

2014 BUDGET ISSUES FOR VIRGINIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Presentation by VALECO to the
Senate Finance General Government &
Technology 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 16,000 deputies
- State-supported, but funding cuts since 2002 have left localities funding larger and larger % of these offices' costs

ISSUE #1: SALARY COMPRESSION RELIEF

- General Assembly provided salary “compression” relief to state employees last year, in recognition that years without pay increases have left experienced employees at or near the same pay levels as brand new employees.
- Constitutional office employees were not covered by the compression relief granted last year.
- On behalf of all five offices, we ask you to provide similar relief to long-serving constitutional office employees this year.

SALARY COMPRESSION RELIEF, *continued*

- Proposal
 - ✓ \$65 per year of service (\$70 for deputy sheriffs)
 - ✓ Capped at a maximum of 30 years
 - ✓ Minimum of five years of service required to qualify
- This would give constitutional office employees the same relief already provided to state employees

ISSUE #2: RETAIN FUNDING FOR ADDRESSING CAREER DEVELOPMENT “WAIT LISTS”

- 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 was frozen in 2008; hundreds of deputies are qualified but unfunded

CAREER DEVELOPMENT “WAIT LIST”, *continued*

- This number has come down; budget language last year permitted funds saved from retirements and departures to be used for new entrants, and allowed us to cover some on the wait list.
- Currently, however, hundreds of deputies remain on the wait list – they have fully qualified, but are unable to participate.
- The funding in the Budget Bill will take care of them – it is important to preserve that so that all deputies will be treated equally.

ISSUE #3: RETAIN & EXPAND REGRADES FOR LOWEST- LEVEL DEPUTIES

- As you have heard, the introduced Budget Bill provides salary regrade for lowest-level deputy sheriffs & deputy clerks – and second year of funding for a regrade for all Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys.
- These regrades are very important – these deputies are living at or near the level for public assistance.
- We ask that you keep the funding in the Budget Bill – *and* look favorably on budget amendments to add the lowest-level deputy treasurers and commissioners of the revenue, so that *all* deputies are provided this relief.