

Special Session Update

RECAP

The Governor's proclamation issued on July 17th, summoned the members to commence a special session of the General Assembly on August 18th for the purpose of "adopting a budget based on the revised revenue forecast and consideration of legislation related to the emergency of COVID-19 and criminal and social justice reforms." Although there was discussion by the Senate as to limiting the number of bills to be introduced per member, ultimately neither body set a limit. The Senate Chairwoman of the Finance and Appropriations Committee, Janet Howell, did not permit Senate members to introduce budget amendments for consideration; however, the committee members themselves – more specifically, the conferees, will be drafting any amendments to the introduced Budget. The Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Delegate Luke Torian, did allow House members to introduce amendments to the Budget and followed the consideration process used during a regular session. Chairman Torian did request that members limit their requests to their top three priorities and did not require that the budget requests be in accordance with the subject areas of the Governor's proclamation.

Below is a statistical summary update of the status of the 407 bills and resolutions introduced during the session. Following the statistics table is a subject matter breakdown of bills that have advanced through the committee process and are now being heard by the full House and Senate.

THIS WEEK – (October 5-October 9 – Week 8):

With the December 30th deadline approaching for the state to spend the funds received through the Federal Stimulus Bill (CARES-ACT), Governor Northam appealed to the General Assembly this week to finish their work. As the prospect for any additional Federal stimulus money is now unlikely to be approved by Congress, the Governor sent out multiple announcements this week allocating \$200 million for K-12 education, \$30 million to support broadband projects and \$12 million dollars in rent and mortgage relief of CARES-Act funding while the House and the Senate were in budget negotiations. Much of the funding allocated in the Governor's announcements are included in the House and Senate budgets; however, the House and the Senate are seeking to spend the remaining dollars on budget line items related to unemployment insurance, utility debt forgiveness and support for the state tourism and recreation industries, which have been hit hard by the pandemic. The Administration would like more flexibility on how the funds are expended as the CARES-ACT only covers COVID-specific expenses. The Secretary of Finance is concerned that if all of the funds are spent in the budget, particularly referencing the House version of the budget, the Administration will have no flexibility to address any issue that arises.

In addition to budget conferences taking place this week, several bills where there is disagreement between the House and the Senate versions have advanced to a conference committee. Conference committee members are appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate made up of three members from each body. Leadership assigns bill conferees for each bill headed

into conference. Normally, the members of a conference committee meet briefly in each others offices or gather in the halls of the Capitol between floor sessions to work out the language of the bill. However, as this Special Session is largely being conducted in a virtual setting with the exception of Senate floor sessions, this may cause a delay in processing conference reports on each bill and get them back to the full body for a floor vote.

The House and the Senate will return to session mid-week next week to hold floor votes on bills that have advanced through the conference process and have final versions ready for floor votes as well as a likely vote on the final version of the budget likely to happen by the end of the week.

As the Special Session has entered its final phase, discussions have commenced between leadership of the House and the Senate regarding the logistics for the 2021 Regular General Assembly session. At this time, there is no final decision of whether the legislature will continue this hybrid virtual environment for the 2021 session.

Type	Introduced	Passed House	Passed Senate	Passed	Cont'd to next session	Failed	Pending	Approved	Vetoed
H.B.	149	39	31	20	0	30	99	0	0
H.J.R.	13	3	1	1	0	2	10	0	0
H.R.	122	118	0	118	0	0	4	0	0
S.B.	121	26	45	17	0	76	28	1	0
S.J.R.	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
S.R.	65	0	57	57	0	0	8	0	0
Totals	471	186	134	213	0	109	149	1	0

BUDGET:

<u>HB 5005</u> - <u>Torian</u> - Budget Bill.	Passed the House	Reported from Senate Finance with amendments – Being negotiated with House and Senate budget conferee members	10/07/20
<u>SB 5015</u> - <u>Howell</u> - Budget Bill.	Passed the Senate	Referred to House Appropriations Committee – Being negotiated with House and Senate budget conferee members	10/07/20

COVID:

HB 5028 - <u>Jones</u> - Workers' compensation; presumption of compensability for COVID - 19.	Passed the House Failed in Senate	(S) Passed by indefinitely in Finance and Appropriations (15-Y 1-N)	09/24/20
HB 5041 - <u>Head</u> - Nursing homes, certified nursing facilities, and hospice facilities; public health emergency, etc.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5046 - <u>Adams, D.M.</u> - Telemedicine services; originating site.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5047 - <u>Murphy</u> - Virginia Post-Disaster Anti-Price Gouging Act; manufacturers and distributors.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5048 - <u>Sickles</u> - Outbreaks of communicable disease of public health threat; posting of information about cases.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5050 - <u>Helmer</u> - Emergency Services and Disaster Law; powers and duties of Governor, purchase of PPE.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20
HB 5059 - <u>Willett</u> - Hospices, certain, home care organizations, etc.; immunity from civil liability, COVID- 19.	Passed the House and Senate	(G) Governor's Action Deadline 11:59 p.m., October 14, 2020	10/07/20
HB 5064 - <u>Price</u> - Virginia Residential Landlord & Tenant Act; landlord remedies, noncompliance with rental agreement.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20
HB 5068 - <u>Ayala</u> - Emergency relief payments; automatic exemption during a state of emergency.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20

HB 5087 - Tran - Unemployment compensation; extends date VEC is required to establish, etc., short-time compensation.	Passed the House and Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5093 - Watts - Emergency Services and Disaster Law; powers and duties of the Governor, executive orders, penalty.	Passed the House and Senate	(S) Senate committee, floor amendments and substitutes offered	10/09/20
HB 5106 - Cole, J.G. - Landlord and tenant; noncompliance with rental agreement, reporting negative credit information.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20
HB 5115 - Price - Emergency laws; civil relief, citizens furloughed or otherwise receiving reduced wages or payments.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5116 - Guzman - Public and private employers; required to provide eligible employees paid quarantine leave, etc.	Passed the House Failed in the Senate	(S) Passed by indefinitely in Commerce and Labor (14-Y 1-N)	09/16/20
SB 5025 - Newman - Emergency orders and regulations; orders adopted by the Board and Commissioner of Health, duration.	Passed the Senate Failed in the House	(H) Tabled in Health, Welfare and Institutions (13-Y 9-N)	09/17/20
SB 5039 - Marsden - Emergency Services and Disaster Law; powers and duties of Governor, purchase of PPE.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5042 - Kiggans - Nursing homes, certified nursing, or hospice facility; patient visitation, notice to family.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20

SB 5051 - Hashmi - Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act; temporary prohibition against landlord termination.	Bill Dead	(S) Rereferred to Finance and Appropriations	08/27/20
SB 5066 - Saslaw - Workers' compensation; presumption of compensability for COVID-19.	Bill Dead	(S) Senate committee, floor amendments and substitutes offered	09/09/20
SB 5080 - Barker - Telemedicine services; originating site.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5081 - Barker - Outbreaks of communicable disease of public health threat; posting of information about cases.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20
SB 5082 - Marsden - Hospices, certain, home care organizations, etc.; immunity from civil liability, COVID-19.	Passed the House and the Senate	(G) Governor's Action Deadline 11:59 p.m., October 14, 2020	10/07/20
SB 5088 - Ebbin - Virginia Residential Landlord & Tenant Act; landlord remedies, noncompliance with rental agreement.	In Conference between House and Senate	Bill negotiators named in House and Senate	10/07/20
SB 5090 - Dunnivant - COVID-19 virus; Commissioner of Health shall make information available to public on a website.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5095 - Dunnivant - Rapid diagnostic testing; availability to all essential workers.	Bill Dead	(H) Tabled in Health, Welfare and Institutions (13-Y 9-N)	09/17/20

SB 5106 - Lewis - Local land use approvals; extension of approvals to address the COVID-19 pandemic.	Passed the Senate	((H) VOTE: Passage (89-Y 5-N 1-A)	10/07/20
SB 5107 - McPike - Unemployment compensation; extends date VEC is required to establish, etc., short-time compensation.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) VOTE: Passage Emergency (75-Y 22-N)	09/25/20
SB 5109 - Chafin - Nursing home/assisted living facility employees/residents; priority for testing for COVID-19 virus.	Bill Dead	(H) Tabled in Health, Welfare and Institutions (13-Y 9-N)	09/17/20
SB 5117 - Deeds - Emergency Services and Disaster Law; powers and duties of the Governor, executive orders, penalty.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5118 - McClellan - Emergency Debt Repayment Plan; every utility providing electric, gas, etc., service to develop.	Bill dead	(H) Referred to Appropriations (language in the budget)	09/17/20

EDUCATION:

SB 5068 - Peake - Student safety drills and student health screenings; school boards to waiver drills & screenings.	Bill Dead	(H) Referred to Committee on Education	09/17/20
SB 5083 - <u>McClellan</u> - School boards; board required to post on its website the COVID-19 virus mitigation plan.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5100 - <u>Dunnavant</u> - Public schools; COVID-19-related absences.	Bill Dead	(H) Referred to the Committee on Education	09/17/20

SB 5101 - Dunnivant - Private school employees and volunteers; essential workers, personal protective equipment.	Bill Dead	(H) Referred to the Committee on Education	09/17/20
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ELECTIONS:

The State Board of Elections The State Board of Elections met on September 18th to certify the use of DemTech Centerpoint system electronic pollbooks.

HB 5103 - Sickles - Elections, Department of; appropriations to provide prepaid postage for return of absentee ballots.	Bill Dead	(S) Recommitted to Finance and Appropriations (language contained in SB5120 and budget)	09/10/20
SB 5120 - Howell - Elections, Department of; appropriations to provide prepaid postage for return of absentee ballots.	Signed by the Governor	(G) Acts of Assembly Chapter text (CHAP0001)	09/04/20

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM:

HB 5045 - Delaney - Inmate, parolee, probationer, detainee, or pretrial defendant, etc.; carnal knowledge.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(H) VOTE: Adoption (94-Y 2-N)	10/07/20
HB 5062 - Mullin - Criminal charges; dismissal on Commonwealth's motion.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5108 - Guzman - Criminal Justice Services Board and Committee on Training; change in membership & responsibilities.	Language included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(H) VOTE: Adoption (55-Y 41-N)	10/07/20
HB 5146 - Herring - Criminal records; automatic expungement for certain convictions, etc.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
HB 5148 - Scott - Earned sentence credits; max. of 4.5 credits may be earned for each 30 days served on certain sent.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20

SB 5007 - Morrissey - Criminal cases; sentencing reform.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5012 - Suetterlein - Virginia Freedom of Information Act; Virginia Parole Board member votes.	Bill Dead	(H) Tabled in Courts of Justice (13-Y 7-N)	09/22/20
SB 5013 - Stuart - Marijuana; possession, violations by an adult shall be prepayable.	Passed the House and the Senate	(G) Governor's Action Deadline 11:59 p.m., October 14, 2020	10/07/20
SB 5017 - Boysko - Correctional facility, local; clarifies definition.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5018 - Bell - Geriatric, terminally ill, or permanently physically disabled prisoners; conditional release.	Passed the House and the Senate	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5032 - Surovell - Assault and battery; penalty.	Bill Dead	(H) Passed by indefinitely in Courts of Justice (18-Y 1-N)	09/22/20
SB 5033 - Surovell - Court authority in criminal cases; prosecutorial discretion to dispose of a criminal case.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5034 - Boysko - Prisoners; conditional release, sentence credits.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5041 - Stuart - Concealed handgun permits; demonstration of competence, changes effective date.	Passed the Senate, but not heard in House Committee	(H) Referred to Public Safety	09/17/20
SB 5043 - Deeds - Police and court records; expungement of certain records.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5050 - Obenshain - Parole; notice and certification, monthly reports, discretionary early consideration.	Bill Dead	(H) Tabled in Courts of Justice (13-Y 7-N)	09/22/20

POLICE REFORM:

HB 5029 - McQuinn - Law-enforcement officer; failure to intervene in an unlawful use of excessive force, penalties.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(H) VOTE: Adoption (57-Y 39-N)	10/07/20
HB 5043 - Bourne - Mental health awareness response & community understanding serv. (Marcus) alert syst.; establishes.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
HB 5049 - Helmer – Law enforcement agencies; acquisition and use of military property.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
HB 5051 - Simon – Law enforcement officer or jail officer; notice to Criminal Justice Services Board of misconduct.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(H) VOTE: Adoption (79-Y 16-N)	10/07/20
HB 5055 - Herring – Law enforcement civilian review panels; localities required, on or before 7/1/2021, to establish.	Conference Report Received	(H) House committee, floor amendments and substitutes offered	10/08/20
HB 5058 - Hope - Marijuana and certain traffic offenses; issuing citations, etc.,	Passed the Senate	(H) Bill text as passed House and Senate (HB5058ER)	10/07/20
HB 5069 - Carroll Foy – Law enforcement officers; prohibition on the use of neck restraints, Class 6 felony.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	H) VOTE: Adoption (60-Y 36-N)	10/07/20
HB 5072 - Lopez – Law enforcement; Attorney Gen. authorized to file civil suit or inquire into any unlawful practice.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5090 - Hurst - Virginia Freedom of Information Act;	Bill Dead	(S) Passed by indefinitely in General Laws and Technology with	09/18/20

law-enforcement criminal incident information, etc.		letter (14-Y 0-N) – Bill Dead	
HB 5098 - Askew - Hate crimes; falsely summoning or giving false reports to law-enforcement officials, penalty.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Signed by the President	10/07/20
HB 5099 - Aird - Search warrants; prohibition on no knock search warrants.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
HB 5104 - Price - Law-enforcement officers, sheriff, etc.; minimum qualifications, disclosure of information.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
HB 5109 - Hope – Law enforcement officer training & qualifications; DCJS to develop uniform curriculum & plans, etc.	Language also included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(H) VOTE: Adoption (60-Y 36-N)	10/07/20
HB 5112 - Levine – Law enforcement officer; duty to render aid, duty to report wrongdoing by another officer.	Language included in SB5030 – Omnibus Bill	(S) Passed by indefinitely in Judiciary (10-Y 3-N)	09/16/20
SB 5003 - Stuart - Civil Rights and Policing, Commission on; established, membership, report, sunset provision.	Bill Dead	(H) Referred to House Committee on Rules	09/17/20
SB 5014 - Edwards – Law enforcement officers; officers to complete crisis intervention team training.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) Bill Title replaced 20201222D-H1	10/07/20
SB 5024 - Lucas – Law enforcement; Attorney Gen. authorized to file civil suit or inquire into any unlawful practice.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20
SB 5029 - Lucas - Marijuana and certain traffic infractions; possession, issuing citations.	Passed the House and the Senate	(H) Signed by the Speaker	10/07/20

SB 5030 - Locke - Policing reform; acquisition of military property, training of officers in de-escalation techniques.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5035 - Hashmi – Law enforcement civilian review boards; locality authorized to establish.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5038 - McPike - Mobile crisis co-response team programs; DCJS & DBHDS to establish throughout the Commonwealth.	In Conference	Bill negotiators named in the House and the Senate	10/07/20
SB 5052 - Reeves – Law enforcement agencies; body-worn camera systems.	Passed the Senate – language in Senate budget	(H) Referred to Committee on Appropriations	09/21/20

OTHER:

HB 5030 - McQuinn - Monuments and memorials for war veterans; authority of localities.	Passed the House	(S) Referred to Committee on Local Government	09/09/20
SB 5031 - Locke - Legal holidays; Juneteenth.	Passed the House and the Senate	(G) Governor's Action Deadline 11:59 p.m., October 14, 2020	10/07/20
SB 5036 - McPike - Alcoholic beverage control; local special events license, limitations on events, etc.	Passed the House and the Senate	(S) House amendment agreed to by Senate (36-Y 0-N)	10/07/20

OTHER KEY ITEMS:

House Appropriations Budget:

Committee Approved Amendments to HB5005 [here](#)

Committee Approved Budget [here](#)

House Appropriations Staff Presentation – Committee Adopted Amendments to the FY2021-FY2022 Budget (HB5005) [here](#)

Senate Finance Budget:

Committee Amendments to SB5015 Staff Presentation [here](#)

PRESS ARTICLES:

Looming deadline for CARES Act money sparks debate between Northam and General Assembly

Virginia Mercury – 10/9

How Virginia spends remaining coronavirus relief funds provided through the federal CARES Act has become a point of contention between Gov. Ralph Northam and the General Assembly — now in the final stretch of finalizing a two-year budget plan amid a special session that’s lasted for nearly two months.

Looming in the minds of many legislators is a [Dec. 30 deadline](#) set out in the federal stimulus bill...

House and Senate committees near informal agreement on budget, but Northam says he may not sign it

By MICHAEL MARTZ, Richmond Times-Dispatch (Metered Paywall - 7 articles a month)

General Assembly budget leaders say they are near an informal agreement on a revised two-year state budget, but Gov. Ralph Northam warned them on Wednesday that he would not sign the spending plans the House of Delegates and Senate approved last week without major changes to preserve the state’s flexibility to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Chesapeake Bay funding preserved in both state Senate and House budgets

By DAVE RESS, Daily Press (Metered Paywall - 1 article a month)

Before the pandemic hit state revenues, Gov. Ralph Northam called for multi-million-dollar increases in clean water projects to help the Chesapeake Bay. But even as the General Assembly cut other spending, those bay plans remain on the books. When he called the legislature into special session in August, seeking to revise the state’s two year spending plan to account for lower revenue due to COVID-19, Northam asked that the spending increases he proposed late last year to protect the bay remain in place.

Measure to expand broadband in rural Virginia faces uncertain future in budget negotiations

By AMY FRIEDENBERGER, Roanoke Times (Metered Paywall - 5 articles a month)

As the General Assembly works toward developing a final revised budget, lawmakers are facing pressure from cable companies over two sentences tucked within a budget bill aimed at expanding broadband in rural Virginia. The House of Delegates passed its budget bill last week that included a proposal for a pilot program for municipal broadband authorities to compete with the private sector for state grants to provide high-speed internet in hard-to-reach areas.

K-12 schools will receive additional \$220 million in federal aid, Northam announces

By CLAIRE MITZEL, Roanoke Times (Metered Paywall - 5 articles a month)

Virginia school divisions will receive \$220 million of additional funding toward operating schools during the COVID-19 pandemic from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Recovery and Economic Security Act, Gov. Ralph Northam announced Thursday. Approximately \$12.4 million will go to school divisions in the Roanoke and New River valleys.

Northam to send \$220 million to schools to cope with pandemic as state doles federal aid

By MICHAEL MARTZ, Richmond Times-Dispatch (Access to this article limited to subscribers)

Gov. Ralph Northam will distribute \$220 million in federal emergency aid to local school divisions across Virginia, including about \$27 million in the four biggest localities in the Richmond area, as the state ramps up efforts to spend money provided under the CARES Act to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The money for K-12 schools has been expected for more than three weeks, but Northam increased the amount from \$159 to \$175 per pupil, or an additional \$20 million, as divisions get better estimates of enrollment in a school year defined by uncertainty because of the public health challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Dominion won't disconnect customers despite end of state-ordered freeze

By DAVE RESS, Daily Press (Metered Paywall - 1 article a month)

Dominion Energy will not start cutting off power to people behind with their bills, even though state regulators say utilities may do so now. The electric monopoly said its aim is to help customers trying to cope with the pandemic and its financial hit to family and business budgets.

Virginia's unemployment trust fund to run dry next week, will seek loan from federal government

By KIMBERLY PIERCEALL, Virginian-Pilot (Metered Paywall - 2 articles a month)

The Virginia Employment Commission said Monday that the money it pays out in unemployment benefits to out-of-work Virginians will run out sometime next week. Joyce Fogg, a spokesperson for the agency, said VEC expects to apply for a loan from the federal government by the end of this week to shore up the fund. Fogg said out-of-work Virginians shouldn't notice any delay or impact to their payments as a result.

Virginia to get additional federal boost for Medicaid costs as state looks ahead to next budget

By MICHAEL MARTZ, Richmond Times-Dispatch (Metered Paywall - 7 articles a month)

Virginia will get additional federal emergency relief for Medicaid through the end of March on top of more than a half-billion dollars that the state saved in reduced spending in the last fiscal year, primarily because of an abrupt decline in use of medical services during COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar announced late Friday that the federal government would extend the public health emergency through late January, ensuring that the federal government will pay an additional 6.2% share of Virginia's Medicaid costs through March 31, state Medicaid officials told legislators on Monday.

JLARC: Low-performing public schools need more help from state

By KENYA HUNTER, Richmond Times-Dispatch (Metered Paywall - 7 articles a month)

Virginia's lowest-performing public schools need more help improving from the agency tasked with overseeing them, the state legislature's watchdog agency concluded in a report issued Monday. Auditors found the Virginia Department of Education is well-managed overall but needs more people supporting high-need schools, a more robust approach to addressing a statewide teacher shortage and diversity among senior staff, all 11 of whom are white, among other findings.

Manufacturers seek to block Virginia from joining carbon market in lawsuit

By SARAH VOGELSONG, Virginia Mercury

The Virginia Manufacturers Association is suing Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality and State Air Pollution Control Board over the state's revision of regulations that will allow it to join a regional cap-and-invest market for carbon. The suit, filed in Richmond Circuit Court Oct. 2, says DEQ followed an incorrect process in revising an existing carbon trading rule as well as claiming the new rule is "unlawful" and the association's members will be adversely affected by it.

Lack of local authority hampering Virginia cities' clean energy efforts, report finds

By SARAH VOGELSONG, Virginia Mercury

A legal principle embraced by Virginia that strictly curtails local powers is hampering cities from making progress on clean energy goals, a report from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy found. As a Dillon rule state — instead of a "home rule" one — Virginia bars cities and counties from exercising any powers not explicitly granted them by the state. That means that localities that want to experiment with new programs like stricter building energy codes or energy efficiency requirements can't do so without permission from the legislature, a process that can extend timelines by more than a year or cut off projects altogether.

New hospital data sheds more light on serious COVID-19 cases in Virginia

By KATE MASTERS, Virginia Mercury

From January to June this year, Virginia's oldest hospitalized COVID-19 patient was 103. But there were also 46 coronavirus hospitalizations among children younger than five out of a total of 22,508, according to new data from the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association — including infants under the age of one. With the exception of a few outliers, the data analysis — presented by the association during a Thursday webinar — highlights much of what's already known about the virus, which disproportionately impacts older patients and those with underlying health conditions.