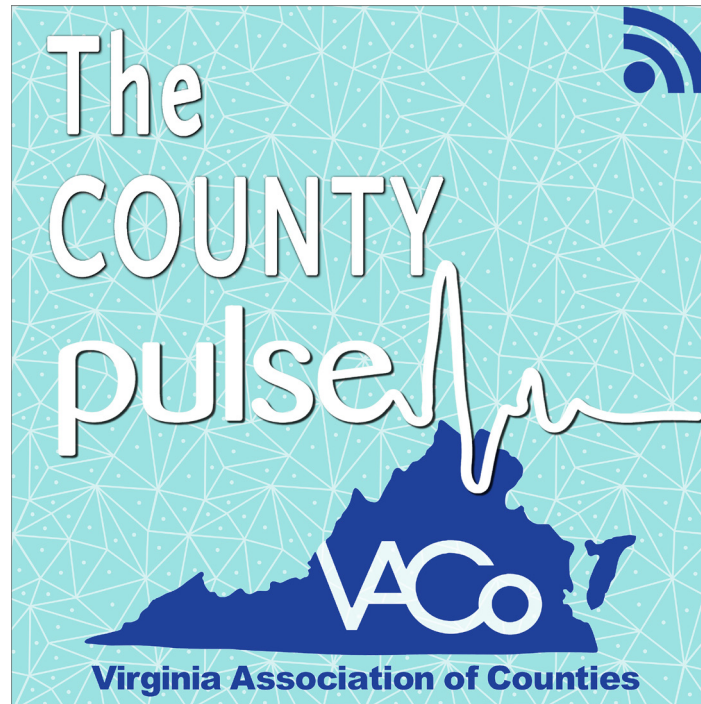


CHECK OUT THE  
**90th VACo Annual Conference**

**AGENDA**





## Season 4

### Energy Landscape of Virginia Series with Joe Lerch

#### Energy Landscape of Virginia Episode 4 | DEQ Solar Permit-By-Rule Regulations - HB 206



[Listen to the Podcast](#)

#### **Draft Revisions to DEQ Solar Permit-By-Rule (PBR) Regulations – HB 206.**

This episode reviews regulations that amend the requirements for utility-scale solar installations to receive state permits to operate. Specifically, a 2022 law – commonly referred to as HB 206 – requires that applicants must avoid, minimize or otherwise mitigate certain losses to prime farmland and forests in order to get approval. In a conversation with Jonathan Rak and Susan Tripp with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), we learn the details of the draft regulations, focusing on important aspects that counties will want to know, opportunities to comment on the draft, and next steps in the process before they become effective.

#### **RESOURCES**

- [DEQ's HB 206 Webpage](#)
- [Virginia Regulatory Town Hall page – Deadline for Comments: December 6, 2024](#)
- [Public Hearing Meeting Information – November 19, 2024 at 10 am](#)

## Money Committees Discuss State Revenues, Hurricane Helene Relief, Medicaid, and More



Both the Senate Finance and Appropriation and the House Appropriations Committees received briefings from Secretary of Finance Stephen E. Cummings on [state revenues](#) and [Hurricane Helene relief efforts](#) at meetings last week. State revenues turned in a strong performance in September, which is an important month for state finances, as it reflects individual income tax nonwithholding payments. Overall revenues increased by 12.4 percent in September, with this growth largely attributable to nonwithholding payments. On a fiscal year-to-date basis, General Fund revenues are 9.9 percent ahead of last year, almost entirely driven by growth in net individual income tax collections.

State revenues are comfortably outperforming the forecast; on a fiscal year-to-date basis, revenues are ahead of the forecast in the 2024 Appropriation Act by 9 percent, or \$601.4 million. However, that forecast was developed in fall 2023 and assumed a mild recession in the fourth quarter of FY 2024, which did not materialize. Secretary Cummings summarized the state's economy as "pretty darn good," although the Administration will be paying close attention to several factors in developing a revised forecast in December. Consumer confidence, as measured by the Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index, weakened in September. Secretary Cummings's [memorandum](#) to Governor Youngkin also notes that the timing of further interest rates cuts by the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee is uncertain, and cites several macroeconomic wild cards, including "escalating geopolitical tensions...and the possibility of protracted fiscal disputes at the federal level that could further weaken consumer and business confidence."

Secretary Cummings shared [updates](#) on the state government response to Hurricane Helene, including a summary of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster designations for affected counties. The state has authorized \$20 million in disaster funding thus far to cover various state agency costs for staffing, travel, supplies, and transportation, among other needs; more funding may be needed as

more damage assessments are completed, although the state expects some reimbursements from FEMA. Several members posed questions about how the state could prepare for and mitigate future flooding disasters given the expected increase in severe weather events.

Both committees also received a [presentation](#) by Dale F. Farino, CEO of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority, who discussed challenges in the spirits industry and their effect on ABC profits. ABC has revised its revenue forecast to reflect no growth in FY 2025 and 1 percent growth in FY 2026, rather than 5 percent growth each year, as predicted earlier. Mr. Farino outlined various strategies to enhance revenues and cut costs; several members expressed concerns about the effect of certain cost-savings strategies, such as holding positions vacant, on ABC's regulatory responsibilities.

The Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee received a [briefing](#) on the new Virginia Clean Energy Innovation Bank, which has been developed by Virginia Energy using \$10 million provided in the 2024 Appropriation Act, with the intention to pursue federal funds through the U.S. Department of Energy, and the goal of supporting clean power generation and energy infrastructure projects. Committee members posed a series of questions to Virginia Energy Director Glenn Davis about the Department's authority to establish the Bank when the enabling legislation had been vetoed.

The Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee also received [an update](#) from the American Revolution 250 Commission on plans for the Virginia 250 Commemoration, including a report on the status of grant awards for local programming and the anticipated economic impact of Commemoration events in the Commonwealth.

The Department of Medical Assistance Services [reported](#) to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee about the status of Medicaid "unwinding." Although eligibility redetermination of all Medicaid members after the conclusion of the public health emergency is now almost complete, this task is unfinished for a small portion of Medicaid members – generally members with more complex cases. Due to some deviation from the predicted Medicaid enrollment levels as "unwinding" was completed, DMAS finished FY 2024 with only a slim end-of-year balance and had to defer \$195 million in certain payments until FY 2025 (which included an issue with the allocation of pharmacy rebate payments that had created an unanticipated \$41 million General Fund cost in FY 2025). DMAS expects to use the \$95 million in contingency funding set aside for Medicaid in the 2024 Appropriation Act, and Administration staff indicated that some additional FY 2024 surplus funds have been reserved to address these needs as well.

In addition to the September revenue report, the Hurricane Helene update, and the update from ABC, the House Appropriations Committee received an [update](#) from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services on progress in allocating the large increase in Developmental Disability Waiver slots approved in the 2024 Appropriation Act. These slots are being provided on a quarterly basis in order to allow CSBs and providers time to build capacity to serve the newly-eligible individuals.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

PHOTO SOURCE:  
[Virginia Is For Lovers](#)



## Visit Patrick County and the Patrick County Historic Courthouse

**Location:** 101 West Blue Ridge Street / North Main Street

**Built:** 1821 – 1822

**Style:** Roman Revival or Jeffersonian

**Architect:** Abram Staples

**Contractor:** Abram Staples

**Description:** The building faces southeast and is a two story red colored brick structure. The building is located on the landscaped grounds of the Courthouse Square in the center of Stuart. There are “central three bay blocks and two flanking wings.” There are four Tuscan columns and a large stairway leading from the ground to the portico. This reflects the “high basements” of the Roman Revival. There is a small bell tower and semi-circular opening in the pediment of the portico. The doorway on the portico probably comes from the 1928 renovation. In the interior, the courtroom occupies the second story. The building houses the County Circuit Court of the 21st Judicial Circuit. A vault was added in 1906. In 1928, the Sheriff’s Office and jail were added. Remodeling occurred in 1936 and 1972. In 1982, another renovation began to relocate the General District Court, Juvenile and Domestic Court Relations Court, the Circuit Court Judge’s secretary and to add space for the Patrick County Clerk of Court’s office.

**SOURCE:** [courthouses.co](http://courthouses.co)

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SAVE THE DATES!

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**VACo Supervisors Certification  
Program (Budget Module)**

January to March 2025  
VACo Headquarters

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**VACo County Government Day**

Thursday, January 23, 2025  
Omni Richmond Hotel

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**VACo Chairpersons' Institute**

Friday and Saturday, January 24-25, 2025  
Omni Richmond Hotel and  
VACo Headquarters

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Join us for these important events.

Call VACo at 804.788.6652 for more information





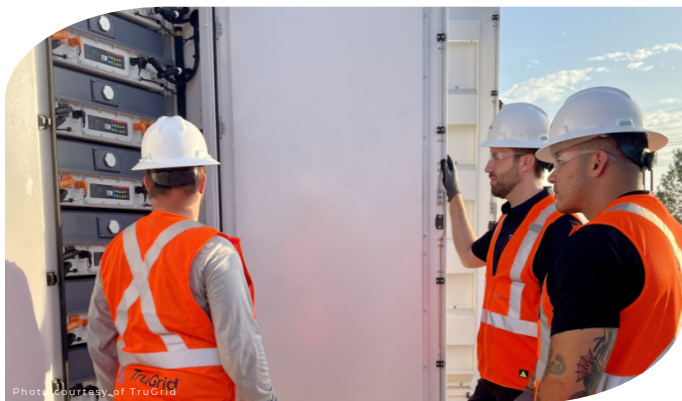
## ABOUT US

East Point Energy is a development firm focused on the origination, construction, and operation of energy storage projects. Our team is currently developing gigawatts of energy storage projects throughout the country, helping to transform the grid into a renewable, resilient, and affordable system for generations to come.

## COMPANY SNAPSHOT

- Founded in 2018
- 45 employees & growing
- Located in downtown Charlottesville, VA
- Projects under development in 15 states
- Active memberships in over 10 trade organizations

*Photo on right from annual Earth Day litter pick up*



## WHAT'S AHEAD

The electric power industry will change more in the next decade than it has in the last 100 years. East Point Energy is uniquely poised to facilitate this transformation by providing stable, grid-scale storage solutions for renewable energy from wind and solar generators.



LEARN MORE AT  
[eastpointenergy.com](http://eastpointenergy.com)





Developed by the  
Professional Development Academy

# NACo AI Leadership Academy

Empowering County Government Leaders for the Future

## About the Program

The NACo AI Leadership Academy is an innovative program designed to equip frontline county government leaders with the knowledge and tools to understand and utilize AI, enhancing operational efficiency, organizational effectiveness, and value for their constituents.

## Six Practical Modules

**Introduction to AI:** Explore AI's history, technologies, societal impact, and an AI playbook for leaders.

**The Promise & Peril of AI:** Understand AI's unique opportunities and challenges in the digital transformation era.

**Your AI Roadmap:** Navigate AI's potential and pitfalls, set expectations, and measure stakeholder impact.

**Leading People & AI:** Lead digital transformation by focusing on people, not just technology.

**AI Optimization, Meaning & Purpose:** Ground AI optimization in ethical awareness, regulatory compliance, customer safety, and workforce impact.

**What's Next - Three Horizons:** Plan, operationalize, and leverage projects, programs, and progress over three horizons.

## Program Features



**Expert Leadership Coaches:** Keeps participants on track.



**World-Class Faculty:** Includes prominent leaders from public, private, and academic sectors.



**Practical, Actionable Insights:** Immediate application to real-world challenges.

## Enhance Your Leadership

November 4th - December 20th

Demystify AI with practical cases, frameworks, and tools. Increase your confidence to lead with AI for good governance.

This program offers lessons from highly effective government leaders, proven industry executives, researchers, professors from top universities, and subject matter experts. An online Leadership Coach will guide participants through pressing issues such as understanding the power of AI, mitigating its risks, and navigating the complexities of change brought by AI.

- ✓ 6 Weeks Long
- ✓ Fully Facilitated Online
- ✓ Made for Current and Emerging Leaders

## Enroll Today

Visit [NACo AI Leadership Academy](#) or email [lukea@pdleadership.com](mailto:lukea@pdleadership.com)



# Terri Mitchell Named Montgomery County CFO



Terri Mitchell has been named Montgomery County's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), effective October 8, 2024. In her role as CFO, Terri will partner with county leadership to plan, forecast, and achieve optimal financial outcomes, manage budget and investment decisions and execute strategic business plans.

"Montgomery County is fortunate to have Terri joining our team," said County Administrator Angie Hill. "Her knowledge and experience will help the County continue to maintain financial strength and security while accomplishing our strategic initiatives."

Terri brings more than 30 years of leadership in finance and administration from her experience in higher education, private industry, and public accounting.

"It's an honor to join Angie and her team of dedicated professionals who value ethics and servant leadership," said Terri. "I look forward to working alongside them in service to the citizens of Montgomery County."

Terri is a Certified Public Accountant. She earned an undergraduate degree in accounting from Virginia Tech and a master's degree in business administration from Old Dominion University. Terri is a native of the New River Valley and resides with her family in the Town of Christiansburg.

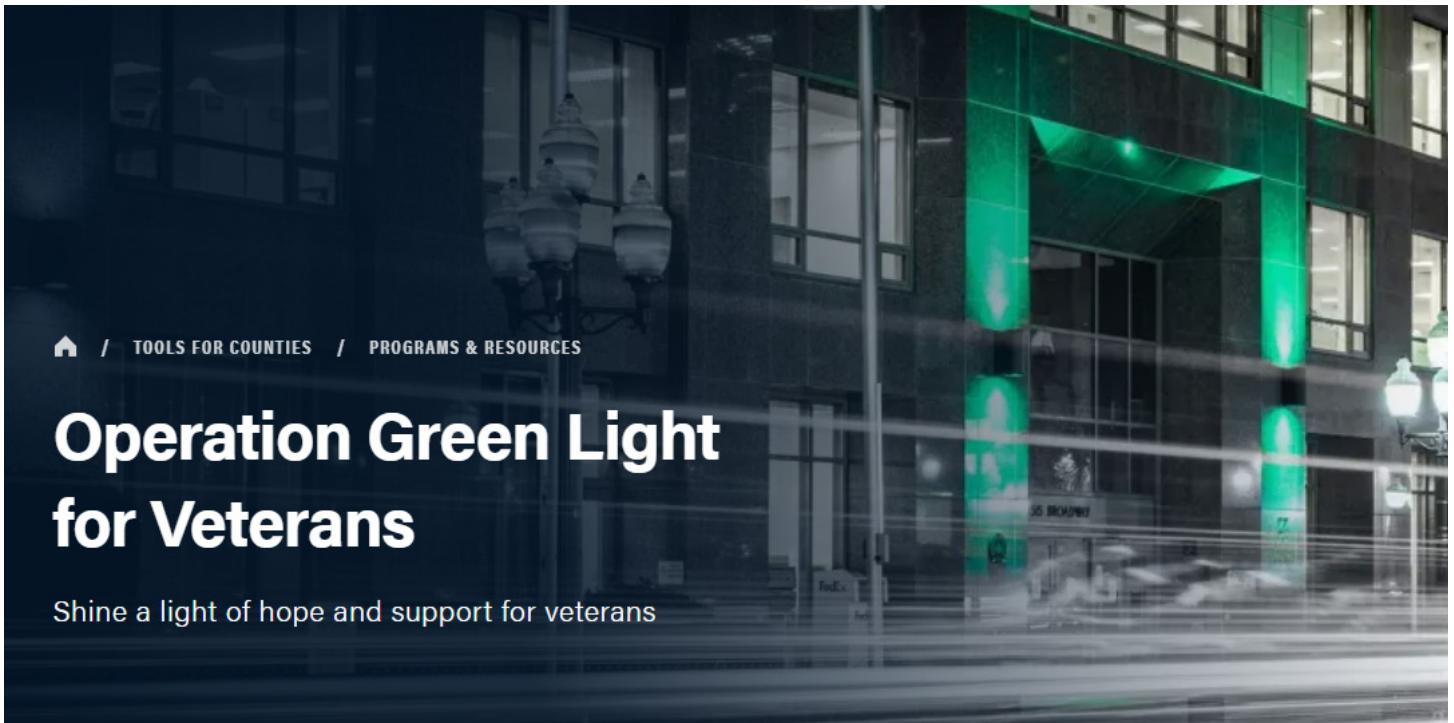


## Get your VA250 license plates now available

Are you ready to show your pride in America's 250th anniversary? The VA250 commemorative license plate is now available for purchase! As a symbol of our nation's rich history and bright future, this limited-edition license plate offers a unique opportunity to drive with a piece of history.

By purchasing a VA250 license plate, you're not only adding a stylish touch to your vehicle, but you're also supporting a worthy cause. A portion of the proceeds from each plate sold will be donated directly to VA250, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating educational programs, events, and exhibits to commemorate America's 250th anniversary.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to own a piece of history and support a great cause. [Visit the Virginia DMV website](#) to purchase your VA250 license plate today.



America's counties have a long and proud history of serving our nation's veterans, a legacy that continues to this day as we work with our federal, state and local partners to ensure that the former service members have access to the resources they need to thrive.

Once again this Veterans Day, the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) invite the nation's 3,069 counties, parishes, and boroughs to join Operation Green Light and show support for veterans by lighting our buildings green from November 4-11, 2024. By shining a green light, county governments and our residents will let veterans know that they are seen, appreciated and supported.

To show support, counties are encouraged to use this template to pass a resolution declaring your county's participation in [Operation Green Light](#).

- [Download Flyer](#)
- [Explore 2023 Highlights](#)
- [NACo Veterans and Military Services Committee](#)
- [NACo Policy Brief: Authorize Resources for County Veteran Service Officers](#)
- [Find a County Veteran Service Officer](#)

## Regulations to Allow Mobile Medication-Assisted Treatment Services Open for Public Comment



Regulations that would allow existing providers of medication for addiction treatment to add a mobile component to their services have been released for a 30-day public comment period, beginning October 21. As defined in current regulations, medication assisted treatment (sometimes referred to as medication for opioid use disorder) is the use of U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies to provide treatment of substance use disorders. Medication-assisted treatment includes medications for opioid use disorder as well as medications for treatment of alcohol use disorder.

The proposed regulations (which are posted at [this link](#)) are intended to incorporate changes made to federal regulations by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which will now allow providers who are currently authorized to dispense methadone for opioid use disorder to add a mobile component to their existing services, with approval from the DEA. Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) staff have indicated that at least one provider is interested in offering this service in Virginia.

Under current law dealing with license applications for MAT provided at bricks-and-mortar locations, the Commissioner of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, upon receiving notice of an initial license application by a prospective provider, must notify the local governing

body and the local Community Services Board regarding the application and the facility's proposed location. The local governing body and the CSB must submit comments within 30 days, and must notify the Commissioner regarding the applicant's compliance with any applicable local ordinances.

The proposed regulations would allow currently-licensed bricks-and-mortar providers to add a mobile services component. The regulations add a definition of "mobile medication assisted treatment program" to existing regulations; stipulate that each mobile medication assisted treatment program would operate as a component of a licensed medication assisted treatment location and be listed on the provider's license addendum; and incorporate certain safety requirements regarding physical security and record keeping.

DBHDS has explained to VACo staff that it intends to implement the following requirements for providers who wish to offer mobile MAT services:

- DBHDS will require proof that providers have received approval from the Drug Enforcement Administration for additional site locations and that providers have informed the local governing body and the local Community Services Board of the locations where they intend to provide services.
- Providers must document the locality's response to the proposed service locations and communicate that response to DBHDS. Providers will be given a standard form for a locality to use to submit any concerns or complaints to DBHDS.
- Providers must report to DBHDS that the locations where services are intended to be provided are in compliance with all local laws and regulations, to include zoning ordinances.

VACo would be interested in members' feedback on the proposed regulations.

**VACo Contact:** [Katie Boyle](#)

# Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council Workgroup to Publish Best Practices Guides for Requests and Charges



As part of the [workgroup](#) created by [SB 324 \(Roem\)](#), the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory (FOIA) Council will publish several best practices guides pertaining to access to public records under FOIA, FOIA charges, and making requests for public records. VACo encourages members to review these guides and to post to the appropriate section of county government websites to help inform and educate members of the public. Increased education and awareness will hopefully streamline the process of FOIA requests made to county governments and reduce the number of contentious requests.

These documents will soon be posted to the FOIA Council [website](#), but links to each can be found below:

- [Access to Public Records Under the Freedom of Information Act](#)
- [Best Practices for Making Requests for Public Records](#)
- [FOIA Charges Guide](#)

As previously [reported](#), VACo expressed concerns with SB 324 in its original form. The workgroup created by the legislation continues to discuss potential consensus approaches that honor the intent of the legislation but reduce or eliminate potential unfunded mandates to local governments. VACo recently sent a survey to County Administrators on the latest [version](#) of potential draft legislation, though this draft is likely to change based on feedback from the October 21 meeting of the workgroup. The patron of the bill is interested in assessing potential costs and has offered to introduce budget amendments to help local governments with implementation of any new changes to FOIA caused by this legislation.

VACo will continue to engage on this issue and provide feedback and updates as the issue evolves.

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#) and [Phyllis Errico](#)

## Join the Schar School Regional Elected Leaders Initiative (RELI) for our webinar on Data Centers In NOVA.



Hon. Rip Sullivan  
Virginia House of Delegates



Hon. Mike Turner  
Loudoun County  
Board of Supervisors



John Larson  
Director of Public Policy  
& Economic Development  
Dominion Energy



Josh Levi  
President  
Data Center Coalition



Ivy Main  
VA Sierra Club  
Renewable Energy Chair



Hon. Jay Fiset  
Facilitator

### Expert Panelist will Discuss:

- How many data centers are in NoVA and how many more are possible?
- What is their impact on the power grid and neighbors?
- How are local governments reacting or planning?
- What is the role of the state and what is the focus of the 2024 JLARC Study?
- How do data centers factor into VA's adopted energy goals?

**Friday, October 25, 2024**

**12-1:15 PM**

**This is a free webinar**

Register Now

[bit.ly/3C2u4Xm](https://bit.ly/3C2u4Xm)

# VACo Releases Its 2025 Preliminary Legislative Program



VACo has released its [2025 Preliminary Legislative Program](#), which was drafted through VACo's steering committee process. The document includes a host of important and timely proposed policy statements including language pertaining to K-12 education funding, local taxing authority, stormwater regulations, land use planning, transportation, broadband, health and human resources and other local budget and legislative issues.

Click on the link to read the [2025 Preliminary Legislative Program](#).

The 2025 Legislative Program will be adopted on November 12 during the Annual Business Meeting at the [VACo Annual Conference](#).

VACo's eight steering committees will finalize and adopt their policy sections on November 10. The Resolutions Committee will ratify the Legislative Program on November 11. VACo's membership will vote to adopt the Final Legislative Program on November 12.

VACo members are encouraged to continue to add their input to this document by working through their county's legislative process and the VACo steering committee process to put forward suggested changes to VACo's 2024 Legislative Program.

For questions regarding VACo's legislative process, contact Dean Lynch at [dlynch@vaco.org](mailto:dlynch@vaco.org) or 804.343.2511.

**VACo Contact:** [Dean Lynch, CAE](#)





**Evaluate the maturity of your cybersecurity program.**

Open to complete from Oct. 1, 2024 to Feb. 28, 2025

 **No cost**  **Anonymous**  **Self-assessment**

The 2024 Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR) assessment is now available. Your organization can utilize the NCSR to **measure your cybersecurity program** at no cost. After participating, you will then receive automated custom reporting and recommendations to improve your organization's cyber program.

This anonymous self-assessment will be open until February 28, 2025.

### Why This Is Important

The NCSR provides access to a no-cost self-assessment and an associated portal containing reports and resources for mitigating common risks. The assessment is designed to help you measure your cyber program at a strategic level regardless of your level of cyber maturity. You can then use the NCSR to identify gap areas that need funding and resource investments.

### Grant Requirement Information

The NCSR is a post-award requirement for recipients and sub-recipients of the [Homeland Security Grant Program \(HSGP\)](#) – specifically, entities receiving funding through the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI).

The NCSR is also a post-award requirement for recipients of the [State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program \(SLCGP\)](#). For questions specific to the grant process, please reach out to [FEMA-Grants-News@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Grants-News@fema.dhs.gov).

### Accessing the NCSR Portal & Resources

**Previously Established Users:** Use <https://cis.my.logicmanager.com/> to access the NCSR portal. Select "Get a new password" if a password reset is needed.

**New Users:** Register for the NCSR at <https://www.cisecurity.org/ms-isac/services/ncsr/>. The MS-ISAC will create your user account and you will receive an email with login instructions.

**Demo Presentation:** The Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) is now offering individual 30-minute NCSR 101 Demo meetings for organizations that are new to the NCSR, the platform, and NCSR's associated benefits. Contact [ncsr@cisecurity.org](mailto:ncsr@cisecurity.org) to schedule an NCSR 101 Demo.

**2023 Participants & Pre-Populated Answers:** If you participated in the 2023 NCSR cycle, your answers will automatically display within your 2024 NCSR assessment. You can then review and update your pre-populated answers as needed. Please contact [ncsr@cisecurity.org](mailto:ncsr@cisecurity.org) if you have any questions.

# VACo CLOSING GENERAL SESSION



Join us for political talk with former Delegates Chris Saxman and David Toscano at VACo's 90th Annual Conference.

**NOVEMBER 12, 2024**  
9 am - 10:15 am  
The Omni Homestead | Bath County



For more information  
[www.vaco.org](http://www.vaco.org)

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Chris Saxman**  
Executive Director  
Virginia FREE



**David Toscano**  
Attorney and Author

# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards  
at Board of Supervisors Meetings

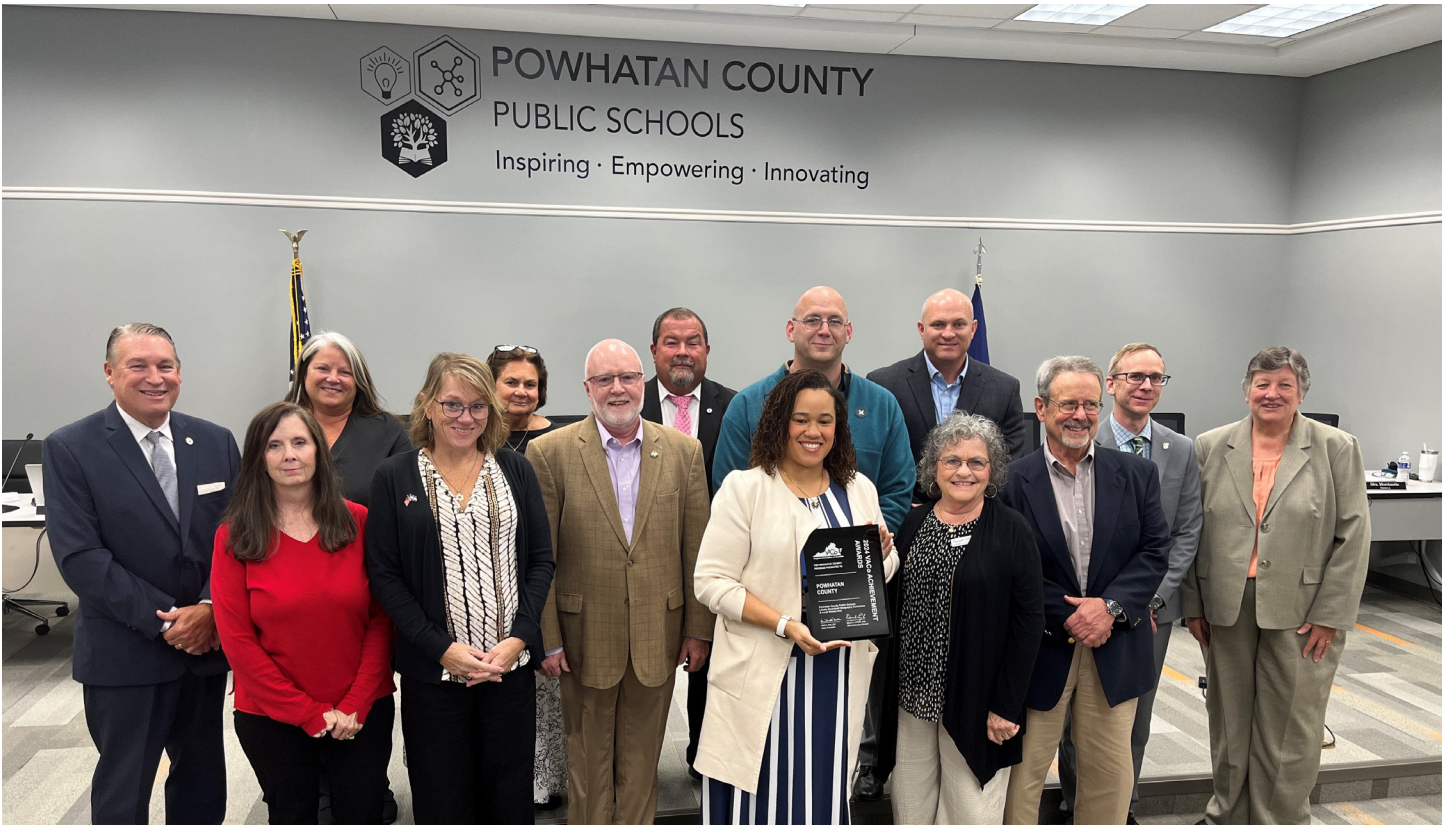


## Congratulations Franklin County!

**Congratulations Franklin County for winning an Achievement Award! Franklin County won for its program titled “Off-Grid Solar Backup Radio Site.”**

# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards at Board of Supervisors Meetings



## Congratulations Powhatan County!

**Congratulations Powhatan County! This is Powhatan County's third-ever Achievement Award, and the first since 2016.**



# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards  
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



## Congratulations Rockingham County!

Rockingham County's Community Development and Engineering staff created the Development Tracker, which won an Achievement Award. To better serve the public, Rockingham County launched a new resource to track development activity occurring throughout the County. The Development Tracker application tracks rezoning and special use permit requests under review and approved, site plans under review and approved, building permits under review, projects under construction, and recently completed building projects. In 2023, Rockingham County received 31 rezoning requests; 35 special use permit requests; over 65 site plans that were reviewed by County staff and outside agencies; and almost 2,000 commercial and residential permits were issued through the building division. The Development Tracker is located at [www.rockinghamcountyva.gov](http://www.rockinghamcountyva.gov).

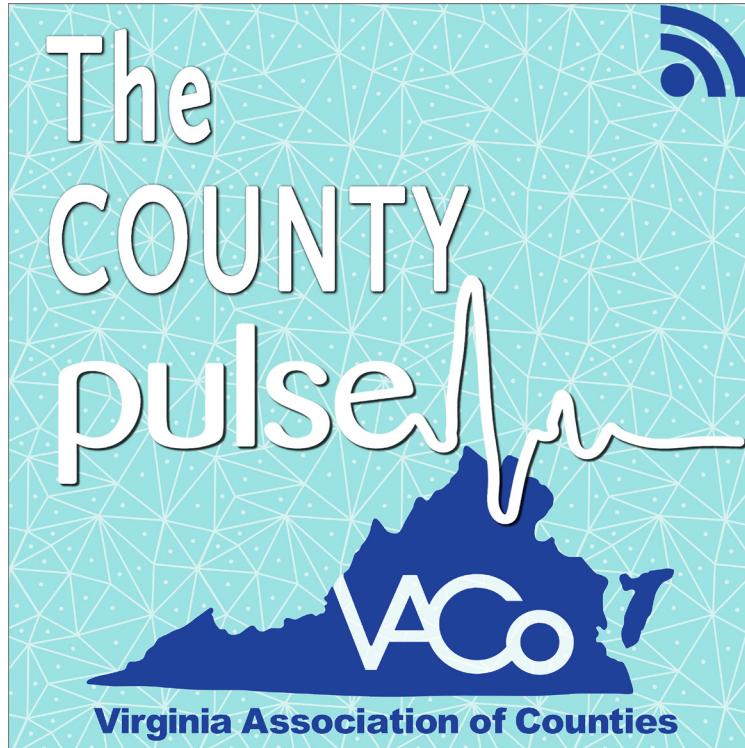
# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards  
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



## Congratulations Prince Edward County!

Prince Edward County's program titled "See Us S.M.I.L.E. won the county its second-ever Achievement Award.



## Season 4 | 2024 | Mecklenburg Experience Energy Landscape of Virginia Series with Joe Lerch

### Energy Landscape of Virginia Episode 3 | Data Centers and Utility-Scale Solar – Mecklenburg County | Part 1

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

#### Part 1. Mecklenburg Experience with County Administrator Alex Gottschalk

This 2-part episode was recorded on location in Mecklenburg County, which is located on the southern border with North Carolina. In Part 1, we sit down with County Administrator Alex Gottschalk to talk about the unique experience of a rural county that has seen significant growth in both data centers and utility-scale solar.

---

### Energy Landscape of Virginia Episode 3 | Data Centers and Utility-Scale Solar – Mecklenburg County | Part 2

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

#### Part 2. Mecklenburg County Tour with Administrator Alex Gottschalk

Alex takes us on a windshield tour of examples of both land uses, and we discuss how Mecklenburg County has responded in terms of planning for how these fit within their community.

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Think and act like a cybersecurity leader.



Cybersecurity Awareness Month

October

**BOGO Deal**

Enroll one leader in the NACo Cybersecurity Leadership Academy, and a second participant is **free**.

[www.naco.org/cyberskills](http://www.naco.org/cyberskills)



Thank you Wythe County Chief Deputy [Anthony Cline](#) for sharing your experience with Blue Line Solutions!



Thank you Sussex County Sheriff [Ernest Giles](#) for sharing your experience with Blue Line Solutions!

## Premier Partner Spotlight

# Blue Line Solutions Testimonials

**Blue Line Solutions** is making a positive impact on communities all over Virginia. In Smyth County - **Blue Line Solutions** recorded during a five-day period that there were 3,530 vehicles traveling through school speed zones at 10mph or higher above the speed limit. That's over 12,000 speeding vehicles a month during school days.

**Blue Line Solutions** uses information and communications rather than focus on enforcement to reduce speeds in school zones.

During **Blue Line Solutions** Public Information Phase of its program in Smyth County - the number dropped to 213 over a five-day period. That's without writing one ticket. The community heard the problem and reacted to it. During the warning phase - the number dropped to 175. Then during the enforcement phase - it dropped to 72. That's a 98 percent reduction of speeders compared to before the **Blue Line Solutions** program.

"That's absolutely fantastic that we can make a difference in a community," Blue Line Solutions CEO/Founder Mark Hutchinson said.

# VACo 90th Annual Conference

November 10 – 12, 2024

The Omni Homestead | Bath County



This year's Annual Conference theme - **“Energizing County Governments”** - was selected because of VACo's collective energy and momentum that has jolted counties to many successes. We are proud of our accomplishments and service to our communities.

Join county and state leaders from all over the Commonwealth on November 10-12 at the Omni Homestead for [VACo's 90th Annual Conference](#).



## Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing

**Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing is a great tool to make your locality's and school division's budget go further!**

**Contact us for details.**

### **VML/VACo Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing offers:**

- Competitive rates and low closing costs.
- Predictable and level payments.
- Lease terms up to the expected life of the equipment.
- Streamlined process – we handle the details for you.

**Budget less in the current year by spreading payments out over the useful life of the equipment** – perfect for school buses, fire engines, and police cars.

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### **Questions?**

Contact Steve Mulroy  
804-648-0635

[\*\*smulroy@valocalfinance.org\*\*](mailto:smulroy@valocalfinance.org)





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- STRATEGIC PLANNING
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# VACo Seeks to Create Mentorship Program for Supervisors



Dear Members/County Administrators...

VACo is blessed to have many smart and experienced Supervisors. This year we welcomed a slew of newly elected Supervisors, some of whom have expressed interest in being mentored. VACo thrives when Supervisors connect and share experiences and challenges. Therefore, we would like to establish an informal, voluntary mentoring program to offer opportunities for personalized connections among Supervisors.

If you are interested in being a mentor or being connected with a mentor, please contact Karie Walker, [kwalker@vaco.org](mailto:kwalker@vaco.org) or 804-343-2504.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

**Karie Walker**  
Director of Programs and Development  
Virginia Association of Counties



## You are VAcorp

You are not merely a customer of VAcorp; you **are** VAcorp! We are both owned and governed by you – our members! VAcorp is created under 15.2-2700 of the local government code where all assets and surplus belong to the members. In addition, VAcorp is controlled by a Supervisory Board that is elected from and by our members. The Board determines and approves all major risk pool decisions, and as a voting member, you have a voice in the decisions that matter most.

### Know Who You Are

Because you are VAcorp itself, we think it is critical that you understand exactly what VAcorp is and why it exists. Many simply think of us as their “insurance carrier” – writing customized coverages and handling claims when they occur – but we are so much more!

## Our History

### The Birth of Risk Pools

VAcorp is not an insurance company, but rather a Risk Pool.

Unstable economic conditions in the mid-1980s led to a commercial insurance crisis with ballooning premiums and widespread policy cancellations. As a result, Risk Pools began to form as an alternative to volatile traditional carriers, allowing Pool members to exert more control over their coverages and costs. Today, almost all public sector entities throughout the country get their coverage from Risk Pools rather than from commercial insurance companies.

### VAcorp’s Origin

VAcorp was founded by a handful of Virginia counties in 1993. The ultimate goals of the program were to provide **cost stability**, the most **comprehensive coverages** possible, and **custom services** tailored specifically to the unique needs of our members. While we are pleased by how well our prices compare against the competition, our goal was never to guarantee the lowest cost. Instead, we promised to avoid the wild price swings that we’ve seen in other providers and provide stable pricing year after year, and that is exactly what we have delivered. VAcorp rates are actually **lower today in 2024 than they were in 1993!**

### VAcorp’s Growth

Today, VAcorp is the **largest self-insurance risk pool** for public sector entities in the Commonwealth with a membership retention rate of better than 98%. Over the years, we have expanded beyond counties to include municipalities, school divisions, authorities, volunteer fire & rescue companies, state agencies, and non-profits funded by taxpayer dollars. **Over 560 members** have joined VAcorp, including 8 of the 10 largest counties, 8 of the 10 largest cities, and 8 of the 10 largest school divisions. We believe that the extraordinary success of the program can be attributed to our unwavering commitment to our founding principles.

## VAcorp Exists to Serve You

VAcorp was created solely to serve Virginia's public sector entities, and from day one until now, we have never lost sight of that purpose. Because we answer only to our members, every decision is designed to benefit the group over the long haul.

VAcorp advocates for local government through a myriad of partnerships with affiliated associations including: VACo, VSBA, VLGMA, VASS, VFGOA, VASBO, LGA, Regional Jail Association, PDC, etc. While there is a cost associated with these partnerships, they add value to the group by aiding in our ability to lobby the General Assembly on behalf of our members.

You may not always see the immediate payoff, but every VAcorp decision is made in alignment with our vision to serve our members and promote the health and longevity of your program.

Take a look at a few of VAcorp's milestones over the years:

- **1993** - VAcorp is established with 12 founding members and less than \$700,000 in annual contribution.
- **1998** - VAcorp terminates service contract with claims administration vendor and hires staff to promote more control and efficiency.
- **1999** - VAcorp offers coverage to K-12 Public Schools across the Commonwealth.
- **2001** - VAcorp begins offering Public Officials Liability coverage in response to VARisk offering limited coverage.
- **2004** - VAcorp begins providing Environmental Liability coverage to all members at no additional cost. Even in 2024, VAcorp is the only provider offering this coverage with a low \$25,000 deductible. Other providers offer this coverage with a \$250,000 deductible.
- **2008** - VAcorp responded to the great recession by freezing rates and providing financial relief with over \$8,000,000 in dividends to members.
- **2011** - VAcorp introduces Line of Duty Act (LODA) coverage, creates the only LODA trust in the state, and absorbs existing LODA losses in response to the state pushing this cost to the local level. VAcorp paid all of its members' 2010 past liability for over \$1,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp merges with the VSBA Self-Insurance Group and assumes their liabilities to prevent School Boards from being assessed. This action saves Local Governments in excess of \$5,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp becomes the first to offer Cyber Risk coverage in Virginia offering the broadest coverage available to local governments anywhere in the US.
- **2016** - VAcorp offers Student Accident and Catastrophic Accident coverage in order to fill VHSL coverage gaps.
- **2020** - VAcorp provides over \$5,000,000 in rate credits during the COVID pandemic to assist members.
- **2023** - VAcorp includes security risk management coverage (active shooter) for all members (coverage has been included for Schools since 2013).







## OneDigital is thrilled to be one of VACo's newest Premier Partners.

What truly distinguishes OneDigital as a leading **insurance, financial services, and HR consulting advisory firm** is our holistic approach to creating environments that enable people to do their best work and live their best lives. OneDigital understands that counties face rising insurance costs while still struggling to attract/retain talent. This is why we use proprietary software to provide accurate and predictable insurance consulting projections for those core benefits that impact your bottom line and incorporate solutions to improve retention. While voluntary benefits may be the focus of other providers, OneDigital has the expertise in alternative funding strategies, best-in-class analytics, and an in-house actuarial team.

OneDigital has a track record of providing cost-saving solutions to counties. This has been achieved through creative funding strategies, rate holds, and exclusive partnerships with various carriers. One of these exclusive partnerships is through VACORP and Anthem Life. OneDigital is responsible for the inception of the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) which is through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Our team of fierce advocates negotiated a 5-year locked rate, including short-term and long-term disability benefits. Your division may already work with us in this capacity, as we currently serve over 270 public sector entities in the VLDP program.



### OUR SOLUTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

#### MANAGE

- Talent Planning
- Recruiting
- Development & Training

#### SUPPORT

- Benefits & Compensation
- Total Wellbeing
- Productivity
- Retirement Readiness

#### ENGAGE

- Culture
- Education & Fiduciary
- Literacy
- Communications

#### PROTECT

- Compliance
- Workplace Safety
- Operational Continuity
- Cyber Security



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At OneDigital, we harness the power of one to solve complex challenges for businesses and people. Scan the code to the left to watch the video and learn more.

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The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. **The cost is \$100 per ad for non-VACo members.** VACo publishes the ad on its website and mobile app as well as the upcoming County Connections issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Valerie.Russell](mailto:Valerie.Russell).

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## VALUE OF VACo



### ADVOCACY

VACo's lobbying efforts have helped stem the tide of unfunded mandates and have saved Counties millions of dollars every year.



### EDUCATION

Our educational programs offer County leaders and staff opportunities to become more effective in their communities.



### MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Some of VACo's best moments are when members convene and work to improve communities all over the Commonwealth.



### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Our business development opportunities offer savings and innovative approaches to delivering services at the County level.

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VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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