
The Northern Virginia Back to Work Leadership Task Force advocates for the continued support of education and workforce training opportunities for Virginians during all phases of the ongoing economic rescue and recovery. We continue to meet the challenges our organizations face as a result of the spread of COVID-19, and we encourage the General Assembly to face those challenges with us. We all agree that the General Assembly has made substantial investments in our workforce training and education system. As tens of thousands of Virginians now find themselves out of work, continuing those investments is critically important to your constituents and our collaborative effort to restore the vibrant economy of Virginia.

Priorities for 2021 General Assembly Session:

1. Initial funding establishing the **G3 Program**: Gov. Northam's Get a Skill, Get a Job, Give Back program represents a critical opportunity for individuals who experience job loss or reduction during this crisis. G3 could reach 40,000 students across Virginia.
2. Support for **higher education**: institutions around the Commonwealth face sharp revenue reductions due to the pandemic. Please consider direct investment to support students' ability to afford to attend school.
3. Identify ways to **enhance dual enrollment and dual admissions** offerings in Virginia schools, such as: allowing subject matter experts to act as adjunct instructors in K-12 classrooms and create a registry of such experts; build cloud and cyber instructional capacity in K-12 and incentive such instruction; work with industry to expand work-based learning opportunities.
4. Funding for the **Tech Talent Investment Program**: Virginia is positioned to lead the way out of the crisis with record numbers of computer science graduates. Continued full funding for this program is central to our success.
5. Funding for **FastForward**: funding for Virginia's short-term credentialing program offered at community colleges, needs to be increased now in order to help Virginians seeking credentialing in fields like healthcare. Virginia Ready Initiative matching funds approved during the Special Session is helpful, and more opportunities should be created for individuals to take advantage of it.
6. Funding for **Virginia Employment Commission** modernization: unemployment insurance has been a lifeline to those who lost their jobs because of the pandemic, but without a modern VEC not all who need it can get it. This would be in addition to needed funding for the UI trust fund.
7. **Support for Childcare**: workers and students in need of childcare will need support, either directly or through state and local programs, in order to work or attend school during K-12 virtual learning. Inadequate childcare presents a significant threat to economic recovery.

About Back to Work

The Northern Virginia Back to Work Leadership Task Force was formed in April 2020. Its members include chambers of commerce, higher education institutions, workforce training providers, and economic development authorities. More information can be found at our website novabacktowork.com or by [emailing Clayton Medford](mailto:clayton.medford@northernvirginia.com), VP, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce.