



# TOWN OF AMHERST

P.O. Box 280 186 S. Main Street Amherst, VA 24521  
Phone (434)946-7885 Fax (434)946-2087

October 26, 2011

Susan Williams  
Commission on Local Government  
600 East Main Street, Suite 300  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Mandate Relief

Dear Ms. Williams:

As requested in Gov. McDonnell's October 4, 2011 letter, please include the following mandates in the list of areas where relief would be appropriate:

### Consumer Confidence Reports

Since 1999 municipal water systems in Virginia have been required by 12VAC5-590-545 (pursuant to 40CFR §141.155) to assemble, publish and deliver an annual report to all water users. We understand that this summary report on municipal water quality is desirable and contains useful information for a variety of situations, but the mass printing and delivery is time consuming, costly and generally wasteful. The Town provides hard copies of the report to anyone who asks and posts it on the Town's web site, which is clearly the best way to make the information available the public. The Town estimates that the cost of extra printing and mailing to be approximately \$2,000/yr. We ask for relief from the delivery requirement and also the EPA-envisioned alternative of publishing the full report in a newspaper as articulated in §32.1-170B of the State Code which has not been implemented by the Virginia Department of Health to date.

### Laboratory Accreditation

The Town of Amherst's wastewater treatment plant laboratory is required to meet the same inspection and certification standards as large-scale commercial laboratories. The cost of this includes a \$600 fee imposed by the Division of Consolidated Laboratories every two years, at least eight man-hours per year of working directly with state inspectors from that agency, and much more time in developing protocols and paperwork to meet "methodology requirements" and heightened scrutiny. We believe the previous inspection system managed by DEQ, the state agency responsible for inspecting all other aspects of wastewater treatment, to be more appropriate and cost-effective approach to this issue.

### Stormwater Treatment

It has come to our attention that new EPA and DCR stormwater management and/or treatment rules are being developed and that some have estimated the anticipated cost to of these to Virginia to be on the order of \$7,000,000,000 (seven billion dollars). Although this stems from EPA's Chesapeake Bay cleanup initiative, apparently the working assumption is that most of the cost and effort will fall

October 26, 2011  
Ms. Susan Williams  
Page 2 of 2

to local government. You should be aware that, although improving water quality is generally good, this comes at an extremely high cost and it will be difficult to explain the new taxes and fees required to fund such programs to our local residents and businesses when its main benefit is for a water feature that is about four driving hours away.

Please let me know if you have any questions or desire additional documentation on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Hobbs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jack Hobbs  
Town Manager

cc Kimball Payne, Governor's Task Force for Local Government Mandate Review  
Mike Amyx, Virginia Municipal League