



# 2021 Legislative Recommendations

## Support for Recovering Communities

The Central Virginia Planning District Commission supports action at the federal, state and local levels to protect local communities and to ensure their viability in the face of the COVID-19 health emergency.

## Budgets and Funding

The Central Virginia Planning District Commission urges the governor and legislature to enhance state aid to localities and public schools, to not impose mandates on or shift costs to localities, and to enhance local revenue options.

1. State should fully fund its share of the realistic costs of the Standards of Quality (SOQ).
2. We support the legislature making additional revenue options available to localities in order to diversify local revenue streams.
3. We support further strengthening for counties those revenue options that were enhanced during the 2020 legislative session.
4. The State also should not eliminate or restrict local revenue sources or confiscate or redirect local general fund dollars to the state treasury. This includes Communications Sates and Use Tax Trust Fund dollars and the local share of recordation taxes.

## Broadband

The Planning District Commission supports state and federal efforts and financial incentives that assist localities and their communities in deploying universal, affordable access to broadband technology in unserved areas.

## Economic and Workforce Development

The Planning District Commission recognizes economic development and workforce training as essential to the continued viability of the Commonwealth. Accordingly, we support the following:

1. Enhanced coordination with the K-12 education community to equip the workforce with in-demand skill sets, to align workforce supply with anticipated employer demands.
2. Continuing emphasis on regional cooperation in economic, workforce and tourism development.
3. Continuation of the *GO Virginia* initiative to grow and diversify the private sector in each region.



4. State job investment and small business grants being targeted to businesses that pay higher wages.
5. Increased state funding for regional planning district commissions.

## General Government

The Planning District Commission believes that since so many governmental actions take place at the local level, local governments must have the freedom, flexibility and tools to carry out their responsibilities.

1. We oppose legislation that mandates binding arbitration, meet and confer requirements, and imposes grievance procedures for local employees. We oppose any amendment to the 2020 legislation authorizing collective bargaining that allows localities to choose whether or not they wish to engage in collective bargaining. The PDC opposes any requirements to mandate collective bargaining, require binding arbitration, or repeal Virginia's right to work law.
2. Local and regional public bodies should be allowed to conduct electronic meetings as now permitted for state public bodies, and to use alternatives to newspapers for publishing various legal advertisements and public notices.
3. The state should maintain the principles of sovereign immunity for local governments and their employees, to include regional jail officers.
4. Police oversight commissions should be local choice enabled, rather than be required.
5. The Commonwealth should meet and increase 599 funding obligations.

## Environmental

The Planning District Commission believes that environmental quality should be funded and coordinated through a coordinated approach due to its inter-jurisdictional nature.

1. We support dam safety regulations that do not impose unreasonable costs on dam owners whose structures meet current safety standards.
2. The State should not impose a fee, tax or surcharge on water, sewer, solid waste or other local services to pay for state environmental programs.
3. We support increased and ongoing investment in the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund to assist localities with much-needed stormwater projects and in response to any new regulatory requirements.
4. We also request that any stormwater requirements be balanced, flexible and not require waiver of stormwater charges, and that adequate funding and training be available for the State and local governments to meet ongoing costs associated with local stormwater programs.



## Airports

The Lynchburg Regional Airport is an important component of the region’s transportation and economic development program. The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on Virginia’s commercial service airports has been unprecedented in the history of the aviation industry.

1. The Central Virginia PDC supports increased funding for the “Governor’s New Airline Service Incentive Fund” as passed by the General Assembly during its 2019 session (SB 990). This legislation created a special non-reverting fund to be used at the discretion of the Governor for grants to airlines serving commercial service airports in Virginia. The fund is intended to provide or assist in the marketing, advertising and promotional activities by airlines in connection with the launch of new airline service, and to provide incentives to airlines as part of such new service.
2. We support increasing commercial service airport entitlement funding under the Commonwealth Aviation Program (CAF). This initiative, adopted by the Virginia Airport Board (VAB) September 17, 2020, is designed to assist airports in moving forward capital projects during this time that would otherwise be cancelled or deferred, as well as allow those airports to use entitlement funds for operating expenses.
3. The PDC also supports funding a new marketing program, adopted by the VAB September 17, 2020, aimed at maximizing the state-wide potential to create jobs in travel and tourism. This would be accomplished by working together with the various Commonwealth agencies and public/private-sector partners to support grants to communities to promote available airline service and build consumer confidence in air transportation.

## Children’s Services Act

The Planning District Commission encourages the State to be partners in containing Children’s Services Act (CSA) costs and to better balance CSA responsibilities between the State and local governments.

1. We support local ability to use state funds to pay for mandated services provided directly by the locality, specifically for private day placements, where the same services could be offered in schools; additionally, we support rate setting by the state for private day placements.
2. We support the state maintaining cost shares on a sum sufficient basis by both the State and local governments; changing the funding mechanism to a per-pupil basis of state funding would shift the sum sufficient portion fully to localities, which we would oppose.
3. We support enhanced state funding for local CSA administrative costs.
4. We support a cap on local expenditures (with the State making up any gaps) in order to combat higher costs for serving mandated children.
5. We support the State being proactive in making residential facilities, services and service providers available, especially in rural areas, and in supporting locality efforts to provide facilities and services on a regional level.
6. We oppose state efforts to increase local match levels and to make the program more uniform by attempting to control how localities run their programs.