



EDUCATION

Stem Academy & Education: The Alliance **supports** a line item or per pupil funding support for STEM Academy's student expansion. Additionally, the Alliance continues to **support** initiatives that emphasize science, technology, engineering, math, and health (STEM-H) courses in K-12 and Virginia's colleges and universities, in addition to coursework in areas of business and economics to encourage entrepreneurship and the next generation of small business owners.

Nationally & Globally Competitive Public Education: The Alliance **supports** innovative strategies to ensure our system of public education remains competitive nationally and globally. This includes initiatives that strengthen connections among students, parents, educators, and guidance counselors of Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities and regionally in-demand careers.

Public/Private Higher Education Congruency: The Alliance **supports** policies in education that do not neglect private institutions of higher learning from receiving similar grant or funding opportunities, such as Laboratory School initiatives.

Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program: The Alliance **supports** the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) Program. The Alliance **supports** efforts to maximize the TAG award amount for qualified students at eligible Virginia private colleges or universities.

FastForward Funding: The Alliance **supports** increased funding for Virginia's FastForward short-term training program and funding for childcare/early childhood education.

WORKFORCE

Improve Coordination Between Employers & Education Community: The Alliance **supports** efforts to improve coordination between Virginia's employers, job training programs, education communities, and decision-making bodies to meet industry, workforce, and student needs. The Alliance continues to **support** investment in job training, education, and in-demand skills as means to higher earning potential. The Alliance **supports** initiatives that encourage guidance and career counselors to place emphasis on CTE and Apprenticeship opportunities for high school students, on par with guidance on college opportunities.

Minimum Wage: Recognizing that high inflation, current economic conditions, and competition for talent have compelled employers to keep pace with rising compensation trends, the Alliance **supports** the repeal of outdated minimum wage mandates. The Alliance **opposes** mandates for increasing the minimum wage outright and opposes the failure to adjust increases for economic differences between the regions of the Commonwealth. The market drives growth.

Right-to-Work: The Alliance **opposes** laws or regulations that undermine Virginia's Right to Work status, including Fair Share or any other initiative that compels employees to pay union dues as a requirement of employment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Central Virginia Training Center: The Alliance **supports** efforts for realistic transition of the property, including: (i) funding the Department of General Services to demolish structures incapable of refurbishment; (ii) funding to mitigate costs associated with environmental remediation and (iii) to aggressively market the facility to national and international developers.

Montvale Terminal Master Redevelopment Plan: The Alliance **supports** one-time funding for a Master Redevelopment Plan to provide strategic guidance on the best use for the Montvale Terminal site along U.S. 460 in Bedford County.

Incentives: The Alliance **supports** incentives to promote business expansion and economic growth. Funding for economic development programs, including the creation of pad-ready sites, available through the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, specifically the expansion of the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program, the Virginia Talent Accelerator Program, Major Business Facilities Job Tax Credit, and GOVA.

Energy Costs: The Alliance **opposes** policies and regulations that increase energy costs for businesses. The Alliance **supports** the continued safe development of cost effective traditional and renewable energy sources to meet the needs of businesses, as well as to support future economic development. The Alliance **supports** the inclusion of commercial nuclear energy production and generation as a part of these efforts.

Broadband: The Alliance **supports** action for broadband development, and an “all of the above” technology approach that includes Fiber and Fixed Wireless technology solutions for broadband infrastructure projects, regional collaboration between government entities, as well as efforts that streamline the ability to engage public private partnerships. Furthermore, the Alliance **supports** initiatives that will encourage existing providers to expand their existing service areas to cover unserved or underserved residents that cannot be provided for by VATI funds.

Insurance: The Alliance **opposes** “Medicare for All” programs.

Association Health Plans: The Alliance **supports** implementation of the consortium healthcare plans. The Alliance **supports** legislation that expands and enhances Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements (MEWAs) which offer health plans to support health care affordability and accessibility for employers and employees.

Mandated Paid Leave Programs: The Alliance continues to **support** businesses voluntarily providing their own employee benefits, that may include Paid Leave Programs instead of a mandated policy by the Commonwealth or Federal Government that increases or creates additional taxes, financial, and regulatory burdens.

Mental Health: The Alliance **supports** funding a comprehensive, multipronged strategy to address the Commonwealth's behavioral health crisis. This would include remedies to relieve law enforcement and community hospitals from long waits in Emergency Departments waiting for state psychiatric beds for Emergency Custody Orders (ECOs) and Temporary Detention Orders (TDOs).

Simplification: The Alliance **supports** proposals that simplify the tax code and reduce the cost of compliance on businesses and individuals.

Reduction of Regulations: The Alliance **supports** efforts at the local, state, and Federal level to reduce regulations, including continued efforts, through the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, of a 25% reduction in business and workplace regulations.

Air Service: The Alliance **supports** the continued expansion of air service to the Lynchburg region.

Rail: The Alliance **supports** expansion of Amtrak passenger rail from Lynchburg to the west, with continued exploration of expansion to Bristol. The Alliance also **supports** the study and initiatives that facilitate the development of an Inland Port in the Lynchburg region.

Surface: The Alliance **supports** continued efforts toward timely implementation of the I-81 Corridor Improvement Plan (CIP) and continued funding and additional VDOT SMART SCALE weighing to meet transportation needs in our region.

For more information on this agenda, please contact Barry Butler, Director of Government Relations, at BButler@LynchburgRegion.org or call W: 434-845-5968 ext. 15 or C: 540-588-2197.

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