



GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE



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2017 General Assembly Convenes

The Virginia General Assembly convened at noon today for a 45 day session scheduled to end on February 25th. This will be the final session in the existing General Assembly Building which is scheduled to be demolished in April with a new building built on the same site. For the 2018-2020 sessions the House and Senate will move across Capitol Square to space recently vacated by the Attorney General and Virginia Lottery.

We have already identified several bills that have been pre filed that will impact the industry. However, new legislation may be filed until a week from Friday, and past experience has shown that many controversial initiatives are filed at the last minute. We have learned that the road building industry is exploring the possibility of expanding the 2.1 percent local motor fuels tax beyond Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia. We also anticipate efforts to impose a floor on these regional taxes.

[House bill 2010](#) by Delegate Roxanne Robinson of Chesterfield County would allow the sale of Virginia lottery tickets on the internet for the first time. [House bill 1860](#) by Delegate Alfonzo Lopez of Arlington County would set up a storage tank fund for chemical tanks in excess of 5,000 gallons. It also contains language which would apparently allow owners of chemical tanks to access the Petroleum Storage Tank Fund for cleanups. It would be unacceptable to tap the fund to pay for non-petroleum releases.

As we have seen in previous sessions, budget shortfalls often result in attempts to increase fees on the industry. Items such as weights and measures fees, attempted raids on the petroleum storage tank fund, and the like, have occurred during previous shortfalls. While the governor did not propose industry specific fees, his budget does call for health inspection fee increases for food service establishments and we will need to closely monitor this process as negotiations occur.

We have already identified a significant number of other bills that will impact the industry. You can access that list [here](#). As in the past we may be calling upon you for assistance in contacting your local legislators. Those contacts are the key to successful advocacy during the session.