2023 Special Session I

Budget Bill - HB6001 (Enrolled)

Bill Order » Office of Commerce and Trade » Item 126

Virginia Tourism Authority

Item 126	First Year - FY2023	Second Year - FY2024
Tourist Promotion (53600)	**$27,039,872**	~~**$23,914,872**~~ ***$24,511,872***
Tourist Promotion Services (53607)	$27,039,872	~~$23,914,872~~ *$24,511,872*
Fund Sources:		
General	$27,039,872	~~$23,914,872~~ *$24,511,872*

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

A.1. The Department of Transportation shall pay to the Virginia Tourism Authority $1,325,000 the first year and $1,425,000 the second year for continued operation of the Welcome Centers, of which $125,000 the first year and $225,000 the second year is for maintenance of the Danville Welcome Center. The Department of Transportation shall fund maintenance at each state Welcome Center 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. Upon authorization of the Governor, the Virginia Tourism Authority may transfer funds appropriated to it by this act to a nonstock corporation.

C. Prior to July 1 of each fiscal year, the Virginia Tourism Authority shall provide to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees and the Director, 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 Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees and the Director, 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.

D. The State Comptroller shall disburse the first and second year appropriations in twelve equal monthly installments. The Director, 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.

E.1. Out of the amounts in this Item, $3,225,000 the first year and $3,100,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for grants to regional and local tourism authorities and other tourism entities to support their efforts. From the grants provided from the amounts included in this paragraph, priority consideration shall be given to funding for the Daniel Boone Visitor Center, as well as $300,000 the first year and $300,000 the second year to the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority, and $50,000 the first year and $50,000 the second year for events sponsored by Special Olympics Virginia, $1,100,000 the first year and $1,100,000 the second year to the

Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority for the Spearhead Trails initiative, and $125,000 the first year for the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame.

2. Out of the amounts in this paragraph provided for the Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority, up to $25,000 the first year and up to $25,000 the second year from the general fund, shall be provided to support a peer-support program for Virginia veterans in partnership with the Spearhead Trails initiative. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Virginia Department of Veterans Services shall provide assistance in establishing such program upon the request of the board of the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority.

3. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the amounts in this paragraph provided for the Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority in the second year to support the Spearhead Trails initiative shall be provided in its entirety in the first quarter of the fiscal year. The Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority shall submit annual financial statements to the Virginia Tourism Authority on or before August 1, 2024.

F. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall place a high priority on marketing rural areas of the state.

G. Out of the amounts in this Item, $3,100,000 in the first year and $3,100,000 in the second year from the general fund is provided to supplement appropriations to promote Virginia's tourism industries through an enhanced advertising campaign. Of these amounts, at least $1,000,000 the first year and $1,000,000 the second year shall be used to support a cooperative advertising program to partner with private sector tourism businesses and regional tourism entities to advertise Virginia as a tourism destination. The state dollars shall be used to incentivize private and regional tourism marketing funds on a $1.00 for $1.00 basis whereby the Virginia Tourism Corporation shall enter into agreements to undertake joint advertising purchases to promote Virginia and specific facilities with private sector and regional partners.

H. Out of the amounts in this Item, $330,012 the first year and $330,012 the second year from the general fund is provided to promote and advertise tourism in Virginia. These amounts include $130,012 in the first year and $130,012 in the second year for a partnership operated by the Virginia Association of Broadcasters to advertise Virginia Tourism, provided the Association contributes a total of at least $390,036 in television and radio advertising value to promote tourism in Virginia in the first year and $390,036 in the second year. Also included in these amounts is $100,000 the first year and $100,000 the second year to promote Virginia Parks, and $100,000 the first year and $100,000 the second year to promote Virginia's wineries.

I. Out of the amounts in this Item, $497,544 the first year and $497,544 the second year from the general fund is provided to purchase media in the Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Baltimore, Maryland markets through a partnership operated by the Virginia Association of Broadcasters, in association with its affiliates in other states in the region, provided that the Association can obtain contributions of at least $1,492,632 the first year and $1,492,632 the second year in television, radio and station-related internet advertising value to promote tourism in Virginia.

J. Out of the amounts in this Item, $150,000 the first year and $150,000 the second year from the general fund is provided to support a tourism development initiative in the County of Henrico.

K. Out of the amounts in this Item, $25,000 the first year and $25,000 the second year from the general fund is provided to support the Carver Price Legacy Museum.

L. With such funds as are available, the Virginia Tourism Authority shall collaborate with "Opening Doors for Virginians with Disabilities" to maintain and update the Opening Doors for Virginians with Disabilities travel guide and establish a more user-friendly link to this information on the Virginia Tourism Corporation website home page.

M. Out of the amounts in this Item, $2,140,000 the first year and $2,140,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for grants to promote tourism in accordance with the provisions of § 2.2-2320.2, Code of Virginia.

N. Out of the amounts in this Item, $3,000,000 the first year from the general fund shall be provided to the City of Norfolk to support Sail250 Virginia, a national maritime and military project to commemorate the 250th anniversary of America's independence.

O.*1.* The Virginia Tourism Authority shall develop and maintain an educational website on sites in Virginia featured in the Green Book by Victor Hugo Green. This online tool shall include a comprehensive list of hotels, guest houses, service stations, drug stores, taverns, barber shops, and restaurants known to be safe for traveling Black Americans during the Jim Crow era; historical context on the importance of Green Book sites; and information for residents and visitors to the Commonwealth on how to access these places of historic significance. The Department of Historic Resources shall provide support and technical assistance to the authority in developing and maintaining this resource. This educational website shall be made publicly available on or before June 30, 2023.

2. Out of this appropriation, $97,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for the authority and the Department of Historic Resources (the department) to conduct a historic study describing the Green Book in Virginia by documenting surviving buildings. In conducting this review, the authority and the department shall develop an architectural survey to improve information for at least 60 existing Green Book properties. The authority and department shall complete this study and report the findings to the General Assembly on or before June 30, 2024. The authority is authorized to transfer all or part of these amounts to the Department of Historic Resources to complete this study.

P. The Virginia Tourism Authority shall provide technical assistance to the City of Danville on how best to plan for increased tourism in the Southside region due to infrastructure improvements at the Virginia International Raceway and the opening of a casino in the City.

Q. Out of this appropriation, $500,000 the second year from the general fund shall be used by the authority to develop a marketing and promotional campaign to increase visitation to the Carter Family Fold. The authority will develop, create, and manage the campaign and may coordinate with existing regional marketing organizations and other state tourism agencies to maximize the economic impact of this campaign.