

VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES
House Republican Caucus
POLICY WORK GROUP



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House Republican Caucus Holds Crossover Press Conference

RICHMOND, VA – The House Republican Caucus Policy Work Group hosted a crossover press conference to discuss their agenda as of the halfway point in the 2012 General Assembly Session. The House Republicans discussed their governing philosophy and legislative priorities – jobs, education, government reform and public safety. Following the press conference, the Policy Work Group issued the following statement:

“As Republicans, we believe efficiency, accountability and innovation are the key principles that guide our legislative outlook,” said Speaker William J. Howell (R-Stafford). “So far this session, we’ve had tremendous success passing legislation that applies those ideals to the everyday concerns of Virginians. Nearly half of the bills passed so far this session address jobs, education, government reform and public safety. We’re proud to stand by that record of success.”

House Majority Caucus Chairman Tim Hugo (R-Fairfax) and Majority Whip Jackson Miller (R-Manassas), highlighted successful Republican jobs bills including [House Bill 33](#) and [House Bill 714](#), which respectively protect non-unionized labor and extend the Major Jobs Business Facility Tax Credit.

“In contrast with our friends from across the aisle, House Republicans are working to keep taxes low, capital flowing and the economic climate amenable to business. That’s how you drive job creation and economic prosperity. By comparison, House Democrats introduced a slate of tax increases, which would hurt Virginia’s families and decimate the pro-business environment here in the Commonwealth,” said Hugo.

House Democrats proposed eleven bills this year to increase various taxes including the gas, recordation and property tax. Proposals to reinstate the Death Tax in Virginia and impose a devastating alternative minimum tax on businesses in Virginia were also heard by the House Finance Committee. The eleven tax bills had estimated fiscal impacts ranging from \$2.0 million to \$744.4 million - all were killed by the House Finance Committee.

Delegates Dickie Bell (R-Staunton) and Jimmie Massie (R-Henrico) spoke to their various education proposals, while Delegate Chris Jones (R-Suffolk) and Steve Landes (R-Augusta) highlighted various government reform bills that passed the House. Jones discussed the successful passage of [House Bill 1129](#) and [House Bill 1130](#), stating “these two measures are designed to further ensure the solvency of the Virginia Retirement System for current and future state employees.”

“House Bill 1130 will allow existing or new employees the option of choosing a defined contribution plan, similar to the 401(k) plans used throughout the private sector,” Jones continued.

Delegate Rob Bell (R-Albemarle) emphasized a number of public safety measures that will increase penalties for drunk drivers, pedophiles and rapists. “Ensuring the public’s safety is one of the most fundamental duties of government. The legislation we’ve passed this year will keep our children safer and make our communities more secure,” said Bell.

House Majority Leader Kirk Cox (R-Colonial Heights) previewed upcoming budget fundamentals and outlined the House Republican’s goal of “crafting a structurally sound biennial budget that makes targeted investments in our core functions of government without raising taxes.”

In closing, Delegate Chris Peace (R-Hanover), Chairman of the Policy Work Group, pointed out 42% of the bills that passed the House so far this session were related to the House Republican’s main priorities for the 2012 Session. “Our focus has – and will continue to be - advancing bills that help private-sector job growth, improve educational opportunities, reform state government and improve the safety of Virginia’s families,” said Peace.

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