INVESTING IN VIRGINIA’S NATURAL RESOURCES, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES, AND JOB CREATION

Virginia has many important natural resource programs, and its state agencies bear serious responsibilities to implement them in a manner consistent with the Constitutional mandate. By increasing appropriations to natural resources to two percent of the general fund, we will be able to make significant progress toward cleaner air and water, healthier soils, improved habitats for fish and wildlife, and more lands for Virginians to enjoy. We will also be able to accelerate Virginia’s recovery from the ravages of the pandemic and economic slowdown, and address long standing concerns over environmental injustice.

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UNDERSTANDING THE ALBEMARLE-PAMLICO WATERSHED AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

A significant part of Virginia lies in the Albemarle-Pamlico watershed and we have a responsibility to restore and protect the natural resources as well as the quality of life of the residents in this watershed. We also have an obligation to work together with our partners in North Carolina to plan effectively for the future of this beautiful and bountiful estuary.

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PROTECTING VIRGINIA WATERWAYS AND COMMUNITIES FROM FRACKED-GAS PIPELINES

Virginia has seen significant, harmful impacts to its waterways from fracked-gas pipelines. The Virginia General Assembly should prioritize accountability measures for polluters and strengthen protections for Virginia communities and waterways through stricter and more stringent review processes for interstate pipelines.

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REDUCING PLASTIC POLLUTION

Virginians’ health, communities, and natural areas are under siege from plastics. Plastics are now found in our air, water, and soil. Recycling has been overwhelmingly shown to not be a feasible solution. Our elected officials need to enact efficient waste reduction policies and encourage businesses as well as Virginians to reduce waste generation to protect Virginia residents, communities, and our environment from the scourge of plastic litter.

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Mark Swingle // Virginia Aquarium // mswingle@vbgov.com

ELIMINATING TOXICS TO IMPROVE HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Commonwealth should identify the risks posed by PFAS, 1,4-dioxane and other emerging contaminants, set drinking water standards that protect human health, and take steps to eliminate sources of contamination. Virginia should also inventory coal refuse piles and develop a remediation plan that safeguards our air, our water, and our soil.

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PROTECTING VIRGINIANS FROM HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL SPILLS

Both the West Virginia law on chemical storage tanks and Virginia’s existing law on oil storage tanks can serve as models for new legislation in the Commonwealth. Virginia should take action before it is faced with another catastrophic spill.

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