

RESOLUTION: ACCF 2025 VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

DRAFT: 10 DEC 2024

A motion was made at the 10 Dec 2024 General Membership Meeting to re-ratify the 2 Jan 2024 Legislation Committee Resolution 'ACCF 2024 Legislative Priorities' for 2025, substituting '2025' for '2024' in the previously ratified document.

ACCF 2025 Legislative Priorities

Governance

- Whereas ACCF's TiGER Task Force has identified opportunities to increase citizen involvement in county affairs and improve the quality of County Board and School Board decision-making through election or representation reforms, including use of ranked choice voting and expanding the size of both bodies,
- Whereas for the implementation of several of the TiGER recommendations statutory changes will be required,
- Whereas the draft County Board legislative priorities document includes the language

"Respect for Local Authority," Oppose any efforts that make changes to Arlington County's form of government without the County Board's explicit policy support."

and several of the changes sought here would permit the County Board, or the Arlington electorate, if either agreed to do so; to make changes in the Arlington County form of government.
- Whereas Arlington has less authority to determine the form of its government of its own volition in a number of policy areas than do many other jurisdictions in Virginia,
- Whereas the ACCF has over a century of history as a forum enabling community-based organizations to join together to assess the conduct of Arlington's governance, including elections and representation,
- Whereas in 2020, laws (VA House of Delegates bills 1103 and 506) were enacted permitting Arlington County to use Ranked Choice Voting in its local elections and ranked choice voting has been used successfully in Arlington's 2023 Democratic Party primary,

Resiliency

- Whereas the ACCF has identified several areas of land use management to address resiliency for stormwater and environmental threats, and which would require statutory changes for implementation

- Whereas the authority of local jurisdictions in Virginia to regulate tree removal and replacement tree planting has not been sufficient for Arlington to avert substantial loss of tree canopy in recent decades.

Therefore, the Arlington County Civic Federation requests that the Arlington County delegation in the legislature:

- **Governance.** Seek to enact legislation which will enable the Arlington County Board, at its discretion, or the citizens of Arlington by referendum, make specified changes in its form of government, to include: number of County and School Board members and their term of office, staggering of terms, level of compensation of School Board members, number and duties of staff to the County and School boards, election of the School Board by ranked choice vote. Enable the Board or citizens to choose whether Arlington will enable Arlington political parties to nominate Board members in partisan primaries.

- **Governance.** Seek to enact legislation which will grant to Arlington County parallel authorities to those held by peer jurisdictions across the Commonwealth.

- **Resilience Flooding.** Permit local governments to adopt building and/or land use codes and ordinances that are future-facing and reflect climate risk for each jurisdiction and each jurisdiction's environmental and resiliency goals. This could include developing a "water disturbance" code for when it applies (disturbance to water tables, springs, stormwater capacities, etc.) and the technical retention requirements and testing.

- **Resilience Tree Canopy.** Advance actions that align with the Arlington County Board's efforts to "Support legislation to provide local governments with greater authority in the reforestation, preservation, and management of urban forests in recognition of their ability to capture and store carbon, reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, lower energy use, mitigate invasive plant species effects, and mitigate urban heat islands and their health effects."