



Jeffrey C. McKay
Chairman

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Suite 530
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-0071

Telephone 703-324-2321
Fax 703-324-3955

chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

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Speaker Don Scott, House of Delegates
Delegate Charniele Herring, House Majority Leader
Delegate Terry Kilgore, House Minority Leader
Senator Scott Surovell, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Ryan McDougle, Senate Minority Leader

Dear General Assembly Leaders,

Thank you for your service to our Commonwealth. I am writing again this year to reiterate the legislative principles of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' (Board) and the relationship of those principles to any potential legislation involving a casino in Fairfax County. Prior bills in General Assembly (GA) sessions and the possibility of future legislation have been discussed by our Board—most recently at our Legislative Committee and Board meetings on December 2nd and 9th, respectively. This letter is a summation of those discussions and a follow-up to the letter I sent in January of this year.

Some proponents of this legislation have sought to link the proceeds of a casino to a reduction in real estate taxes. We want to be very clear that the largest driver of increases in real estate taxes in the County is the shortfall in state funding for K-12 education, as identified in your Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study. Should the Commonwealth fully fund its obligations to fund public education, the County would receive an additional \$568.7 million annually, the equivalent of 17.5 cents on our real estate taxes. This is of course if Virginia decided to fund education to the national average. This could in turn save homeowners an average of \$1,300 on their tax bills (these figures are based on the JLARC study at the time it was published).

Our Board also commissioned the Center for Economic and Policy Studies, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia to conduct a revenues and returns analysis for Fairfax County, which can be found here: [Fairfax County - Revenues and Returns Analysis](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/Assets/eic_materials/November_25_2025/FairfaxCounty_RevReturnAnalysis_2025-11-20.pdf)¹. The study examined direct and indirect funding to provide a contextual assessment regarding state funds that are generated in and those returned to Fairfax County. The findings concluded that Fairfax County sees a return of 22 cents directly, if you include all indirect benefits that increases to 50 cents, on every dollar that we generate for the state. While Fairfax County is proud to support our fellow Virginians, the study's findings underscore the need for fundamental

¹ https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/Assets/eic_materials/November_25_2025/FairfaxCounty_RevReturnAnalysis_2025-11-20.pdf

tax reform within the Commonwealth to ensure sustainable revenue streams and to provide localities with revenue diversification that reflects a 21st century economy.

Salient in this discussion is what has transpired over the last year with actions taken by the federal government that directly attack Fairfax County's economy. The chaos it has created for the federal workforce and federal contractors and well as many local businesses is now well documented. Despite this, Fairfax County is working day and night to create jobs and attract businesses locally. In fact, over the last several years Fairfax County has retained and created 28,000 jobs, 90% of which were led by efforts locally—and in some instances we have outpaced the Commonwealth as a whole.

This economic instability coupled with the aforementioned study undergird the reality we are experiencing, and permanent financial solutions are essential to Fairfax County. Collaborating on systemic changes to modernize our tax system provides us a collective opportunity to remedy these issues at their core as opposed to one off and potentially temporary solutions. Any new authority the state is considering granting the County to generate revenue must be considered in this long-term context.

This year, the Board's legislative program outlines our overall priorities/initiatives on the budget and position statements on key issues such as education, land use, health and wellness, and human services. Among these is our long-standing and fundamental priority and principle for Fairfax County to retain our local authority.

Previous legislation would have added Fairfax County to the list of localities eligible to host a casino. That legislation provided that any proposed site for a casino gaming establishment considered by Fairfax County shall be:

(i) located within one-quarter of a mile of an existing station on the Metro Silver Line, (ii) part of a coordinated mixed-use project development, (iii) within two miles of a regional enclosed mall containing not less than 1.5 million square feet of gross building area, and (iv) outside of the Interstate 495 Beltway.

As you are aware, the legislation cited set the parameters around the location of a potential casino, which is inherently a major land use decision. GA intervention into our land use process would undermine a fundamental local government responsibility to work directly with the community to responsibly manage economic growth—something we do very well in Fairfax County.

I want to be very clear that if any bill gains traction or is passed by the GA it is this Board's position that it be subject to a referendum voted on by Fairfax County residents. Equally important is that the Board is afforded the authority to decide the timeline for when such a referendum would take place.

Furthermore, in response to overwhelming citizen testimony and keeping in line with responsible governance, the Board wholeheartedly supports the implementation of a statewide Gaming Commission before any casino proposal could move forward.

It must also be noted that Fairfax County has *not* historically opposed legislation that provides local governments with any new local authority, even if we do not intend to utilize it. Similarly, we do not as a matter of principle seek or ask the GA to provide new authority unless we intend on applying it. To provide further clarification, Fairfax County has not been substantively involved in the development of the casino concept envisioned by patrons of previous legislation and prospective stakeholders, nor have we requested such authority.

We understand the Commonwealth's desire to collect additional state tax revenue, but we know our residents would not accept the revenue share prescribed in the current statute or previously proposed legislation. This is especially relevant given that the proscribed locations where a casino could be built have the potential to generate significant local tax revenue without a casino. Furthermore, because there has not been an independent analysis of revenue projections specific to this proposal, the County is unable to determine whether or not this proposal presents a good financial deal for Fairfax County residents.

Thank you again for your service to our Commonwealth and for the opportunity to share our perspective on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff McKay", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeffrey C. McKay
Chairman