

Legislative Report

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1. General Assembly Scorecard: bills introduced-2352; bills passed-889; remaining bills were either deferred until next year -242 or rejected by either House or Senate or both-1221. A number of experts evaluating these results consider these outcomes acceptable performance as several major bills were approved with a great deal of give-and-take by representatives from different interest groups. Are you aware of the role your representatives played in this effort?

2. SW Virginia Legislator's Scorecard (Includes our Representatives): Our Regional Chamber of Commerce believes this session showed a new degree of unity and political clout by the SW Virginia participants. Some examples of this: bond money for the expansion of the Virginia Tech Carillion Research Institute; rejecting the budget request to study closing the Catawba Hospital; a significant investment in public education at all levels without increasing taxes; and bringing a major new car parts manufacturer to Botetourt County.

3. Now some bad news! Lack of transparency in some of the General Assembly decisions. This year 834 bills "DIED" with no one recorded as being for or against. This was an increase over last year. Faith in our democratic institutions is based on truth and openness. One Virginia organization--Transparency VA--is closely monitoring this and urging the Assembly to make major changes in their procedures. You can help by asking your representatives to explain this.

4. Elderly Financial Abuse. It happening as well to professionals, managers, executives and their families. Primarily in unauthorized trading in stocks, high fees, inappropriate investment advice, breach of fiduciary duties. The Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) has an extensive library to help us do "due diligence" on such matters. (web site-investor.gov) In addition they have a financial ombudsman who takes complaints on suspected financial fraud (tele-202-551-3330) Their current case load is high so they are not always able to offer an immediate response. In such cases contact a local attorney.