



Bedford County
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

November 15, 2011

The Governor's Task Force
on Local Government
Mandate Review

Dear Chairman Herry:

The Bedford County Board of Supervisors has asked me to forward the attached list of additional mandates of concern to us. The Board strongly supports the items found in the *List of Unfunded Mandates of Concern to Localities* presented by the Virginia Association of Counties to the Task Force earlier this year. The Task Force may find a few of VACo's concerns duplicated here. However, there are also a number of concerns specific to Bedford County and Central Virginia that we would like to emphasize.

Please include these concerns in the record to be considered by the Task Force as it formulates recommendations to be forwarded to Gov. McDonnell.

Sincerely,

Kathleen D Guzi
County Administrator



Additional Mandates of Concern to Bedford County

**Presented to the Governor's Task Force
on Local Government Mandate Review
November 2011**

Bedford County wholeheartedly supports the *List of Top Mandates of Concern to Counties* presented to the Task Force by the Virginia Association of Counties in August 2011. This extensive list represents most of the mandates that concern all counties in Virginia. Additionally, Bedford County has several items that specifically impact Bedford County as well as various other localities in Central Virginia.

In unranked order, they include:

- **Line of Duty Act**

The 2010 General Assembly included budget language transitioning the costs of the Line of Duty Act to local governments while still allowing the state to continue administration of the program. The localities had no input into design of the LODA benefits program or on eligibility, but are being asked to fully fund its costs now that the program has grown beyond what the state is willing to pay. The Commonwealth should pay for the program, make LODA coverage optional at the local level, or allow localities to design the program specific to local needs. In addition, LODA administration should fall under the State Workers Compensation Commission and not under the State Comptroller's Office if it continues to be a state-administered program.

- **Comprehensive Services Act**

Make the CSA program subject to the Administrative Processes Act. The APA ensures adequate public notice about, and input into, proposed rules and regulations that affect all taxpayers in the Commonwealth, which would undoubtedly result in local and state savings.

- **Increase State Match for CSA**

The state match for certain youth programs in the CSA should be increased. Local governments pay a healthy portion of the state Medicaid match for certain youth in this program. The portion paid by local government has increased over the life of this program, which began in the early 1990s. The state pays the Medicaid match for other service areas and should do so for this program as well.

- **Reduce frequency of landfill groundwater monitoring**

Several years ago, the state enacted changes to the Solid Waste Management Regulations

that required landfills located within a certain proximity to wetland areas to monitor groundwater quarterly. The monitoring was previously conducted semiannually. This doubled the monitoring costs for Bedford County's groundwater program. At the Bedford County facility groundwater flow rate is approximately 29 feet per year. Monitoring this slow-moving groundwater on a quarterly basis significantly adds operational costs with little or no benefit. The previous monitoring program was effective at protecting public health and the environment and met federal landfill monitoring requirements.

- **Landfill groundwater flexibility for naturally occurring inorganic metals**
Over the past several years, the Department of Environmental Quality has adopted more stringent regulatory limits for some inorganic metals in landfill groundwater monitoring wells. Some of these inorganics, such as cobalt and vanadium, are naturally occurring. However, facilities in Virginia spend significant resources drilling new groundwater wells, increasing monitoring frequency/programs, conducting verification sampling, and/or preparing alternate source demonstrations. The more stringent regulatory limits for these naturally occurring constituents result in additional annual monitoring costs.
- **Nonessential Reporting Requirements**
Virginia agencies require a mind-boggling amount of reporting and information that on the surface appears unnecessary and at times even frivolous. Yet this paperwork is mandated either by statute or is required to maintain funding for necessary services. An example is the monthly duplication of Constitutional Officers' payroll reports to obtain reimbursement for state-supported local employees from the Compensation Board. Compensation Board funding should be made on a lump-sum basis for those localities who meet certain standards without duplication of accounting and payroll processes. A thorough review by the state of what is actually required and necessary would reduce millions of dollars in unneeded costs annually to the various localities.
- **Dog Tag Reporting Requirement**
For the past four years a mandate imposed by the General Assembly requires that local Treasurers' Offices contact area veterinarians to determine whether owners of vaccinated animals have also procured local dog licenses. We must then contact owners who have failed to do so. This mandate is so burdensome that Bedford County was forced to hire a part-time clerk to meet its requirements. On average we have spent \$9,625 on labor costs and \$5,580 on printing and postage, for a total of \$12,274 each year since the mandate was imposed. This exceeds the amount of money we generally collect on animal licenses.
- **Retiree Health Insurance Credit Cost Shift**
When the Commonwealth adopted a Retiree Health Insurance Credit in 2000, localities were assured that the cost for this program would remain a state expense. Only two years later, in 2002, the cost was shifted to localities through the VRS. This program should be fully paid for by the state as promised or eliminated as it is no longer being funded.
- **Cost of Primary Elections**
Require that political parties pay for the costs of local primary elections and/or change the election laws to decrease the cost of such primaries to the localities through

alternative means such as paper ballots, countywide voting places, absentee voting, or similar changes.

- **Restore Per Diem Payments for Inmates**

The 2010 General Assembly reduced its per diem payment to localities for both state and local-responsible inmates in local jails. We request that this funding be restored.

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