



# **General Assembly Preview**

**January 8, 2021**



# General Assembly Preview

**Logistics and Process**

**Budget Overview**

**Anticipated Key Topics/Bills**



# General Assembly Preview

## Logistics: What about the Schedule

- Budget presentation—December 16
- General Assembly Convenes—January 13
- Crossover Day—February 9
- Adjournment—February 27
- Virginia Constitution (Article IV, Section 6) stipulates that “no regular session of the General Assembly convened in an odd-numbered year shall continue longer than thirty days; but with the concurrence of two-thirds of the members elected to each house, any regular session may be extended for a period not exceeding thirty days.”

# General Assembly Preview

## Logistics: What if a 30- day Schedule

- ❑ Budget amendments due—House (1/8); Senate (1/15)
- ❑ General Assembly Convenes—January 13
- ❑ Crossover Day—January 26? or 28?
- ❑ Adjournment—February 11
- ❑ LOOONG legislative days
- ❑ Possible special session to finish work on the budget
- ❑ Special redistricting session in spring

# General Assembly Preview

## Logistics: Lay of the Land

- House meeting virtually
- Senate meeting at the Science Museum
- Bill Introduction Limits in effect
  - House: 7
  - Senate: 12
  - Total: ~1,200 bills (typically 2,000 in short sessions)

# General Assembly Preview

## Logistics: Lay of the Land

- ❑ No in person access at Pocahontas or Capitol
- ❑ Communication challenges and options
- ❑ Committee meetings/testimony
- ❑ Budget amendment process
- ❑ Legislating through the budget?

# General Assembly Preview

Logistics:  
Lay of  
the Land

- Expectations lowered, but look for opportunities
- Relationships are key
- Best way to communicate
- Messaging

# General Assembly Preview

Federal:  
New  
Stimulus  
Package

- ❑ \$900+ billion
- ❑ Stimulus checks
- ❑ Unemployment assistance
- ❑ Education
- ❑ Business Assistance/Paycheck Protection Program
- ❑ Rental Assistance
- ❑ Vaccine funding



## General Assembly Preview

Federal:

New  
Stimulus  
Package

- ❑ Child care
- ❑ Highways and transit
- ❑ NO direct state and local aid, but...
- ❑ One-year extension of December 30 deadline for using CRF
- ❑ Implications for state budget

## General Assembly Preview

### State Budget Proposal

- Chapter 56 in effect 11/18/20
- Governor Northam's Proposed Budget 12/16/18
- \$47.6 billion GF; \$79.5 billion NGF for FY21/22.
- \$1.25 billion more GF revenue, based on projected revenue increases of 1.2% and 3.3%.

# General Assembly Preview

Budget:

Key  
Items

- ❑ \$650 million revenue reserve
- ❑ 1 ½ percent bonus for state supported locals, 9/2021
- ❑ Two percent bonus for SOQ instructional and support positions, 9/2021 (\$15.5 million)
- ❑ \$100 million for reducing unfunded pension liabilities

## General Assembly Preview

Budget:

K-12

- State share of 2% bonus for SOQ positions, 9/2021
- \$500+ million in “no loss” funding over FY21/22; enrollment down 44K+
- \$26.6 million for 1:325 school counselor ratio across K-12
- \$11.1 million for increasing VPI per pupil amount by \$1,300+
- VDOE/Treasury study of use of Literary Fund, due 7/2021

## General Assembly Preview

Budget:

Community  
Develop-  
ment

- \$50 million for VATI in FY22 (increase of \$15 million)
- \$40.7 million added to Housing Trust Fund (\$70/\$55 million)
  - \$28.2 million for RMRP
- \$3.5 million for Virginia Main Street Program (\$3 million increase)

## General Assembly Preview

Budget:

Air

Land

Water

- \$35 million for Ag BMPs in FY22 (increase of \$9 million)
- \$4.5 million for SWCD technical assistance
- \$12 million for protection measures; DEQ staffing to improve permitting processes

## General Assembly Preview

Budget:

HHR

- \$240 million for state COVID response in 2022
- \$89.3 million for vaccination campaign/distribution/storage
  - Communications to have diversity, equity and inclusion focus
- \$10.2 million in FY22 for cooperative health, including hold harmless in updating health department funding formula.

# General Assembly Preview

Budget:

Public

Safety

- Maintains HB599 funding at \$191.7 million for FY21 /22
- \$2.3 million for 25% of unfunded sheriffs/prosecutor positions; body camera workgroup continued for one year
- \$1.5 million for grants for localities to address hate crimes
- Loan authority and \$25 million re: marijuana legalization costs



## General Assembly Preview

### Budget:

### Rails & Trails

- \$50 million in FY22 for Roanoke rail extension, and for increasing service along the 29 corridor
- \$5 million in FY22 for (long) trails development/construction
- Locals concerned about recordation tax swipe; budget amendments to be introduced
- Transportation revenues to recover? +\$270 million forecasted

## General Assembly Preview

Budget:

What's  
Left?

- \$16.7 million to replace VERIS; more \$ to locals needed
- Additional positions support for treasurers, CoR, court clerks
- Additional \$2 million for VJIP
- \$5.5 million in FY22 for the Business Ready Sites Program in VEDP

# General Assembly Preview

## Budget: The Timeline

- Virtual budget hearings Jan 6
- Money committee staff brief members (House on 1/8 and Senate on 1/11)
- Budget amendments due 1/8 (House) and 1/15 (Senate)
- House/Senate budgets due?

# General Assembly Preview

Legislation

Bills, Bills,  
Bills.....

But not as  
many this  
time

- 2020: Significant legislation (think firearms, transportation, collective bargaining, energy, criminal justice, revenue authority) and continuing uncertainty (COVID-19)
- 2021: ~1,200 bills; clean up and retreads likely
- COVID, COVID, COVID
  - Long term impacts of crisis for future action

# General Assembly Preview

## Key Legislation

- K-12 Education
- Broadband
- FOIA/Electronic meetings
- Immunity: Sovereign and Qualified
- Marijuana
- Housing

# General Assembly Preview

Key  
Legislation

K-12

- Impacts of COVID
- Virtual/in person: to what degree are kids learning?
- Equity issues—access to internet; parental support and childcare issues
- Plus, K-12 budget—44K fewer students; push for big money?

# General Assembly Preview

## Key Legislation Broadband

- Broadband Code cleanup
- Utility projects streamlining
- Pilot affordability program to supplement federal and provider programs
- Municipal providers eligible for VATI; pilot backed by BAC

# General Assembly Preview

Key  
Legislation

FOIA

- FOIA Council backed bill to allow continued flexibility to conduct electronic meetings
- During state or local emergency
- Public notice/access and allow public comment (if already do)



# General Assembly Preview

Key  
Legislation  
Immunity

- ❑ Broad immunity legislation (HB 5103) failed in special session, but may return
- ❑ Limited Senate bill focused on deadly and excessive use of force
- ❑ Limited to law enforcement so far

# General Assembly Preview

Key  
Legislation

Legal  
Marijuana  
????????

- Legalizing and commercializing marijuana in the headlines
- Gov. Northam has endorsed
- 15 states have legalized non medicinal use; VA decriminalized in 2020
- JLARC report identified 75 recommendations and policy options IF Virginia were to legalize

# General Assembly Preview

Key  
Legislation  
  
Legal  
Marijuana  
????????

- Regulatory structure
- Industry structure
- Taxation
- Health issues
- Equity of enforcement
- Local control—zoning, location, hours, code compliance, etc.

# General Assembly Preview

## Key Legislation Housing

- 2020 provisions intended to provide more flexibility—unit prices/eligibility, density, waivers and fees
- Heightened interest due to COVID economic impacts
- DHCD/Va. Housing study; report due late 2021

# General Assembly Preview

## Other Considerations

- Election year—statewide offices and House members
- House/Senate relationships
- Impacts of COVID
- Mood factors

# General Assembly Preview

Where  
to Turn  
for More  
Info

- [Virginia Legislative Information System](#)
- [Virginia State Budget](#)
- [Budget Highlights](#)
- [TJPD Legislative Services](#)  
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# Questions & Discussion

