



The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Inc.

P.O. Box 203, Mount Vernon, VA 22121-9998

<http://www.mvcca.org>

Jan 14, 2025

Dear Senator Surovell and Delegate Krizek,

The MVCCA recognizes the importance of this legislative session and wants to make you aware of several legislative issues of importance to us. They are attached.

We request that you engage with others in the legislature to bring these issues to light and hopefully have bills created to address them.

We appreciate all our had work and efforts to improve Fairfax County and the Mount Vernon area. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Larry Zaragosa at Chair.er@mvcca.org or 703-577-7466.

Sincerely,
Katherine Ward
Katherine Ward
Cochair
MVCCA

Attached: MVCCA Legislative Recommendations

MVCCA Legislative Recommendations for 2025

Support for solar energy:

- Establishing a non-refundable income tax credit. For example, Del Krizek introduced HB 197 in the 2024 session to provide a state personal income tax credit for residential solar installation. Our nearby neighbor, South Carolina, has had such a credit for several years.
- Solar on buildings is important so that we can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and also reduce the use of forests and prime agricultural lands for utility scale solar farms. We anticipate Delegate Bulova will be introducing a bill to empower County governments to promote appropriate solar energy such as rooftops and parking lots, during the development process.
- Remove barriers to solar. Such barriers include providing for cost sharing of interconnection of private solar energy generation to the electrical grid. Such costs should be allocated so that the solar installer pays for the costs of equipment for safety and reliability purposes at the premises of installation. The utility should bear the cost of needed equipment between the solar premises and the utility's generation facilities. The utility would recover its costs from its rate structure, as the state Corporation Commission determines to be appropriate.
- Support legislation to allow local government to establish energy efficient energy standards than state code.
- Support legislation to authorize local jurisdictions to require commercial buildings to report publicly the energy use intensity of their buildings (benchmarking) and develop and enforce building energy performance requirements.

Data Centers

- Support legislation to modify the Virginia Clean Economy Act to count renewable energy generated outside of Virginia's borders. The exceptional concentration of data centers in Virginia, especially Northern Virginia, has placed a strain on the electrical grid so that the high energy demand is threatening Virginia's ability to meet carbon neutrality goals.
- Given the high energy demands and potential water demands that would threaten Northern Virginia water security (i.e., the ability of the region to deliver water to customers), data centers should be rewarded for sharing information on energy use, water use and wastewater (including salts and PFAS, if any) releases to the publicly owned treatment facilities, especially wastewater released to the Upper Occoquan Service Authority. PFAS has been used in at least some systems that use liquid cooling for data center chips so if wastewater includes PFAS, the PFAS should be removed before release to wastewater treatment facilities.
- Reward the major corporations and data center operators that share their data on energy use, water use, and wastewater (e.g., amount, constituents). Many of the major corporations that use data centers have goals that include net zero carbon,

and these corporations should be thanked and rewarded for their environmental contributions, which may be share nationally with shareholders but do not seem to be shared at the local level here in Virginia.

Invasive Plants

- Support legislation to label and highlight native plant species in nurseries and other places where plants are sold.

Chesapeake Bay and Living Shorelines

- Provide legislation to ensure that a property owners that legally raises the height of their bulkhead to protect their property from sea level rise can also raise the height of the land on the landward side of the bulkhead.
- Require objectivity from Wetland Boards, who have exceptional latitude to require replacement of man-made hardened structures with living shorelines at the cost of the property owner, which also devalues the property and reduces its use by the property owner.
- Under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, a tidal waterfront property owner can be penalized for the removal of a single “wetland” plant. Yet “wetland” plants listed in Virginia law include plants that do not require a wetland environment. This is especially troubling as county, VDOT and utility projects clearcut and regrade areas. The current law has been written and interpreted to be excessively stringent for property owners who have acquired and maintained their property in accordance with the law, which makes the law easy to enforce but lacks reasonableness. Virginia is a buyer beware state and the information for a property owner to make informed decisions, especially for tidal waterfront properties is lacking.
- If living shorelines are really a priority, grants to support property owners that consider their property to be a viable option should be provided. The current amount of up to \$30,000 per property will be inadequate for most properties as engineering analyses and other costs will be needed so the stability of the land and nearby structures will not be threatened. Moreover, much more funding will be needed to provide these grants as their budget would only allow for a few of these projects.

Approved by the MVCCA Board Jan 14, 2025