



September 23, 2020

Rebuild VA Extended

In July, it was announced that the Commonwealth would be launching a new grant program for small businesses and nonprofits called Rebuild VA. Rebuild VA has expanded its eligibility criteria to allow more small businesses to apply. The application is open and available [here](#).

Small supply chain partners of businesses forced to close under Executive Order 53 or 55, as well as businesses that received CARES Act funding, are now eligible to receive a \$10,000 Rebuild VA grant. Businesses that have received CARES Act funding must certify that they will only use the Rebuild VA grant for recurring expenses and that the grant will not be used to cover the same expenses as the other CARES Act funds.

Administered by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD), Rebuild VA has received over 3,000 applications. SBSD and its program partners, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Virginia Tourism Corporation, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, made the decision to expand eligibility criteria after analysis of eligible and ineligible applications received within the first 30 days of the launch.

More details about the program, including eligibility criteria, may be found at <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/rebuildva/>.

PMAA Urges Congress to Make Improvements to the Paycheck Protection Program

From PMAA

PMAA joined several associations in sending a letter to Congress in strong support for “The Paycheck Protection Program Small Business Forgiveness Act” (S. 4117) (H.R. 7777), sponsored by Senators Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) as well as Reps. Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) and Fred Upton (R-MI). The bill would streamline the forgiveness process for small businesses who received PPP loans of less than \$150,000 upon the borrower’s completion of a simple, one-page forgiveness document. Click [here](#) to read the letter.

PMAA also signed a letter in support of the “Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Small Business Enhancement Act” (H.R. 7894), which would provide businesses that have experienced a reduction in gross receipts of more than 20 percent as compared to last year with the opportunity to apply for a second PPP loan; permit businesses to use PPP loan funds

on protective equipment and COVID-19 testing expenses; allow businesses to receive their regular tax deductions for eligible expenses paid with PPP loan funds and allowing automatic forgiveness for loans under \$150,000 while maintaining the ability of the Small Business Administration (SBA) to audit those loans for compliance. Click [here](#) to view the letter.

Amherst County Cigarette Tax

On Tuesday, October 6th, the Amherst Board of Supervisors is expected to hold a first reading on a proposed new cigarette tax of \$.27 per pack. Draft language and the agenda for the meeting on October 6th have not yet been posted. A public hearing and vote to adopt is anticipated for October 20, 2020.

City Council Meeting Details:

--Date: Tuesday, October 6th

--Time: 3:00 PM

-- Location: Administration Building, 153 Washington Street, Public Meeting Room, Amherst, Virginia 24521

Arguments Against Adopting or Increasing Local Cigarette and Tobacco Taxes:

- Local cigarette and tobacco taxes often cause adult consumers to either travel to nearby communities or purchase some products online just to avoid the local tax.
- Tobacco is often purchased in conjunction with gasoline, food, beverages, and other items by adult consumers. Driving all of these purchases outside local jurisdictions because of high cigarette or tobacco taxes not only causes harm to local, taxpaying businesses, but local tax revenues suffer as well.
- Local cigarette and tobacco taxes encourage development and growth of illicit markets where underage compliance goes unchecked and governments derive no revenue.
- For example, New York City's high cigarette tax rate is the reason an estimated 60 percent or more of New York City tobacco sales occur outside legal channels. As a result of the illicit market, the city loses as much as \$900 million per year in revenue due, according to the Tax Foundation.
- With tobacco stores dependent on the sales of their products for virtually all of their profits and with convenience stores relying on tobacco sales for nearly 40 percent of in-store sales, a downturn in cigarette and tobacco sales would result in employee layoffs and store closures.

Take Action today:

1. *Contact your local legislators before the hearing:*
 - a. Call and email your elected officials (contact information below)
 - b. Go to the **NLAA Take Action Website: [VIRGINIA](#)**
 2. *Attend the hearing and speak out*
 3. *Notify other retailers and association members and encourage them to take action*
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Welcome New Members

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