinates meetings between County elected officials and the County's Congressional Delegation. On the state level, articulates and advocates Board positions as assigned; performs detailed review of the state budget, particularly as to impacts on the provision of services at the local level and the allocation of state tax revenues.

These positions carry out the Board's directives to 1) address particular constituent concerns requiring state or federal legislative changes, 2) acquire or retain legislative authority for essential local public services in a Dillon Rule state, and 3) achieve a fair share of state revenues and services based on the taxes paid by County residents.

Currently, the governmental relations function is achieved through a public/private strategy. Operating from the County Executive's Office, government relations staff coordinate and bring the full complement of County operational staff's expertise and knowledge to bear upon legislative issues; the internal County legislative advocacy effort is extended through the use of contractual services at both the state and federal levels. Options involve performing the government relations function entirely in-house, or, alternatively, to entirely privatize.

The FY 2010 cost of the S-34 Legislative Director merit position is estimated at \$132,797, while the cost of the S-31 Legislative Liaison merit position is \$97,517.