



January 23, 2022

Assembly Action on Industry Issues Upcoming

Action on issues important to association members will be important agenda items before the House and Senate in the coming weeks. Legislators will have just three weeks to complete work on bills in their house of introduction. Following is a summary of some of the issues we are working with on behalf of association members.

Skill Games

Senator John Bell of Loudoun County has introduced Senate bill 462 which would allow video gaming terminals in Virginia for the first time. VGT's are games of chance and are currently operating in states like Nevada and Illinois, where in many communities there is a mini casino on every corner. Those who support this bill have also added a provision to prohibit skill games, presumably to clear the field for themselves. It has long been a precedent in the General Assembly not to interfere in pending court cases, and the ruling that reinstated the skill games will not be subject to review until May. We oppose the VGT bill so long as it contains the prohibition on skill games.

Liquor Liability

For the first time in 20 years we have seen legislation to impose liability (HB984) on those who sell alcohol. Currently there are laws on the books to prohibit underage sales, mandate carding for those who may be under 21. Further ABC regulations mandate regular compliance checks and zero tolerance policy for underage sales. Penalties are high including license suspension and revocation. We have partnered with a wide variety of business and professional associations to defeat these bills. You can see our position paper here.

Motor Fuels

Delegate McNamara has filed legislation (HB 297) that would suspend the 5 cent per gallon tax increase that went to effect July 1 for one year. It is likely that some version of this bill will pass the House. However, the Senate will likely have another view of the issue, and Democrats there hold a 21-19 seat advantage. We have suggested that as an alternative, legislators should look at the provision of the 2020 fuels tax bill that ties future increases to the increase in the Consumer Price Index. In light of 2021's largest increase in CPI in 40 years, current law will mean an additional three cents added at the pump on July 1. This would put us very close to border state tax rates and diminish our competitive advantage that promotes interstate drivers to fill up in the Commonwealth.

Other Issues

There are a wide variety of other bills that we are focusing on and you may see the full list by [clicking here](#).