

January 14, 2019

To members of Virginia's Senate and House of Delegates:

As they help prepare students for success in life and in their careers, Virginia's public colleges and universities also have key roles to play when it comes to workforce development and keeping Virginia's talent pipeline filled.

Accordingly, the decisions made by the governing boards of our public colleges and universities have far-reaching and lasting impacts not just on students and their families, but also on the economies of Virginia and our communities.

These governing boards exist to hold public institutions accountable and make decisions in the best interest of Virginia's students, taxpayers, and other stakeholders. Yet decision-making is often based solely on information and briefings delivered by a school's administrators or its president.

The members of college governing boards chart a school's future, approve multi-billion-dollar budgets, and increase tuition and fee rates with little or no public discussion or opportunity for comment. That needs to change.

Just as many other state-appointed boards and commissions are legally required to have periods for public comment to hear from diverse perspectives, public higher education should be held to the same level of accountability to Virginia taxpayers.

Therefore, we urge the Virginia General Assembly to support legislation requiring that the governing boards of Virginia's public colleges and universities set aside time to hear from the public before setting rates for tuition and fees.

Sincerely,

**Organizations**

- AARP – Virginia
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni
- National Campus Leadership Council
- Partners for College Affordability and Public Trust
- U.S. PIRG
- Virginia Coalition for Open Government
- Virginia Education Association
- Virginia Parent Teacher Association

**Individuals**

- Jeff Ainslie  
Former Member, Old Dominion University Board of Visitors (1998-2002)  
President of Sales, Operations and Finance, Ainslie Group  
Former President, Homebuilders Association of Virginia

Elizabeth Alcorn	Chair, Greene County Democratic Party
Tom Allison	Deputy Policy and Research Director, Young Invincibles
The Honorable Rich Anderson	Former Member, Virginia House of Delegates (2010-2018)
Dr. Lee Armistead	Former Vice Chair, Tidewater Community College Board (2008-2016)
Garrett Berger	Property Portfolio Controller, Armada Hoffler Properties, Inc.
Abigail Brand	Regional Caucus Chair, Virginia Young Democrats (Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro)
Rebecca Chalmers	Community Leader
Barbara Cockrell	Chairman, Middlesex County Democratic Committee
Angie Connolly	Community Leader
Wally Connolly	Community Leader
Rebecca Daly	Chair, Charlotte County Democratic Party
Louise Davis	Chair, Buckingham County Democratic Party
The Honorable William J. Deutsch	Member, Prince William County School Board
Erika Dyer	YRFV State Central Committee Rep., Republican Party of Virginia
Ed Elkins	Vice President Industrial Products, Norfolk Southern Corporation
Cindy Free	Community Leader
Col. J. Jack Hilgers, USMC (RET)	Former Member, Old Dominion University Board of Visitors (1998-2002)
	Director of Development, Virginia Department of Veterans Services
Jim "J.R." Hoeft	Host, The J.R. Hoeft Show
Margo Horner	8 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District Chair- Arlington, Democratic Party of Virginia
Michael King	Chief Financial Officer, Southern Auto Group
Charles Kolb	Former Deputy Assistant to the U.S. President for Domestic Policy
	Former General Counsel for Regulations and Legislation, U.S. Department of Education
	Senior Advisor, Business for America
The Honorable Jordan Labiosa	Member, New Castle Town Council
	Chairman, Craig County Republican Committee
James Lewis	Immediate Past President, Virginia Young Democrats
Richard McCarty	11 <sup>th</sup> CD Rep., Republican Party of Virginia State Central Committee
The Honorable Andria McClellan	Member, Norfolk City Council
Delceno Miles	President and CEO, The Miles Agency
John Piscitelli	Senior Vice President- Investments, Davenport and Company
Nicholas Proffitt	Chair, Republican Party of Chesapeake
The Honorable David Ramadan	Former Member, Virginia House of Delegates (2012-2014)
	Former Member, George Mason University Board of Visitors
	Founder, RAMA International, Inc.
The Honorable Amelia Ross-Hammond	Former Member, Vice Beach City Council (2013-2016)
	Retired Distinguished Professor, Norfolk State University
Joel Rubin	CEO, Rubin Communications Group
Michelle Sanderson	Chair, Virginia Beach Young Democrats
The Honorable Elizabeth Schultz	Member, Fairfax County School Board
Debbie Schwartz	Director of Development and Community Relations, Senior Services of Southeast Virginia
Dr. Dishant Shah	Magisterial Chair, Henrico County Republican Committee
Philip Shucet	President, The Philip A. Shucet Company
The Honorable Louisa Strayhorn	Former Member, Virginia Beach City Council (1994-1998)

The Honorable Chris Stuart	CEO, LSA Consulting Former Member, Hampton City Council (2010-2014) Past President, Virginia Security Association Vice President, Top Guard Security
Terri Thompson	Board Chair, Tidewater Community College
Kishore Thota	Chair, Young Republican Federation of Virginia
The Honorable Michael Watson	Former Member, Virginia House of Delegates (2012-2014)
The Honorable Rick West	Mayor, City of Chesapeake
Yvonne Jackson-Wilson	Chair, Nottoway County Democratic Party
The Honorable Dr. Pat Woodbury	Newport News City Council

*Individual titles are listed for identification purposes only.*

