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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX



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Rodney L. Lusk
LEE DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Board Matter

September 15, 2020

Mr. Chairman - Litter is an issue that plagues our county's streets, rivers, neighborhoods, and businesses. When trash is misplaced the residents of Fairfax County pay the price—as does our region's wildlife and ecosystems. Businesses are loath to locate and invest in communities that look messy and unkempt. Every year, litter costs our state and local governments millions of dollars in cleanup efforts; and residents find themselves spending thousands of hours cleaning up their own neighborhoods and streams every spring and fall. I am proud of the proactive measures that our county has taken to address litter in our community, yet there is still so much more that needs to be done to address this persistent challenge.

This past Spring in Lee District we completed the installation of an innovative floating litter trap in Little Hunting Creek, a project that I know you were instrumental in Mr. Chairman, which has already prevented an enormous amount of trash from continuing through our streams into the Chesapeake.

Additionally, the successful implementation of Operation Stream Shield has proven to be exactly the kind of innovative program we need to ensure we are meeting our environmental and human services goals. I applaud our County staff who are diligently working towards ridding our County of this problem—but we need to do more. I receive calls reporting litter and illegal dumping to our office regularly, and the reality is that there is little we can do. Following consultation with the relevant county staff, the time has come to organize our community in order to supplement the prevention and litter control efforts that our county staff are already undertaking.

With that goal in mind, I move that this board direct the County Executive to assign the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, in coordination with the Clean Fairfax Council, to oversee the creation of a special task force focused on preventing and mitigating litter in Fairfax County. The task force should consist of relevant County departments, state agencies, non-profit organizations, community groups, schools, and our residents. The task force should study the causes of litter in Fairfax County, evaluate our current policies and procedures, and investigate neighboring or similar jurisdictions to Fairfax County for proven

solutions, such as a plastic bag ordinance. Finally, they should report back with a comprehensive plan for this Board to consider and potentially enact. The plan should include any recommended changes to the County Code, agency operations or reorganization, and development of new programs. This task force should be convened by January of 2021 and report to this Board on their findings in the following Fall of 2021.

Thank you.