
VIRGINIA STATE BUDGET

2004 Session

Budget Bill - HB29 (Chapter 943)

Bill Order » Office of Commerce and Trade » Item 135

Virginia Tourism Authority

Item 135 (Not set out)	First Year - FY2003	Second Year - FY2004
Tourist Promotion (53600)	\$13,285,857	\$10,351,258
Tourist Promotion Services (53607)	\$13,285,857	\$10,351,258
Fund Sources:		
General	\$13,285,857	\$10,351,258

Authority: Title 2.2, Chapter 22, Article 8, Code of Virginia.

A.1. The Department of Transportation shall pay to the Virginia Tourism Authority \$1,000,000 each year for continued operation of the Welcome Centers. The Department of Transportation shall fund maintenance at each facility based on the agreed-upon service levels contained in the Memorandum of Agreement between the Virginia Tourism Authority and the Department of Transportation.

2. To the extent necessary to fund the operations of the Welcome Centers, the Virginia Tourism Authority is authorized to collect fees paid by businesses for display space at the Welcome Centers.

B.1. Out of the amounts for Tourist Promotion shall be provided \$3,100,000 the first year from the general fund for the cooperative advertising program matching grants and direct administrative expenses.

2.a. Out of the amounts provided for the cooperative advertising program, at least \$175,000 the first year from the general fund shall be used to market and promote Virginia's African-American heritage sites, programs, and events.

b. Out of the amounts provided for the cooperative advertising program, \$110,000 the first year and from Tourist Promotion \$93,500 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to support the "See Virginia First" cooperative advertising program operated by the Outdoor Advertising Association of Virginia. In fiscal year 2004, the Outdoor Advertising Association of Virginia shall provide a total of at least \$187,000 in promoting tourism in Virginia.

c. Out of the amounts provided for Tourist Promotion, \$200,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to the "See Virginia First" cooperative advertising program operated by the Virginia Association of Broadcasters. The "See Virginia First" program shall be operated under the guidelines in effect June 30, 2000.

3. Omitted.

4. Omitted.

5. Funds shall be distributed in accordance with the program guidelines and reporting requirements adopted by the Virginia Tourism Authority Board of Directors.

6. In allocating the available funding for the cooperative advertising program, the Virginia Tourism Authority shall develop a methodology for reviewing grant applications that ensures that the grant recipients' tourism marketing efforts are consistent with the state's tourism goals and mission. Factors that the Authority shall consider in its methodology include a return on investment from each grant award as well as the overall statewide impact of the advertising program and an increase in length of stay at Virginia tourist destinations. The Authority is directed to develop amended guidelines for allocating awards and consider input from the tourism industry in Virginia that includes representation from all geographical areas of the Commonwealth. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall report to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committee on its methodology, return on investment findings and amended guidelines by November 6, 2002.

C. Upon authorization of the Governor, the Virginia Tourism Authority may transfer funds appropriated to it by this act to a nonstock corporation.

D. Prior to July 1 of each fiscal year, the Virginia Tourism Authority shall provide to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees and the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget a report of its operating plan. Prior to September 1 of each fiscal year, the Authority shall provide to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees and the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget a detailed expenditure report and a listing of the salaries and bonuses for all Authority employees for the prior fiscal year. All three reports shall be prepared in the formats as previously approved by the Department of Planning and Budget.

E. The State Comptroller shall disburse the first year appropriation as follows: Twenty percent (20%) in the first month, fifteen percent (15%) in each of the second and third months, six percent (6%) in each of the fourth through the tenth months, and four percent (4%) in each of the last two months. The State Comptroller shall disburse the second year appropriation in twelve equal monthly installments. The Director of the Department of Planning and Budget may authorize an increase in disbursements for any month, not to exceed the total appropriation for the fiscal year, if such an advance is necessary to meet payment obligations.

F. Out of the amounts for Tourist Promotion shall be provided \$100,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year from the general fund to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy to develop the "African-American Heritage Trails in Virginia" program. Funds may be used to support research positions and to develop a database of African-American sites, as well as to promote and market the sites.

G. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall offer souvenir items for sale at the Bell Tower visitor information center in Capitol Square. Such souvenir items shall be stocked and available for direct purchase at the visitor information center. Net proceeds from the sale of souvenirs shall be used for Virginia Tourism Authority projects designed to increase tourism in the Commonwealth.

H. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by October 1 of each year on the status of plans for the events marking the 400th anniversary of the 1607 settlement at Jamestown. The report shall include a discussion of cooperative arrangements and plans of state agencies, institutions of higher education, and other entities, including, but not limited to, the Virginia Tourism Authority, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, the National Park Service, and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

I. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall report by December 1 of each year to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees on its core marketing and advertising programs. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the goals, objectives and strategies of the Authority's marketing and advertising programs; the media used and dollars spent for advertising and the effectiveness and efficiencies of each; the events and sites the Authority markets including the location of these events by region; the financial relationships between the Authority and its public and private partners; and other such relevant information.

J. Out of the amounts for Tourist Promotion shall be provided \$250,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year from the general fund for the Tredegar National Civil War Center, a national comprehensive museum and education center in the City of Richmond.

K. Upon completion of the Sam Snead Golf Trail, it is the intent of the General Assembly that the Virginia Tourism Corporation shall seek funds to specifically market and promote the Golf Trail. To that end, the Sam Snead Golf Trail shall consist of at least six courses with a capital investment of at least \$65,000,000 made in Virginia.

L. Out of the amounts provided for the cooperative advertising program shall be provided \$75,000 the first year for operating support for the Coalfield Regional Tourism Authority.

M. The Secretary of Commerce and Trade shall develop a plan to merge the operations of the Virginia Tourism Authority within the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. The Secretary of Commerce and Trade shall submit this plan to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by November 1, 2002.