

2012 BUDGET ISSUES FOR VIRGINIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Presentation by VALECO to the
Senate Finance General Government
Subcommittee

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CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS: OVERVIEW

- Five elected offices provided for in Va. Constitution: clerk of circuit court, commissioner of the revenue, Commonwealth's Attorney, sheriff, treasurer
- 625 principal officers
- Over 15,000 deputies
- State-supported, but funding cuts since 2002 have left localities funding larger and larger % of these offices' costs

ISSUE #1: NONREVERSION OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT \$

- Four of the five offices have programs legislatively created in 2002 to retain experienced deputies, promote professional development
 - Master Deputy Sheriff program
 - Career Prosecutor Program
 - Certified Treasurer and Commissioner programs for deputies and principal offices
- Funding frozen since 2008; hundreds of deputies are qualified but unfunded

REVERSION IS DESTROYING ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS

- 2010 budget language is now reverting (and thus eliminating) *existing* funding when positions turn over
- Hundreds of thousands of dollars have already been lost as a result of reversion.
- Proposed language amendments in each office would provide that *existing* funds do not revert, but rather remain available for qualified officers
- *No new funds required*

ISSUE #2: PAY INCREASE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES

- While state employees in recent years have received 3% bonuses and a 5% pay increase to offset retirement costs, constitutional officers have received *no pay increase for five years*.
- Inflation during this time has eroded the buying power of frozen salaries by 15%.
- State employees are slotted to receive another 3% this year.
- Treating constitutional officers differently from state employees is simply unfair. These constitutionally-mandated offices perform core governmental functions – from jails and law enforcement, to court records, to revenue assessment and collection.

5% PAY INCREASE EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2012

- Will help these employees – most of whom earn modest salaries – to begin to make up lost ground
- First-year cost: \$13.8 million
- Second-year cost: \$27.7 million
- Alternately, 3% raise would cost \$8.3 million (FY13) and \$16.6 million (FY14)