



Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance Virginia Legislative Priorities for 2025

- **Virginia Military Community Infrastructure Grant Program (VMCIGP):** The military presence in Virginia is a vital component of our economy with a Commonwealth-wide impact of \$105.5 billion accounting for 19% of the economic output and 872,845 direct, indirect, and induced jobs. In 2022, the General Assembly created the VMCIGP to support local infrastructure projects that enhance the value of military installations in the Commonwealth and benefit both the local community and the installations. The biennium budget included \$5 million for the program. Defense communities in Virginia can currently apply for these funds to help offset the non-federal share costs of Department of Defense (DoD) grants with the locality providing a 100% match for the state grant funds. The entire \$5 million was obligated within the first year of the two-year budget cycle, demonstrating a clear need and demand for these funds. The \$5 million investment of Commonwealth funds resulted in \$24 million in DoD grants demonstrating an incredible return on Virginia's investment. For FY2025, the Commonwealth included \$3 million for VMCIGP in the first year of the biennium, but no funding in the second year. **We request your support for continuing the VMCIGP in FY2026 and increasing the annual funding to \$5 million. We also request support for altering the program so grants can be awarded directly to defense communities instead of being restricted to offsetting the non-federal match of DoD grants.**
- **Improving Childcare Access for Military Families:** Securing access to high quality childcare is imperative to many military families where both parents work, or where the military member is a single parent. In fact, lack of access to childcare in a dual-military family can often lead to one of the military members separating from the service. On-base child development centers (CDCs) cannot accommodate all military children requiring care. For example, Joint Base Langley-Eustis has the largest waitlist for CDC care in the Air Force with approximately 400 families on the list. Similarly, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic has reported approximately 2,000 kids on Hampton Roads Navy installation CDC waitlists. While the military is working to increase childcare capacity on base, they rely extensively on off-base care. The Department of Defense has fee assistance programs (MCCYN/MCCYN+) to help service members with the increased costs for off-base care (up to \$1,800/mo), but there are not enough private providers participating in the program. Out of the 154 licensed childcare providers on the Peninsula, only seven participate in the DoD subsidy program. Only 24 childcare providers on the Southside participate. Private childcare providers also face high initial startup costs when trying to establish new care centers. **Request your support for several initiatives aimed at increasing childcare access for military families as well as expanding childcare capacity in general throughout the Commonwealth.**



- **Incentivize providers to participate in DoD fee assistance programs through state grants or tax credits.**
- **Provide new business grants (\$1M) to support the establishment of new childcare providers that support military families and offer priority enrollment for military children.**
- **Provide grants to childcare business providers for management software to support real-time visibility on childcare availability across the Commonwealth.**
 - **100% grant for MCCYN/MCCYN+ participating providers**
 - **50% grant for non-participating providers**
- **Funding to support Childcare Aware of Virginia's (CCAoVA) increased efforts to support military families in the Commonwealth and development of a WorkLife Solutions military-focused web search engine.**
 - **Integrate all available childcare providers (military, non-military) with school and housing data.**
 - **\$89K in startup development, then \$38K annually (+\$12K/yr to existing VDOE funding)**
 - **\$285K to increase provider participation in DoD fee assistance program, assist filling critical regional childcare gaps, survey existing childcare supply, recruiting and supporting additional providers.**

- **Wind Farm Permitting Deconfliction with DoD Operations:** Wind energy production in Virginia has the potential to help meet renewable energy goals in the Commonwealth. However, a locality issuing a permit for windfarm construction could have unintended consequences on military missions in Virginia. It is imperative that developers obtain coordination from the FAA and Department of Defense (DoD) prior to a locality issuing permits and allowing construction of a wind farm. This issue was also identified in the Virginia Regional Joint Land Use Study as potentially having detrimental effects to military missions in the Commonwealth. **Request your support for codifying the requirement for wind farm developers to obtain coordination from the DoD Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse prior to a locality issuing permits to construct a wind energy facility.**

- **Military Spouse Employment:** Military spouse careers are often interrupted by the frequent moves required of military members. A common barrier is the transfer of licenses or certifications from one state to another. Military spouse unemployment or underemployment can lead to retention and readiness issues as military members decide to leave the military to support their spouse employment and family economic needs. Additionally, service members are more likely to stay in Virginia when they leave the military if their spouse is employed with a good job in the Commonwealth. HRMFFA supports several initiatives to improve military spouse employment in Virginia.



- **Request the Commonwealth include military spouses in their Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Employment Grant program to incentivize hiring of military spouses. The grant program currently offers private employers \$1,000 for every eligible veteran hired up to \$10,000.**
 - **Increase the amount of V3 grant funding available each year to \$150,000. The V3 program was created in 2015 and funded at \$100,000 and that annual funding amount has not changed in 10 years. Increasing funding to \$150,000 would help keep pace with inflation and allow for grants to be awarded to more veterans and military spouses.**
 - **Virginia should join the remaining five interstate licensing compacts for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Dietitian, Massage Therapy, Teachers, and School Psychologists.**
- **Recurrent Flooding:** One need only look at a map of the Federal installations in Hampton Roads to realize most of them are on the water and susceptible to sea level rise, storm surge, and recurrent flooding. Department of Defense leaders in the Pentagon are also becoming more aware of environmental risks to installations in Hampton Roads and elsewhere. While the various installations are working to make themselves more resilient, 70 – 80% of their personnel live off base in the surrounding communities. Even if a base is protected from flooding, the mission will be negatively impacted if personnel cannot get there due to impassable roads or critical off-base utility systems are off-line due to flooding. **Virginia and Hampton Roads must address these concerns collectively to ensure the future viability of many of our federal installations.**
- **Request the Commonwealth provide \$200 million per year through the Commonwealth Flood Protection Program to assist localities with flood prevention efforts.**
- **Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) Priority Items:** The Department of Defense DSLO provides state policymakers with insight on priorities affecting military families and their quality of life. The initiative is part of the Department of Defense's efforts to identify and address the most pressing needs of service members and military families. Request support for implementing DSLO priorities that have not yet been addressed in Virginia to include:
- **Open Enrollment Flexibility:** Military families are at a disadvantage when it comes to enrollment options available to their children due to military-directed reassignments. **Request your support to ensure that school districts provide military families with flexibility when it comes to the enrollment options available to their children.**



- **Support for Military Families with Special Education Needs:** Highly mobile military children with special education needs are more likely to experience recurring educational disruptions. **Request your support to ensure timely establishment of comparable special education services upon enrollment in Virginia schools.**
- **State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence:** Addressing issues of sexual assault, domestic violence, abuse and harassment within the military is critical to ensuring a resilient and ready force. **Request your support for Virginia courts to consider Military Protective Orders (MPO) as evidence of immediate and present danger for preliminary protective orders. Additionally, require Virginia law enforcement agencies to notify the military entity who entered the MPO into the National Crime Information Center database when a law enforcement officer has probable cause that a military member violated an MPO.**

