



April 17, 2020

The Honorable Mark Levine
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room E409
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Delegate Levine,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

The amendment makes it clear that all public bodies, including the Arlington County Board and its advisory commissions, are able to hold electronic meetings to discuss business that is necessary to continue operations, beyond just discussing the emergency. We believe this fix will confirm the Attorney General's Opinion 20-011, requested by Delegate Sullivan and Senator McPike, stating that continuity of operations is allowed under the law.

The proposed amendment is drawn narrowly to respond to this unusual health-related emergency and only for the duration of the Governor's declared emergency. The health risks that accompany having an in-person quorum make this clarification particularly necessary with the recent extension of the stay at home order to June 10, 2020.

The change sought preserves all the current open government protections: a quorum is required, as are three days of advance notice to the public, information on how to access the electronic meeting, and arrangements for public access to the meetings. Copies of the agenda and meeting materials must be made available in electronic form, and minutes and votes must be recorded in a roll call fashion.

Public bodies will strive to have the people speaking be clearly identified. There will be staff and members available after the meeting to speak to the press when requested, and, to the extent practicable, videoconferencing methods will be used to hold meetings.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County General Assembly delegation



April 17, 2020

The Honorable Patrick A. Hope
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room E222
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Delegate Hope,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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Kate Bates
President & CEO

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April 17, 2020

The Honorable Richard C. "Rip" Sullivan
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room E220
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Delegate Sullivan,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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Kate Bates
President & CEO

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April 17, 2020

The Honorable Alfonso H. Lopez
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room E223
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Delegate Lopez,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County General Assembly delegation



April 17, 2020

The Honorable Adam P. Ebbin
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E520
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Ebbin,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County General Assembly delegation



April 17, 2020

The Honorable Barbara A. Favola
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E610
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Favola,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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Kate Bates
President & CEO

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April 17, 2020

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E509
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Howell,

As we attend to the immediate and unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, it is also essential to ensure that operations can continue for the public good. For this reason, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges you to support the governor's Amendment 28 to HB 29, the caboose budget bill, to allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations.

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