

Legislative Report
June, 2018
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1. 2018 GENERAL ASSEMBLY inputs from recently elected Del. Chris Hurst. Source - a personal meeting with Del. Hurst, Monday May 21 at the Blacksburg Public Library.
 - A. Major Disappointments: Failure to pass a State budget for the next fiscal years. Several special meetings have already been held with another scheduled in Richmond next week; B. Failure to provide affordable health care for all citizens; C. Failure to agree on a strategic educational plan to increase/improve the skills levels of our work force. This is critical for economic development in our State.
 - B. Major Accomplishments: 14 bills approved in committees, 4 submitted and approved by all decision makers and soon will be effective in our State laws. These subjects covered vehicle taxes in one of our communities, revisions to 2 town charters and a critical change to the State Felony Law. We continue to work in special sessions on the State budget and Medicaid expansion for thousands of our citizens.
 - C. Some major concerns for the future: An effort by some to develop "hybrid health care plans with lower benefits which are now required in the Affordable Care Act. Yes the costs will be somewhat lower but it will have an adverse affect on the Affordable Care Act; the difficulty convincing all our stakeholders (students, citizens, government representatives, employers and others we must be BOLD in solving the problems of the inadequate skills levels of our work forces. My belief is that the quickest way to correct the problem is free tuition at our community colleges, technical/trade schools and other educational institutions to be financed by all appropriate stakeholders. Our future depends on this bold effort.

2. Legislation. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). CAUTION!! This Federal Agency is designed to protect consumers from predatory lending. It is going thru significant organizational changes to cut costs and to now broaden its mandate to protect lenders not only the consumers. Some suspect there are political motives for these changes but it does have support of some members of both parties. But the changes have and will continue to have an affect on their enforcement operations. In addition the current temporary Director (Mick Mulvaney) sees the Agency's mission in a much different way than the previous executive management. If you have a need of critical urgency to use the Agency proceed with great aggressiveness!!