

Government Reform & Restructuring – Part II
By Delegate Albert C. Pollard, Jr.
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Last week, I shared the first half of my letter to Governor McDonnell listing my recommendations for his Commission on Government Reform and Restructuring.

I began my letter by stating my belief that the best possible way to achieve efficiencies is to remove unnecessary regulation and bureaucracy by decreasing legislative mandates on the executive branch and offer flexibility at lower levels of management.

The following are my additional recommendations from that letter:

Dear Governor:

I offer the following list of recommendations [cont]:

- 3. In terms of executive branch management, I feel that there could be better delivery of services (although no cost savings) through coordination of Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) and Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) law enforcement officers. As you know, east of the fall line these two agencies have concurrent jurisdictions on the water and both sets of officers are federally licensed game wardens.*

Several years ago the agencies entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). However, a review of that MOU reveals that it neither touches on scheduling nor on interagency aid during times of peak service demand. Through strong executive branch leadership, I believe the service delivery overlap of these two law enforcement divisions could be greatly reduced.

- 4. In terms of the state agency fleet, I have personally observed that there are many state vehicles which are pickup trucks yet appear to be used for single passenger travel. While I realize the convenience of a pickup truck, in my own business I use my compact car for the vast majority of pickup and delivery. Since my truck is expensive to operate, I reserve it for loads which cannot fit into nor be carried by my car. For instance, my car can load up to eight 2'x 4's, and at the present moment, I have several hundred pounds of stainless steel parts in the back of my car.*

I am sure that a review of the state's ratio of trucks to passenger vehicles would yield long term fuel savings. Furthermore, increased use of utility trailers can expand the flexibility of the state's fleet.

- 5. The next item is regarding Virginia's rules surrounding public meeting requirements. In this modern age, telecommunications and the public acceptance of telecommunications has outstripped the Commonwealth's public meeting*

requirements. I have heard of several instances where boards have had to meet in person for fifteen minutes to vote on an issue requiring action. By modernizing Virginia's standards and allowing greater flexibility, we could save taxpayer money and citizen members' time without sacrificing citizen accessibility and open government. Furthermore, if properly constructed, state employees could save considerable travel time by the increased use of teleconferencing.

6. *My final recommendation is that your commission should look at the manner in which Virginia spends money. As you may recall, several years ago I worked with then-Delegate Chris Saxman to move Virginia to an annual budgeting process. The arguments for such a move are in the attached editorial which we wrote. In short, such a move would create greater transparency, greater accountability, and a decreased incidence of "back loading" expenses into the second year of the budget. Any move toward annual budget should include a "three year, non-itemized planning budget" so policy makers can always keep their eye on future programmatic costs.*

Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts and suggestions.

*Sincerely,
Albert C. Pollard, Jr.*

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