



# Advocacy and the American Rescue Plan

**Virginia First Cities Coalition**



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1. VFC Advocacy Survey Results
2. Special Session
3. Your City - prioritization of equity-related needs (public health, housing, community wealth building, Broadband affordability and access, transit, Pre-K-12 education)
4. Let's talk/what's on your mind?  
Questions & dialogue



# VFC SURVEY RESULTS

- 8 of 16 cities responded
- 5 broad categories
  - Economic development; Tax Policies to decrease burden on low income residents; Pre-K12 Education; Public Safety; Social & Human Services



# Economic Development

- #1: Broadband affordability
- #2: CDFI Fund to leverage funding for small business development
- #3: Main Street Program to support small business recovery
- #4: Enterprise Zone
- #5: Industrial Revitalization Fund
- #6: Brownfields



# Tax Policies – Low-Income Residents

- #1: Childcare tax credit at the state level
- #2: Increasing the standard deduction
- #3: Refundable EITC



# Pre-K-12 Education

- #1: Construction & modernization
- #1: Closing the achievement gap by adding a teachers aid to K-3 classrooms
- #2: One-time payment to reduce VRS teacher pool
- #3 Tie: Team teaching
- #3: Teacher & principal mentoring programs



# Public Safety

- #1: HB 599 increased funding
- #2: Gun violence prevention
- #3: Prisoner reentry programs & centers



# Social & Human Services

- #1: Community wealth building
- #2: Street homelessness, eviction diversion

(1 point difference between #1 & #2)



# Other/Suggestions

- Newport News suggested that there needs to be a funding stream to assist lower/middle income residents, particularly elderly with home repair.

*“People are living longer and many don’t have the financial capacity as they age to keep up the maintenance on their homes”*

# State ARPA Appropriations

- As you heard from Jim, the state is awash in excess revenues ... northward of \$1B
- State has \$4.3 billion in ARPA funds to distribute/appropriate. State also has Treasury guidance on how these dollars may be used:
  - respond to acute pandemic-response needs
  - fill revenue shortfalls
  - support communities that COVID-19 hit hardest



**BE TRANSFORMATIONAL**

**ONCE IN A GENERATION**



# 2021 Special Session II

Joint statement of Governor, General Assembly leadership, money committee chairs – 5 goals:

- **Help public health**
- **Help small businesses**
- **Help workers**
- **Help public schools**
- **Fully deploy broadband across Virginia**

# Prioritizing Your Equity-Related Needs

- Prioritizing how your city will/can use ARPA to address long-standing equity-related needs
- Talk to your citizens --- Hold public hearing(s), Get public comment memorialized
- Talk to your state legislative delegation. Let them know what your city/council priorities are and let them know about your process for arriving at priorities.
- Ask them how this can dovetail with state funds for maximum impact



# The Ask of You

- We know we are asking a lot of you
  - On the one hand: your local ARPA process and appropriation
  - On the other hand, letting VFC know how and where you'd like for us to advocate in the special session for state dollars to assist in your local efforts

**QUESTIONS / COMMENTS**