

COALITION LETTER IN SUPPORT OF HB 2195/SB 1470

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

On behalf of the undersigned coalition of industry, business, and workforce leaders in the Commonwealth, we write to express our support for HB 2195 and SB 1470, which will consolidate Virginia's fragmented and siloed workforce development programs that currently sit across 13 agencies and six secretariats, under one new agency. By adopting the Workforce Development Transformation legislation, the Commonwealth has the unique opportunity to improve the delivery of its workforce development services, up-skill and re-skill job-seekers, and prepare its workforce for the jobs of today—and tomorrow.

The Commonwealth is facing unprecedented critical workforce shortages across many sectors and regions. While many workforce development programs provide a great service, the system as a whole is a set of channels with limited connectivity, creating a fragmented system that limits the potential future prosperity and opportunity for both Virginians and the businesses that drive the Commonwealth's economic vitality. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, 120K fewer Virginians are participating in the Commonwealth's labor force compared to pre-pandemic levels, with a labor force participation rate of 63.6% overall in Virginia.¹

Combining many of these programs under a single agency will optimize workforce readiness for Virginia's current and future jobs. The proposed creation of the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (VDWDA) will provide:

- More efficient program delivery and increased workforce participation, fostering greater business investment, and, ultimately, a stronger economy for all Virginians;
- Data-driven insights that will improve the delivery of skill-building and workforce preparedness services through leveraging innovative data gathering and analyze best practices;
- A centralized strategy balanced with regional flexibility, ensuring programs and services remain consistent with the needs of regions across Virginia;
- Program development that better aligns with the needs of businesses and the ability to scale programs that work; and
- A set of measures and metrics focused on jobs filled and people retained in the workforce, with greater accountability of the results.

The time to make a lasting investment in Virginia's long-term economic growth and workforce development is now.

Sincerely,

AccuTec
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
American Council of Engineering Companies of Virginia
American Institute of Architects Virginia
American Recyclable Plastic Bag Alliance

Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Asian American Hotel Owners Association
Associated Builders and Contractors – Virginia
Associated General Contractors of Virginia, Inc.
CGI
ChamberRVA

AccuTec

**THE
CHAMBER
AIX**

ACEC
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
of Virginia

AIA Virginia

ARPBA AMERICAN
RECYCLABLE PLASTIC BAG
ALLIANCE

**Arlington
Chamber
OF COMMERCE**

AAHOA
ASIAN AMERICAN HOTEL OWNERS ASSOCIATION

ABC Virginia
Associated Builders and Contractors

AGCVA
ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF VIRGINIA, INC.

CGI

chamber RVA
SERVING THE RICHMOND REGION

**CHESAPEAKE REGIONAL
HEALTHCARE**

**Networking
CISCO Academy**

**DELMARVA CHICKEN
ASSOCIATION**
EST. 1948

GENEDGE

**GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade**

**GREATER
AUGUSTA
REGIONAL CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

**GREATER WASHINGTON
PARTNERSHIP**

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Chesapeake Regional Healthcare
Cisco Networking Academy
Delmarva Chicken Association
Genedge
Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce
Greater Washington Board of Trade
Greater Washington Partnership
Heavy Construction Contractors Association
Home Builders Association of Virginia
Loudoun Chamber of Commerce
Louisa County Chamber of Commerce
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
Mark A. Herzog, Former Chair, Virginia Board of Workforce Development
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
Newport News Shipbuilding- Huntington Ingalls Industries
National Federation of Independent Business
Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Northern Virginia Technology Council
Precast Concrete Association of Virginia
Prince William Chamber of Commerce
Richmond Area Municipal Contractors Association
Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council
rvatech - Richmond Technology Council
Shickel
Thomas Jefferson Institute
Virginia Agribusiness Council
Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Assisted Living Association

Virginia Association for Home Care and Hospice
Virginia Association of Roofing Professionals
Virginia Association of Surveyors
Virginia Automatic Merchandising Association
Virginia Aviation Business Association
Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Economic Developers Association
Virginia Food Industry Association
Virginia Funeral Directors Association
Virginia Hispanic Chamber
Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association
Virginia Manufactured and Modular Housing Association
Virginia Manufacturers Association
Virginia Poultry Federation
Virginia REALTORS®
Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association
Virginia Retail Federation
Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance
Virginia Trucking Association
Virginia Wholesalers and Distributors Association
Washington Gas

¹<https://www.vec.virginia.gov/sites/default/files/news-15678-Employment%20Newsletter-November2022.pdf>

