LYNCHBURG REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE
Chamber & Economic Development

2027 Legislative Agenda

EDUCATION

The Alliance is ***committed*** to empowering and strengthening the region's public and private education systems so students are prepared for high-demand careers and employers can access a skilled workforce. The Alliance continues to ***support*** innovative K-12 instruction, career and technical education, and ***champion*** affordable, accessible higher education aligned with regional economic priorities.

2027 Focus

- Continued support for all required facility upgrades and maintenance to address increased enrollment at CVCC.
- Dedicated per pupil funding for STEM and CTE education.
- K-12 curriculum emphasizing business, economics, and entrepreneurship.
- Maximize Tuition Assistance Grant awards for eligible Virginia students attending qualifying private colleges and universities.
- Adequate funding support for VCCS FastForward and G3 programs.

WORKFORCE

The Alliance is ***committed*** to bridging the gap between employers and job training programs, as well as removing barriers to workforce participation, including access to affordable child care. The Alliance is firmly ***committed to championing*** career pathways that increase earning potential, expand economic mobility, and help employers recruit and retain talent.

Minimum Wage: The Alliance believes the market better reflects demand for fair wages. The Alliance ***opposes*** mandates for increasing the minimum wage outright and opposes the failure to adjust increases for economic differences between the regions of the Commonwealth.

Right-to-Work: The Alliance ***opposes*** laws or regulations that undermine Virginia's Right-to-Work status, including Fair Share or any initiative that compels employees join a union or any organization as a condition of employment.

2027 Focus

- Protect Virginia's Right-to-Work status.
- Oppose state-mandated public-sector collective bargaining that removes local voter and governing-body authority, as well as prevailing wage and private labor agreements.
- Remove barriers that prevent local school divisions from hiring or contracting with qualified industry professionals to teach CTE courses when they possess relevant experience but not a bachelor's degree.
- Provide robust investment and adequate funding for all workforce credentials, job training, and in-demand skills programs at CVCC.
- Equip school counselors to present CTE, apprenticeship, and work-based learning pathways alongside traditional college options.
- Support the continued efforts of the Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education to treat childcare as essential workforce infrastructure through investment and innovation in early childhood care and education, within the Lynchburg region and across the state.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Alliance is ***dedicated*** to enhancing regional competitiveness, by growing existing employers, attracting new investment, expanding business-ready sites, and increasing the supply of workforce housing. The Alliance will ***continue to champion*** the growth of our existing industry cluster in nuclear energy and advanced manufacturing services while supporting entrepreneurship, small-business growth, and predictable development processes.

2027 Focus

- Support competitive funding for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program, Virginia Talent Accelerator Program, Major Business Facility Job Tax Credit, and GO Virginia.
- Support policies that alleviate sitting and permitting roadblocks and reducing local impact fees.
- Promotion of reasonable and cost-effective building codes.
- Oppose one-size-fits-all state mandates that restrict local authority without regard to local conditions.
- Support of the regional Housing Needs Study.
- Continued support for a second entrance to the CVTC property.
- Support the expansion of entrepreneurships, technology commercialization, small-business access to capital, and state procurement opportunities for regional firms.

ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Alliance supports reliable, affordable, and diverse energy resources that promote economic growth, strengthen regional competitiveness, and meet the needs of businesses, residents, and future employers. The Alliance supports strategic investments in energy, broadband, and utility infrastructure while preserving local decision-making authority and protecting ratepayers from unnecessary cost increases.

2027 Focus

- Support predictability and certainty in permitting, as well as the regulatory processes for critical infrastructure projects.
- Support the continued development of commercial nuclear energy and emerging advanced nuclear technologies.
- Support electric transmission, generation, utility, and transportation investments needed for economic development while protecting reliability, affordability, and ratepayers.
- Support the continued development of commercial nuclear energy and emerging advanced nuclear technologies.
- Support continued implementation and expansion of the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) and regional broadband infrastructure.
- Support informed, fact-based evaluation of data centers and other emerging digital infrastructure projects, balancing economic opportunity, infrastructure demands, and community considerations.

HEALTHCARE

The Alliance is ***committed*** to market-based solutions to address quality and affordable healthcare needs.

2027 Focus

- Oppose “Medicare for All” insurance programs at state or federal level.
- Support alignment and conformity of Paid Family Leave programs with the federal law.
- Support continued implementation of consortium healthcare plans and expansion of Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements (MEWAs).
- Support the continued advancement of a comprehensive, multipronged strategy to address the Commonwealth's behavioral health crisis.
- Support mitigation strategies to reduce or eliminate impacts of federal reductions in Medicaid and SNAP funding on the state and regional workforce and healthcare-providers.
- Support changes to eligibility criteria that more accurately reflect the rural character and status of Amherst, Bedford, and Campbell counties relating to the Rural Health Transformation Program as identified by Virginia's Rural Regions map.

TRANSPORTATION

The Alliance ***supports*** expanding investments in air, rail, and surface transportation that enhances the region’s connectivity, safety, workforce mobility, and economic competitiveness.

2027 Focus

- Continued expansion of air service to the Lynchburg region, upgrades and enhancements to the Lynchburg Regional Airport infrastructure.
- Support continued expansion and improvement of the Governor’s New Airline Service Incentive Fund.
- Support improved coordination between passenger and freight rail operators to protect reliability and support future passenger rail service expansion.
- Oppose any changes to VDOT SMART Scale that negatively impacts parity in funding with Virginia’s larger metro areas.
- Support continued emphasis on safety in SMART Scale weighting of transportation needs in our region.
- Support streamlined fund utilization and marketing to airlines.

TAXATION & REGULATORY REFORM

Simplification: The Alliance ***supports*** proposals that simplify the tax code and reduce the cost of compliance on businesses and individuals.

Reduction of Regulations: The Alliance ***supports*** efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to reduce unnecessary regulations, remove permitting roadblocks, modernize outdated rules and ordinances, and lower compliance costs for businesses and consumers. The Alliance also ***supports*** uniform and consistent application of regulations across all Virginia DEQ regions.