

# Agriculture and Forestry

The proposed amendments for the Agriculture and Forestry secretariat include \$11.1 million in net additional general fund dollars over the adjusted base budget. These additional amounts result in a total general fund appropriation of \$108.3 million for the Secretariat.

The largest single spending item is \$3.0 million GF each year to provide a state match for the local purchase of development rights programs. This program would be administered by the Office of Farmland Preservation in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Other amendments for VDACS include an additional \$185,000 each year to support funding for weights and measures inspections. No new spending items are proposed for the Department of Forestry. A total of \$3.7 million in GF savings is generated by continuing the reductions announced in October 2007. Also included is a proposal to merge the Department of Charitable Gaming into VDACS' Office of Consumer Services. As part of this proposal, 30 positions and \$2.6 million GF each year is shifted to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

- **Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**
  - *Merge the Department of Charitable Gaming.* Proposes transferring the responsibilities of the Department of Charitable Gaming along with the positions and related funding to the Office of Consumer Services. Included is \$2.6 million GF each year and 30 positions.
  - *Purchase of Development Rights Matching Grants.* Includes a proposal to provide funding for state matching grants to local purchase of development rights programs in the amount of \$3.0 million GF each year. This program would be administered by the Office of Farmland Preservation.
  - *Weights and Measures Inspections.* Proposes an additional \$185,000 GF each year to support the weights and measures program. Additional funds will help reduce the backlog of inspections due to the increasing number of devices to be inspected each year and fund equipment costs associated with a new site for the testing of large weighing devices.
  - *Governor's October 2007 Budget Reductions.* Continues the strategies announced in October 2007 for a savings of \$996,039 GF and 3 positions each year. A portion of this funding is back-filled with \$333,394 NGF each year. The major reduction strategies include eliminating one wage and two fulltime positions in the Department, reducing conference attendance and other discretionary travel, and eliminating funding for Hydrilla control.
- **Department of Forestry**
  - *Governor's October 2007 Budget Reductions.* Continues the strategies announced in October 2007 for a savings of \$781,000 in each year of the biennium. Savings

were generated by increasing the vehicle rotation period, reducing discretionary expenditures, and reducing energy consumption in accordance with the Virginia Energy Plan.

- ***Reduction to Reforestation of Timberlands.*** Reduces by \$72,184 GF each year the amounts provided to match industry funds for the reforestation of timberlands. This savings action will require overriding Code provisions setting out the matching requirements of this program.