

## 2021 Legislative Issues

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<i>(continued).</i>				

**21P01**

**Background Checks on Firearm and  
Ammunition Purchased**

Assessment methods are needed on whether existing permitting, licensing, or background-check laws are being used to disarm dangerous people, including those who intend to harm themselves through suicide.

Better restrictive legislative on gun purchasing should include accurate tracking by police agencies of any weapons used in a crime and should increase public safety for communities and school students without infringing upon Constitutional 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment protection to bear arms.

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<p><b><u>Issue ID:</u></b> 21C01 Virginia Environmental Policy Act</p>
<p><b><u>This Issue is for:</u></b>     <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly                                                  <input type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors</p>
<p><b><u>Date Approved by Federation:</u></b> 22 October 2020</p>
<p><b><u>Issue:</u></b> Not all projects get the environmental review and public engagement that will adequately protect our health or wellbeing.</p>
<p><b><u>Background:</u></b> The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) helps ensure that projects undertaken or approved by the Federal Government get an environmental review according to the environmental requirements set by the Federal Administration in power at the time the decision is made. Some limitations are: 1) What gets consideration is based on Federal laws and are somewhat subject to the priorities of the Federal Administration and not responsive to State and Local concerns. 2) Projects that do not involve Federal permitting do not get as rigorous environmental review.</p>
<p><b><u>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</u></b> There are several limitations to NEPA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Air Quality: NEPA reviews only consider criteria pollutants which generally have regional significance, they do not include air toxins which generally have more localized impacts and can dominate health impacts locally.</li> <li>2. Water Quality: NEPA does not have to take into consideration local design goals, including erosion and sediment control guidelines.</li> <li>3. Gaps: NEPA does not cover actions that don't have Federal guidelines such as actions that only require State or local permits.</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Preferred Position:</u></b> Several States have state environmental policy acts that can address the shortcomings of NEPA discussed above. In California actions taken by Counties or the State are required to go through the extensive California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. A Virginia Environmental Policy Act could take into consideration hazardous air pollutants, additional public engagement – particularly for smaller projects which may not hit Federal Environmental Impact Statement thresholds, and set other requirements such as climate change that are not currently incorporated into the Federal requirements.</p>
<p><b><u>Benefits:</u></b> Better public involvement in projects that could impair the environment, our health and/or our future.</p>
<p><b><u>Potential Supporters</u></b> (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):        .</p>
<p><b><u>Lead Federation Committee:</u></b> Environment</p>
<p><b><u>Prepared by:</u></b> Flint Webb, Chairman, <a href="mailto:Environment@FairfaxFederation.org">Environment@FairfaxFederation.org</a>.</p>

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<p><b><u>Issue ID:</u></b> 21C02 <b>Break Free From Plastic Pollution</b></p>
<p><b><u>This Issue is for:</u></b>     <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly                                          <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors</p>
<p><b><u>Date Approved by Federation:</u></b> 22 October 2020</p>
<p><b><u>Issue:</u></b> Most plastic ends up in landfills or in our streams, and in the ocean where it either is eaten by fish or other sea creatures and/or sea birds, or breaks down to smaller plastic pieces which enter our food chain. We need to reduce the use of single use plastic containers. Even the plastic that is burned adds to air pollution.</p>
<p><b><u>Background:</u></b> Because of the proliferation of forms of plastic, most plastics can't be recycled cost effectively. The whole scheme for putting the recycling symbol on plastic containers was a marketing ploy to sell more plastic.        Legislation has been introduced in Congress (HR 5845) and US Senate (SB 3263) to 1) make producers fiscally responsible for collecting, managing and recycling or composting plastic containers, and 2) increases the percentage of recycled content of beverage containers. Virginia could enact similar legislation that would accomplish these goals for the Commonwealth as a natural expansion of the legislation that passed last year (SB11) and signed by the Governor giving local governments the ability to levy a 5 cents per bag..</p>
<p><b><u>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</u></b> Plastic does not degrade in the environment – it only breaks down into smaller particles that can ultimately enter the food chair or causes air pollution if burned. Because of the proliferation of forms of plastic, it is not cost effective to recycle.</p> <p>Last year the Commonwealth permitted local governments to enact a 5-cent plastic bag tax.</p>
<p><b><u>Preferred Position:</u></b> The Fairfax County delegation to Congress should support the Federal legislation (HR 5845 and SB 3263) that would make producers responsible for collecting and managing single use plastic containers and increase the percentage of recycled content. Similar legislation in Virginia could apply a tax on the sale of plastic containers in Virginia that would require producers and wholesalers in to take responsibility for the products they sell in Commonwealth.        Fairfax County should also enact the 5-cent plastic bag tax that was authorized last year. This tax will reduce the plastic bag pollution and reduce the burden on residential property taxes</p>
<p><b><u>Benefits:</u></b> It would reduce the plastic pollution in our streams, along our streets, in our farmland, in the oceans, and in our food.</p>
<p><b><u>Potential Supporters (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):</u></b>        350 Fairfax, Friends of Accotink Creek, the Sierra Club, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions.</p>
<p><b><u>Lead Federation Committee:</u></b> Environment</p>
<p><b><u>Prepared by:</u></b> Flint Webb, Chairman, <a href="mailto:Environment@FairfaxFederation.org">Environment@FairfaxFederation.org</a>.</p>

### 2021 Legislative Issues

<b>Issue ID:</b> 21C03 <b>Maintain and Increase Tree Canopy and Leaf Area</b>
<b>This Issue is for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
<b>Date Approved by Federation:</b> 22 October 2020
<b>Issue:</b> The growth in Fairfax County has been at the expense of our tree canopy despite County goals to increase the tree canopy.
<b>Background:</b> Trees provide numerous benefits to our environment and our quality of life: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Trees sequester carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>),</li> <li>2) Trees remove particulates and other pollutants from the air,</li> <li>3) Trees help cool their environment by the transpiration of water vapor,</li> <li>4) Trees help stop erosion, and</li> <li>5) Trees help cool our streets and neighborhoods by providing shade.</li> </ol> All of these advantages are achievable by planting and preserving trees and by using green, or vegetated, walls and roofs.
<b>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</b> It is difficult to maintain tree canopy goals and still continue the growth of the county. As a result, the tree canopy has suffered. The Environmental section of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan Objective 10 is to conserve and restore tree cover on developed and developing sites. The County has also developed standards for green roofs in the Public Facilities Manual (PFM) but no standards for green walls.
<b>Preferred Position:</b> Since many of the advantages of the trees can be realized by use of green roofs and walls, Objective 10 should be revised to include a new policy for maintaining the pre-construction leaf area. This would require that the tree inventory include a calculation of the pre-construction leaf area. Developers could use green roofs and green walls to attain the goal of maintaining the same leaf area post-construction. The County should also ensure that green roofs and walls are maintained similarly as storm-water improvements are maintained. <p style="margin-top: 10px;">The Public Facilities Manual should be revised to include specifications for green walls.</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">The Federation encourages other organizations to review and engage these two issues.</p>
<b>Benefits:</b> Requiring that new construction at least provide the leaf area of the pre-construction site it will ensure that we can at least maintain the same rate of CO <sub>2</sub> sequestration that has been occurring historically.
<b>Potential Supporters (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):</b> 350 Fairfax, Friends of Accotink Creek, the Sierra Club, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions.
<b>Lead Federation Committee:</b> Environment
<b>Prepared by:</b> Flint Webb, Chairman, <a href="mailto:Environment@FairfaxFederation.org">Environment@FairfaxFederation.org</a>

## 2021 Legislative Issues

<b>Issue ID:</b> 21E01 Free and Reduced-Price Meals
<b>This Issue is for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
<b>Date Approved by Federation:</b> 22 October 2020
<b>Issue:</b> Providing educational funding from the Commonwealth to help defray the higher costs associated with educating students who receive Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FRM).
<b>Background:</b> Students who receive FRM are among those who are most at risk of educational failure. Low-income students often require additional instruction and remediation, and their lack of at-home resources and support place them at a well-documented disadvantage when they enter the classroom. Data show that these disadvantages grow into an achievement gap which has proven difficult to narrow, let alone close. Meeting these children’s needs requires schools to spend extra time, attention, and other resources above and beyond what is needed for children who do not receive FRM. (Ref 20E01, 19E02, 18E02, 17E02)
<b>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</b> Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) serve a diverse student population, in which approximately 59,000 children (or about 31% of the total student population) are eligible for FRM. This percentage has grown significantly since the most recent recession, while overall state funding levels for K-12 education have declined in real terms. Title I Federal funds (for children in poverty) make up little of the difference between children’s needs and the funding required to meet those needs.
<b>Preferred Position:</b> The Federation supports legislation to create educational funding that addresses the higher needs of FRM students. Per-student funding can help provide these children with the resources they need to be successful, and would help similarly situated children throughout the Commonwealth.
<b>Benefits:</b> Targeting educational funding for students who receive FRM will help address the achievement gap that has long existed among students whose demographic characteristics vary. In addition, by basing funding on a per-student basis, we direct these funds to at-risk children in all communities.
<b>Potential Supporters (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):</b> Educational organizations and county governments, particularly in areas with large percentages of FRM-eligible students.
<b>Lead Federation Committee:</b> Education
<b>Prepared by:</b> Nancy Trainer and Ed Saperstein, Co-chairs, <a href="mailto:Education@FairfaxFederation.org">Education@FairfaxFederation.org</a>

## 2021 Legislative Issues

<b>Issue ID:</b> 21E02 Admission to Governor’s Schools
<b>This Issue is for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
<b>Date Approved by Federation:</b> 22 October 2020
<b>Issue:</b> Potential changes in admission processes at Governor’s Schools to promote access for historically underserved students.
<b>Background:</b> Language in the 2020 session budget bill requires each Governor’s School to “set diversity goals for its student body and faculty, and develop a plan to meet said goals in collaboration with community partners at public meetings.” Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni formed a task force to evaluate diversity issues at Governor’s Schools, and will provide his recommendations to Governor Northam this winter. Secretary Qarni has indicated that he will propose changing the existing admissions processes in order to change the racial and socioeconomic composition of future Governor’s School classes.
<b>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</b> According to the Department of Education, Governor’s Schools are created to “provide some of the state’s most able students academically... challenging programs beyond those offered in their home schools.” They form an “important component” of Virginia’s mandate to “provide differentiated instructional opportunities for gifted students.” The racial and socioeconomic composition of these schools has remained unrepresentative of their surrounding communities for many years, despite efforts to ensure equitable access to gifted education.
<b>Preferred Position:</b> Regardless of the particular methodology, admissions processes for Governor’s Schools must maintain robust standards that evaluate students on an individual basis, identifying students based on their suitability for the unique challenges and benefits offered by that particular school. Diversity can be one of the relevant considerations, in helping to identify the “small population of students whose learning levels are remarkably different from their age-level peers,” which is the language describing the purpose of the Governor’s School Programs.
<b>Benefits:</b> Governor’s Schools are a valuable asset to the communities in which they sit, providing a nurturing environment not only to gifted students themselves but as an investment in tomorrow’s leaders. When these schools are successful, they help retain and attract economic business investment as well. Local businesses and industries are designed to play an important role in Governor’s Schools by providing mentors, equipment and supplies, facilities, and expert advice.
<b>Potential Supporters (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):</b> Regional and local Economic Development Authorities, gifted organizations, county governments.
<b>Lead Federation Committee:</b> Education
<b>Prepared by:</b> Nancy Trainer and Ed Saperstein, Co-chairs, <a href="mailto:Education@FairfaxFederation.org">Education@FairfaxFederation.org</a>

### 2021 Legislative Issues

<b>Issue ID:</b> 21P01 <b>Background Checks on Firearm and Ammunition Purchased</b>
<b>This Issue is for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fairfax Delegation to the General Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> Fairfax Board of Supervisors
<b>Date Approved by Federation:</b> 22 October 2020
<b>Issue:</b> Virginia does not address age requirements for the purchase of ammunition. Federal law requires an individual to be at least 21 years of age to purchase handgun ammunition, and at least 18 years old to purchase rifle or shotgun ammunition.
<b>Background:</b> Prospective purchasers of firearms must present a valid photo-ID form issued by a governmental agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia that denotes the individual’s name, sex, and date of birth. Where the primary form is a photo-ID issued by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), 30 days must have passed since the original date of issue or duplicate driver’s license unless a copy of his/her DMV driver’s record is presented showing that the original date of issue was more than 30 days prior to the attempted purchase. Rifles and shotguns may be purchased from licensed firearms dealers by persons who are residents of other states upon the presentation of one photo-identification form issued by a governmental agency of the purchaser’s state of residence and one other form of identification determined to be acceptable by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (6VAC20-130-10).
<b>Existing Conditions/Impacts:</b> Virginia’s approach to firearms records checks does not infringe on an individual’s Constitutional Rights (via 2 <sup>nd</sup> Amendment) – that is, the ability to purchase or possess a firearm, while those individuals who are prohibited by State or Federal law are denied legal access to firearms. The Virginia Department of State Police developed and administers the Virginia Firearms Transaction Program (VFTP). This program became operational on November 1, 1989, and provides for a timely, point-of-sale, approval or disapproval decision regarding the sale or transfer of all firearms (except antiques) based upon the results of a criminal history record information (CHRI) check concerning the prospective purchaser pursuant to <a href="#">§18.2-308.2:2 of the Code of Virginia</a> .
<b>Preferred Position:</b> The State of Virginia should require individuals to be at least 21 years old to purchase any type of ammunition to include handgun, rifle, and shotgun ammunition.
<b>Benefits:</b> This will increase public safety of school students and communities without infringing upon a person’s constitutional protections to bear arms (as written in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Amendment of the Constitution).
<b>Potential Supporters</b> (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations): Gun Violence Prevention Caucus, Safe Virginia Initiative, Virginia State Police, Fairfax County Police Department, Fairfax County Public Schools, League of Women Voters, local religious organizations.
<b>Lead Federation Committees:</b> Public Safety, Legislation
<b>Prepared by:</b> Patrick Smaldore, Co-chair, Public Safety and Tim Thompson, Co-Chair, Legislation <a href="mailto:PublicSafety@FairfaxFederation.org">PublicSafety@FairfaxFederation.org</a> , <a href="mailto:Legislation@FairfaxFederation.org">Legislation@FairfaxFederation.org</a>