

Federal Funding & Legislative Principles

114th Congress

Revised and Readopted December 8, 2015
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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Oppose deficit reduction actions that shift costs to localities, impose unfunded mandates, or pre-empt local programs and taxing authority. (*114th 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). (*114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position.*)

Federal Agency Relocation and Consolidation

Principles for Relocation and Consolidation-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). (*114th Congress position*)
- Ensure sufficient funding for other BRAC impacts, including significant increases in students to Fairfax County Public Schools. (*114th Congress position*)
- Ensure greater coordination between federal agencies and host communities for any federal government relocation and consolidation proposals, for both new facilities and the use of existing facilities, including analyzing transportation impacts before final recommendations are made and coordinating implementation efforts following such relocations. (*Revises 114th 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. 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. (*114th Congress position*)

Principles for Surface Transportation Authorization:

- In order to allow long-term transportation planning, support long-term transportation reauthorization legislation, including sufficient funding. (*New position.*)
- Support coordination with local governments and regional entities as USDOT develops rules to establish performance measures and standards for numerous programs. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support language included in current authorization giving priority to highway transportation funding for evacuation routes surrounding military facilities. (*114th Congress position*)
- Greater decision-making authority for determining how transportation funding is spent should be given to metropolitan areas and local governments. (*114th Congress position*)
- Safety must continue to be an important focus of transportation projects. (*114th Congress position*)

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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. (*114th Congress position*)
- To address current and future capacity needs for the Metrorail system, WMATA 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. 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. (*Revises 114th Congress position*)
- Support legislation creating permanent parity between the level of transportation benefits provided for transit and for parking. (*114th Congress position*)

Principle for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization:

- Oppose further changes to the perimeter and slot rules for Dulles and Reagan National Airports to protect the balance between these airports. (*New 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 recent 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). (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support incentives for affordable housing creation and preservation. (*114th Congress position*)

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- Support federal funding initiatives that will advance research, surveillance, reporting, and diagnostics for Lyme disease. (*114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support federal funding to the states for adult protective services as well as funding for state long-term care ombudsman programs. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support appropriate oversight by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services of Medicaid-funded transportation service, in order to resolve ongoing complaints stemming from consistent poor performance and ensure adequate service is restored. (*Revises 114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support federal reimbursement for costs associated with educating unaccompanied minors placed in Fairfax County by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). (*114th Congress position*)
- Support full funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), which provides funding for affordable housing through acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, and tenant-based rental assistance. (*New position*)
- Support federal assistance to state and local governments to develop and implement programs designed to improve outcomes for individuals with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system. (*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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)

CONTINUING PRINCIPLES

Consumer Protection

Principle for Consumer Protection legislation:

- Support efforts to enhance consumer protections in products sold by alternative financial services, such as payday loans and vehicle title loans, to minimize the negative financial impact of such products on financially vulnerable consumers. Payday and vehicle title loans are often associated with practices which drive consumers further into debt. (*New position*)

Elections

Principles for Elections legislation:

- Support security and reliability of elections equipment and results. (*114th Congress position*)

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- Oppose costly, unfunded mandates for elections equipment and unrealistic timelines for implementation of new federal mandates. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support sufficient federal funding to assist localities in implementing any new federal mandates for elections equipment, including accessibility requirements. The Virginia Department of Elections has indicated that its share of Help America Vote Act funds will be exhausted by FY 2018; currently, these funds comprise 60 percent of the Department's annual spending. (*Updates 114th 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." (*114th Congress position*)

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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support funding and incentives to increase research and development for emerging energy efficient and renewable technologies. (*114th Congress position*)

Environment

Principles for Environmental legislation:

- Support incentives and innovations that encourage environmental preservation and resource conservation. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support incentives for open space preservation. (*114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)

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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support timely delivery of funds and ways to achieve greater flexibility for use of funds, while maintaining strong accountability standards. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support federal assistance for the implementation of "Next Generation 911," a major change in the provision of 911 services that is particularly critical for the National Capital Region. (*New position*)

Immigration

Principles for Immigration legislation:

- Support stricter federal action to improve the enforcement of federal immigration laws and policies by federal agencies. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)
- Oppose legislation that would mandate local governments to enforce federal immigration laws, especially in the area of law enforcement. (*114th Congress position*)

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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. (*114th 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)
- 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)

Public Safety – Gangs

Principles for Gang legislation:

- Support greater federal efforts to assist localities with gang prevention or intervention programs. (*114th Congress position*)
- Support stronger prevention measures. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress 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. (*114th 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. (*114th Congress position*)