

Coalition of Northern Virginia Chambers of Commerce

January 11, 2017

Dear Members of the Virginia General Assembly:

On behalf of the Coalition of Northern Virginia Chambers of Commerce – composed of 12 chambers of commerce representing thousands of employers and every community in Northern Virginia – we ask that you support full funding for the “Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity” (GO Virginia) in the FY2018 Budget plan that will be adopted in the upcoming Legislative Session.

Members of the Coalition of Northern Virginia Chambers have been strong and early supporters of GO Virginia because of its innovative approach to spurring economic prosperity through cross-jurisdictional cooperation. We were pleased when the General Assembly and Governor McAuliffe worked in a bipartisan fashion to adopt the initiative in the 2016 legislative session.

GO Virginia is needed because Virginia’s economy is dramatically underperforming, relative to other states, due in part to the decrease in Federal spending and insufficient economic diversification. This situation is reflected in Virginia’s declining performance in numerous rankings of the best states in which to do business.

Facing a significant budget shortfall in the upcoming fiscal year, Legislative leaders and the Executive branch will have to make many hard decisions to reduce spending to meet your Constitutional obligation to adopt a balanced budget. We appreciate that these decisions will not be easy and that many important constituencies will face the prospect of reduced state support

By keeping the GO Virginia funding in the budget, we can begin to create a strategy that results in sustainable revenues for all sectors of Virginia’s economy. Our economic future depends on strong private-sector growth and job creation, and state policies and regulations should encourage businesses, educational institutions, and local governments in each region to work together on economic and workforce development. That is what GO Virginia will achieve, and that is why this program must be protected.

We urge you to support full funding for the program during the 2017 session. Your support of this key initiative will help the economy grow faster in each region and produce better job opportunities for all Virginians.

Sincerely,



Joe Haggerty
Alexandria Chamber of
Commerce



Eileen Curtis
Dulles Regional Chamber of
Commerce



Kate Bates
Arlington Chamber of
Commerce

Coalition of Northern Virginia Chambers of Commerce



Mark Ingrao
Greater Reston Chamber of
Commerce



Paul Kohlenberger
Greater McLean Chamber of
Commerce



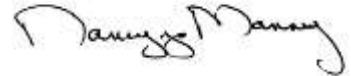
Sally Cole
Falls Church Chamber of
Commerce



Anthony J. Howard
Loudoun County Chamber of
Commerce



Debbie Jones
Prince William Chamber of
Commerce



Nancy-jø Manney
Greater Springfield Chamber
of Commerce