

Legislative Report
June 2017
Val Coluni

1. STATE ELECTIONS

A. For Governor and Assembly: In June, the primaries; In November, the finals. Several candidates for Governor--Gillespie, Stewart, Wagner, Northam, Perriello. Multiple candidates for the House of Delegates based on election district assignment.

B. A few critical issues: State economy/budget (we already used \$600 million from our "rainy day fund" to support recent budget decisions); diversifying our economy thru educational curriculum changes designed to train students for higher paying technical jobs now in great demand; revise current State funding formulas for school districts in coal field communities where there is inadequate budgets to meet their essential educational needs; opioid epidemic/mental health services; raising taxes (gasoline tax) to provide necessary funds to correct deficiencies (highways-new and repair, bridges),and continued resistance within the State Assembly to address the problem of gerrymandering. THIS IS A VERY PARTIAL LIST!!!

C. Your challenge. How to identify/vote for those politicians regardless of party affiliation who present the most practical and realistic solutions and who have the temperaments to work collectively and effectively with others who may have a different point of view. The only way you can be prepared to do this is: READ, LISTEN, ATTEND MEETINGS, INITIATE DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHERS, and ACT!!!

2. VOTER ID LAWS. These laws have been an issue in several states, including Virginia, where several court decisions have been made and may be under appeal soon. In a recent N. Carolina case a Federal Appeals Court struck down the NC Law with the finding that it targeted minorities with "surgical precision" in a way which restricted their voting rights. The State appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn this decision but their appeal was not accepted.