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**TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION**

701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

**Education Committee Meeting**

Friday, January 8, 2021  
1:30 o'clock p.m.

(Electronic Conference Call Meeting)

1     APPEARANCES:

2     Ms. Rebecca Coleman, Chairman

3     The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird

4     Ms. Gretchen Clark

5     Mr. Joel Cunningham

6     Dr. Alexis I. Ehrhardt

7     The Honorable Franklin D. Harris

8     The Honorable Chris L. Hurst

9     The Honorable Louise Lucas

10    The Honorable Sam Rasoul

11    Ms. Sandy Ratliff

12    Mr. Cecil E. Shell

13    The Honorable Roslyn C. Tyler

14

15    COMMISSION STAFF:

16    Mr. Evan Feinman, Executive Director

17    Mr. Andy Sorrell, Deputy Director

18    Ms. Joyce Knight, Administrative Supervisor

19    Mr. Michael Kaestner, Grants Program Administration Director

20    Ms. Michele Faircloth, Grants Assistant - Southern

21    Ms. Jessica Stamper – Grants Assistant - Southwest

22    Ms. Sarah K. Capps - Grants Program Administrator - Southern

23    Ms. Sara G. Williams, Grants Program Administrator - Southwest

24    Ms. Stephanie S. Kim, Director of Finance

25

1     COMMISSION STAFF *(Continued)*:

2     Ms. Stephanie S. Kim, Director of Finance

3     Mr. Jordan Butler, Public Relations Coordinator

4

5     COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION:

6     Ms. Elizabeth B. Myers, Assistant Attorney General

7         Richmond, Virginia 23219

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1 January 8, 2021

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3 DELEGATE AIRD: Good afternoon, everyone, thank  
4 you so much for joining us. I'm going to go ahead and have my  
5 time being at 1:32, I'm going to go ahead and call the Education  
6 Committee to order.

7 And, Andy, would you go ahead and give us the  
8 remote meeting rules and regulations.

9 MR. SORRELL: All right, thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
10 I'm going to read the brief electronic meeting ground rules. Due  
11 to the Governor's declared state of emergency, this meeting is  
12 being held electronically without a quorum of the public body  
13 physically assembled at one location. The nature of this  
14 pandemic makes it impractical and unsafe to assemble a quorum  
15 in a single location.

16 In addition, the purpose of this meeting is to discuss  
17 or transact business that is statutorily required to continue the  
18 operations of the Commission. Public notice of this meeting was  
19 provided on both the Commonwealth's calendar and the  
20 Commission's website contemporaneously with the notice  
21 provided to the Commission members. A recording of this  
22 meeting, as well as the minutes, shall be posted on the  
23 Commission's website as soon as practical after the conclusion of  
24 this meeting. The agenda and all other meeting materials can be  
25 found on the Commission's website, [www.revitalizeva.org](http://www.revitalizeva.org). There

1 will also be an opportunity for public comment both at the  
2 beginning and the end of this meeting.

3 Please remember to mute yourself if you are not  
4 speaking. If you are only participating by phone, you can press  
5 Star 6, and you can mute or unmute yourself.

6 All participants are unmuted at the start of the  
7 meeting, and participants will be returned to mute if background  
8 noise or disruptions occur. If repeated disruptions occur,  
9 participants will be removed from the meeting.

10 As mentioned, public comment will be provided at the  
11 beginning and at the end of the meeting. And if a member of the  
12 public desires to speak or address the Commission, please  
13 reserve your questions until this portion of the meeting.  
14 Participants may also use the raised-hand feature or send a  
15 comment in the chat box feature of the electronic meeting  
16 program, and the comment will be read during the public  
17 comment portion of the meeting.

18 At the time of public comments, please state your full  
19 name, location, and the organization that you may represent.  
20 Please keep your comments to two minutes each. Thank you  
21 very much, and I turn it over to the Chair.

22 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you, Andy for that.

23 At this time, Evan, may we have the roll call.

24 MR. FEINMAN: Certainly, Madam Chairwoman.

25 Ms. Coleman.

1 Delegate Aird?  
2 DELEGATE AIRD: Present.  
3 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Clark.  
4 MS. CLARK: Here.  
5 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Cunningham.  
6 Dr. Ehrhardt.  
7 DR. EHRHARDT: Here.  
8 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Harris.  
9 MR. HARRIS: Here.  
10 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Hurst.  
11 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Lucas.  
12 SENATOR LUCAS: Here.  
13 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Rasoul.  
14 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Ratliff.  
15 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell.  
16 MR. SHELL: Here.  
17 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Tyler.  
18 DELEGATE TYLER: Here.  
19 MR. FEINMAN: You have a quorum, Madam  
20 Chairwoman.  
21 DELEGATE AIRD: At this time, you should have  
22 received the minutes from the September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 that were  
23 included in your packet. If there are no questions or corrections,  
24 I'd like to entertain a motion to approve them.  
25 MR. SHELL: So moved.

1 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you, Cecil. I have a motion  
2 to approve. Is there a second?

3 MR. HARRIS: Second.

4 DELEGATE AIRD: Okay, great, per Mr. Harris  
5 seconded that. It's moved and properly seconded. Are there  
6 any questions or additional feedback? All those in support of  
7 approving the minutes, please say aye. (Ayes). Any opposed?  
8 (No response). Thank you, those minutes are approved.

9 As stated by Andy, we'll go ahead and allow for public  
10 comment at this time, and then later on in the meeting, if  
11 necessary. But is there public comment? Okay, I am not getting  
12 a request for public comments.

13 Now, we will move to the Fiscal Year '21, Workforce  
14 Financial Aid Applications, and I'm going to ask that Mike walk us  
15 through this portion of the agenda.

16 MR. FEINMAN: Mike, you're muted.

17 MR. KAESTNER: Sorry about that, thanks. Good  
18 afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the Committee, I'm Mike  
19 Kaestner, I'm the Commission's Grants Program Director. And as  
20 the Chair mentioned, I will be proceeding with Workforce  
21 Financial Aid, the Staff recommendations for the 2021-22 school  
22 year.

23 As a little background, in the past, the Commission  
24 would act on Workforce grants and work with Staff to allow tools  
25 to plan further in advance and communicate with prospective

1 students more effectively. We moved to action on this per the  
2 January meeting, so this happened one meeting earlier in the  
3 year.

4 For background on the program, the goal of the  
5 Workforce Financial Aid Program is to reduce the financial burden  
6 that might prevent students in the region from obtaining  
7 additional training and education and the object is to help create  
8 employment outcome for long term. The related goal is to  
9 develop a special labor force so that lawyers in the Footprint can  
10 recruit solid employees. Funding through the Workforce Aid  
11 Program is last dollar funding, meaning that Commission funds  
12 can be spent only after all other funding sources have been  
13 exhausted first.

14 In addition, just like all other Commission grants,  
15 there is a one-to-one matching funds requirement.  
16 Approximately four years ago and prior to my time on the  
17 Commission, the Education Committee and the Commission  
18 adopted five priority funding areas for Workforce Financial Aid  
19 grant funds.

20 If you turn to your Committee packet, you'll see it's  
21 underlined Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in about the middle of the  
22 first page there. Priority 1 programs are all certifications and can  
23 be completed in six months or fewer. Priorities 2 and 3 are  
24 STEM-H, and Advanced Manufacturing programs working toward  
25 a degree or certificate, for completion within a year respectively.



1 Priorities 4 and 5 are other non-STEM-H or Advanced  
2 Manufacturing programs that can be completed within a year or  
3 more than a year respectively. Priority 4 and 5 programs are a  
4 lower priority because they can include general study programs,  
5 among others, where students transfer to a four-year college  
6 outside of the Footprint. And so there is, well, that's a laudable  
7 goal. And students in the Footprint obtain additional education,  
8 it's a wonderful thing. The Commission has its limited resources,  
9 and the Commission was concerned that funding those lower  
10 priority programs risk financing, which have been called a brain  
11 drain from the region.

12 This year, we took a slightly different approach that  
13 was intended to encourage schools to share the Commission's  
14 prioritization of the five different program areas, priority areas of  
15 the Commission. We require schools to allocate a funding to  
16 support eligible students and higher priority programs or allocate  
17 funding for lower priority programs. The schools still could  
18 allocate funding to Priority 4 and 5 programs but only in targeted  
19 high demand fields. Those could not just really be a catch-all.

20 For schools where Staff is recommending funding for  
21 Priority 4 and 5 programs, we work with those schools to target  
22 funding for programs that allow graduates to seek employment in  
23 certain high demand occupations. Many schools provided labor  
24 market data that show that there is a demand for graduates in  
25 those fields. For example, some schools provided data showing

1 us the amount of job postings for certain types of jobs. Other  
2 schools explain their prediction that they would be seeing in  
3 demands for certain types of positions to take upward because of  
4 local circumstances. For example, one school shared that the  
5 county in its service area is nearing completion of the  
6 construction of a jail and expect to hire at least 50 new  
7 administration of justice graduates in the criminal justice system,  
8 a high demand occupation for that school.

9 The packet explains how funding will be allocated  
10 concerning the five priorities and schools' predictions of the  
11 number of students that will be served. We had a total of 12  
12 applications, of those 12, five schools requested to allocate  
13 funding through Priority 4 and 5 programs. For those five  
14 schools, there's a list of one or two high demand occupations in  
15 corresponding programs below their table. In the case of New  
16 River Community College, the list of high, of eligible high demand  
17 occupations for Priorities 4 and 5 programs is still under  
18 development, and the Staff recommendation requires the  
19 Executive Director to approve those programs in advance. With  
20 that, I'll go ahead and read the Staff recommendation.

21 Staff recommends the request as summarized in the  
22 meeting packet for last-dollar Workforce Financial Aid for the  
23 Tobacco Region residents in the 2021-22 school year, contingent  
24 on the following:

25 Grantees must provide at least dollar-for-dollar

1 matching funds;

2 Grantees may not seek reimbursement for students  
3 enrolled in Priority 4 and 5 programs in excess of the approved  
4 amounts or for programs not listed. Any unused amounts  
5 allocated to Priorities 4 and 5 may only be reallocated to higher  
6 priority programs, Priorities 1, 2, or 3;

7 If no High Demand Occupations are listed when  
8 Workforce Financial Aid funding is allocated to Priority 4 and 5  
9 programs, the Executive Director must approve any programs  
10 before that grantee may seek reimbursement for such programs,  
11 and the grantee must submit updated results and budget  
12 worksheets for Staff's approval before the Commission will  
13 execute the grant agreement;

14 Grantees must report, on an individual student basis,  
15 the full distribution of all financial aid and/or other funding used  
16 to meet that student's financial responsibility to the grantee.  
17 This documentation may be marked confidential to protect  
18 student privacy, and the Commission asks that any other data  
19 that might make documentation sensitive, such as Social  
20 Security numbers, student health, or disability status, be  
21 redacted;

22 Finally, grantees must report the program/major for  
23 each scholarship recipient in order for the Commission Staff to  
24 validate eligibility under the approved priorities.

25 With that, Madam Chair, that completes my report,

1 I'm happy to answer any questions. You'll note I did not, I  
2 elected not to go through each of the tables for the 12 schools,  
3 maybe I spent too much time on that, and I think it's self-  
4 explanatory, but if you or any other members have any  
5 questions, I'm happy to answer those.

6 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much, Mike, for that  
7 information. The members can ask questions. Dr. Ehrhardt has  
8 indicated she has several questions, so we'll begin with her.

9 DR. EHRHARDT: Thank you. Just a couple of  
10 questions about the request from NCI. I think it's 3720. I  
11 noticed that the original request had changed, and so two  
12 questions, and I'm sure that the Staff has considered, but I'd  
13 love to know more about, one is the programs that are being  
14 offered or that would be offered are offered currently through the  
15 Virginia Community College system or something similar,  
16 whether locally or online, and so I'm curious about why, I guess  
17 I'm just hyper-aware of duplicating services at a time particularly  
18 of limited resources, so curious as to why we would duplicate  
19 that.

20 And, secondly, I don't know a lot about, but I don't  
21 think they're originally accredited, and my concern there is while  
22 that certainly the majority of students in my professional  
23 experience who go to get those kinds of certifications probably  
24 don't go on to get further degrees or other credentials. These  
25 students would have no chance of doing so unless they wanted to

1 start from scratch. Certainly if they wanted to continue at a  
2 VCCS institution or many of our public and private universities.

3 So, those are kind of the two concerns, Mike, if you or  
4 one of your colleagues could address this, I'd just like to hear a  
5 little more about it.

6 MR. KAESTNER: Yes, Dr. Ehrhardt. For a little higher  
7 level background, so, this is the first year, is my understanding,  
8 that New College Institute has submitted an application and been  
9 considered for funding for the Workforce Financial Aid Program.  
10 They've always been eligible to apply, but this is the first time  
11 we're seeing an application.

12 Going back to your question, Dr. Ehrhardt, you'll  
13 notice that the amount of the funding was reduced from the  
14 original request and, Sarah Capps, lean on you to support me  
15 here. I believe initially NCI received funding also for the CDL  
16 program, the truck driver training program, and we're well aware  
17 that there are community colleges in the area that offer that.  
18 And as you're saying, there's concern about duplication. And  
19 there's a concern about the initial offer and capital cost to  
20 establish a program like that and so forth.

21 So, discussing it briefly with NCI, they were very quick  
22 to understand our concern and to remove the course and the  
23 funding request that they believed would be allocated for the CDL  
24 Program. That led to health-care-related programs, the certified  
25 dental assistance program and the certified billing and coding

1 specialist program. And this would be considered STEM-H  
2 programs in favor of that STEM-H. I understand there's a  
3 significant demand for folks in coding, mental coding in the  
4 Footprint and in the NCI service area, and so believe that they  
5 would certainly help the health care providers in the area to grow  
6 more effectively and support them.

7 Sarah, you may be better in tune to, I believe you  
8 have had some discussions with NCI about accreditation and the  
9 curriculum. Are you able to address that, Dr. Ehrhardt's  
10 concerns?

11 MS. CAPPs: During our review process, Dr. Ehrhardt,  
12 we did inquire with New College about the curriculum and the  
13 course work and the credential certifications and questions  
14 concerning health care and certificates and they did provide us a  
15 lot of detailed information, including links to the nationally  
16 recognized certificates. I don't know if we have Karen Jackson  
17 with us today, but I do think New College would probably be the  
18 best organization to specifically address the certification body  
19 and the credentials.

20 MS. JACKSON: Sarah, this is Karen, I am here.

21 Members of the Commission, Karen Jackson, I'm the  
22 Interim Director.

23 MS. CAPPs: Yes, go ahead, Karen.

24 MS. JACKSON: Okay, thank you, ma'am. When we  
25 looked at these programs, the differential between what is

1 offered at the Virginia Community College System and what  
2 we're proposing to offer is the number of credit hours. The  
3 program offers group insurance, culminates in a nationally  
4 recognized certification. That's not the case, we look specifically  
5 at what Patrick Henry was offering, and that was a differentiator.

6 The difference, also, is that the Patrick Henry Program  
7 is a 300-hour program, and the program with Ventura is a 900-  
8 hour program. So, there's a difference in the amount, and I'm  
9 going to say sophistication, that's no disrespect to Patrick Henry,  
10 this is in respect to the number of hours that are involved in the  
11 preparation, and these simply are able and trained to sit for the  
12 national certification.

13 So, we felt that it was significantly, from what was  
14 being offered at Patrick Henry, we're very sensitive, and we've  
15 heard both Mike and Sarah say that, you know, the minute they  
16 brought up CDL, and now we think we've got enough of it, we're  
17 out. So, we're very sensitive to the noncompetition piece, but  
18 this is an additional level of challenge for those in the region, and  
19 it's also a different level of certification that's currently not  
20 available. And so, we felt that that was significantly different  
21 enough and we felt like it was necessary enough based on what  
22 we've done recently of the regional roundtable, around health  
23 care with the foundation and the need for these types of folks is  
24 clear. And so, we felt like there was significant differentiation  
25 enough for us to warrant to come to this program and ask for the

1 funding. As you heard, this is the first time that NCI has come  
2 before you asking for this funding. We wouldn't be here if we  
3 hadn't done what we feel to be the due diligence on not only the  
4 differentiators, as well as the demand for these careers.

5 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much. Dr. Ehrhardt,  
6 does that satisfy your question?

7 DR. EHRHARDT: It does make me feel better about  
8 the content of the program. I still do have some concerns about  
9 the accreditation. Madam Chair, I know you probably  
10 experienced a SACSCOC accreditation process once or more in  
11 your lifetime. I've survived three of them at two different  
12 institutions. And there's a reason for their rigor.

13 And so, I've also sat with students who have gone  
14 through a nationally accredited program and sat with them as  
15 they were in tears in my office because we recognize nothing  
16 that they had done. So, I'm comfortable moving forward. Would  
17 love to know that, and this is not, frankly, common practice with  
18 a lot of these institutions that they make students aware of that  
19 at the beginning. So, I'm comfortable moving forward and would  
20 support it, knowing that there's going to be some real counseling  
21 done on the front end for those students, that they have an  
22 understanding that this is a career preparatory program and not  
23 something that would lead perhaps to continuing education.

24 MS. JACKSON: Yes, ma'am, this is Karen, again,  
25 we're comfortable providing that counseling. This was meant to



1 be, as I said previously, it's meant to be exactly what you just  
2 said, it is meant to be a credential that can get them into the  
3 workforce or further their presence in the workforce and not  
4 necessarily being a stepping stone toward a more traditional two  
5 or four year academic pursuit. So, I will guarantee personally  
6 that that will be made abundantly clear to any and all who apply.  
7 I appreciate your consideration.

8 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much. Thank you  
9 both for the dialogue. I think those were great points raised, and  
10 one thing that we have to be extremely cautious about. Thank  
11 you for that.

12 Are there other questions and/or feedback relative to  
13 any of the projects that are listed before us or the Staff  
14 recommendations generally?

15 DELEGATE HURST: Madam Chair, it's Chris.

16 DELEGATE AIRD: Delegate Hurst.

17 DELEGATE HURST: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mike,  
18 can you walk me through with what's going with the New River  
19 Community College? That's the institution that has red on the  
20 page, and I will preface with what you have to say with this  
21 which is that I can appreciate wanting to be very targeted in the  
22 program selection that we have, but what we've done in the New  
23 River Valley, not just in Floyd County, but the entire Footprint for  
24 New River Community College has been a public private  
25 partnership to guarantee community college for all graduating

1 high schoolers. This would be, I think, a real wrench in the gears  
2 if we try to change with what's going on with a lot of these  
3 students who would be impacted by some of this programmatic  
4 change that is being proposed.

5 Mike, please tell us what is necessitating all this red  
6 ink on the page.

7 MR. KAESTNER: Of course. Delegate Hurst and  
8 Madam Chair, thank you for that question and for those of you  
9 holding your packet, this is page 33 of the entire meeting book,  
10 page 8 of the Education Committee packet. As Delegate Hurst  
11 pointed out, you will see some red and some strike-through on  
12 the page there, focusing on the second from the left column, TRC  
13 funding requested and turning down and looking at the next to  
14 last rows for Priorities 4 and 5, you'll see that we struck out the  
15 9300 in each Priority 4 and 5, and reduced that funding, I  
16 believe, by \$7,500 and increased the funding correspondingly for  
17 Priorities 2 and 3 programs by that corresponding amount,  
18 \$7,500.

19 During the course of Staff review and working with  
20 New River College, New River's representative called us today  
21 and indicated that among other professions, given the type of  
22 year that we've all experienced in 2020, mental health is a  
23 serious issue, and there should be additional investments in  
24 these programs. Discussion among the Staff and other  
25 leadership, and we thought about that, and said mental health

1 certainly qualifies in H, in STEM-H, and so, frankly, time was  
2 short.

3 So we, without having tremendous insight into New  
4 River's offerings, had to allocate some funding there, believing  
5 that if New River, in fact, had mental health offerings, those  
6 would qualify as 32 and 33 programs, and represented a need  
7 and shifted some funding there.

8 The remaining red ink you see on the page with the  
9 TDDs, it's not anything bad, really was just to be fair to New  
10 River. All those other cells reflect New River's estimates of the  
11 numbers of students that would be served with that funding, and  
12 so it truly would not be our place to really guess what New River  
13 would do and what outcomes they would be able to achieve if we  
14 shifted the funding around like that. Not calling New River out or  
15 saying anything is wrong, it's just if, in fact, funding is shifted for  
16 Priorities 4 and 5 up to 2 and 3, it's going to result in a different  
17 number of students graduating from these programs or  
18 participating.

19 Taking a step back, the bigger issue that I think in  
20 reference to Delegate Hurst was the impact that this may have  
21 on New River's ACE program, I believe it is called, and that's a  
22 program that graduates from Floyd County High School, and it's  
23 my understanding it's essentially a need-base program and  
24 students who wish to attend New River effectively get a full  
25 scholarship with Commission dollars and other funding sources to

1 attend the first two years, a two-plus-two program to start off at  
2 New River and transfer to a four-year school.

3 A number of things for recent high school graduates  
4 very well may participate and may enroll in programs that line up  
5 with the Commission's priorities. They very well may do, you  
6 know, if a program that falls within STEM-H, but some don't, and  
7 there's income overlap between the Commission's Workforce  
8 Financial Aid Program. And this isn't meant to be derogatory,  
9 but a general education scholarship program, but there's not  
10 complete overlap. And so going back to four years ago when the  
11 Commission said it's five funding priorities. It intended for those  
12 priorities to be in ranked priority order. We felt that we wanted  
13 to encourage New River to share priorities and to focus its  
14 funding a little more narrowly than it wanted to.

15 I think initially New River was proposing to fund, and I  
16 may be corrected here, I believe it was about 12 to 15 different  
17 programs, and you'll see some of the other schools that we  
18 worked with, had narrowed that down to two or three. If the  
19 Staff recommendation is supported here, we were still leaving  
20 the door open to funding a portion of the money that New River  
21 was requesting for the Priority 4 and 5 programs just in a smaller  
22 amount, and we certainly look forward to working with New River  
23 to identify which particular programs would be covered.

24 On a related note, I was also excited to learn that,  
25 and I understand that ADP recently announced a financial award

1 to New River Community College, I believe for \$50,000 to  
2 support New River's Ace Program. I can't speak to whether  
3 that's only for Floyd County students or if it's for a broader  
4 service area, but was happy to hear that there are other funders  
5 out there that are willing to step in and fund New River's good  
6 work.

7 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chairwoman, if I could just  
8 share one additional thing, I apologize for dropping of the  
9 meeting a little earlier, I had a technical glitch. We try to be as  
10 flexible as we can, and particularly in service of making projects  
11 work, we will use the leeway that we are afforded and grateful to  
12 be afforded by the Commission, but in instances like this, where  
13 the Commission has spoken really clearly and said these are our  
14 priorities in this order, I don't believe the Staff really would  
15 recommend a deviation from that, I just don't think that's our  
16 role.

17 The Commission told us this is what we want, so we're  
18 obliged then to recommend grantee action that complies and  
19 follows those prioritizations, the priorities that the Commission  
20 has laid out. When a grantee deviates, we bend as far as we  
21 can, which is to say we'll put a pin in it and we'll continue to work  
22 with them as long as they can come around to the rules that the  
23 Commission has laid out and we can approve that and we can't  
24 really go any farther than that on our own.

25 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much, Evan, I want to

1 thank you and Mike for that concept, we know the priorities have  
2 the data behind them.

3 Delegate Hurst.

4 DELEGATE HURST: What have been the past awards  
5 for New River Community College, and have there been similar  
6 stipulations to them for past funding of Floyd County.

7 MR. KAESTNER: In short, no. This is the first year  
8 that the Commission has taken the approach of encouraging all  
9 schools, not just New River, to follow the Commission's five-rank  
10 priority program areas. In the past, there's an encouragement,  
11 and then funding would be allocated across the programs, they'd  
12 be reflected in their applications, and then it would just be a  
13 matter on the back end.

14 Sara Williams and Sarah Capps, feel free to step in  
15 and supplement this, and waiting as reimbursement requests  
16 would come in. And sometimes funding would be shifted from  
17 higher priority categories than the lower priority categories after  
18 the fact. And we would only learn about that after the fact.

19 So, in effect, there had not been a rigorous effort to  
20 cause schools to narrow the focus and to come up with a way to  
21 allocate funding that lines up with our priorities.

22 MR. FEINMAN: Mike, I apologize, Madam  
23 Chairwoman, since I joined the Commission, which at this point  
24 was five years ago, there has been sort of a general finger  
25 wagging at the community colleges regarding their compliance

1 with the Commission's conditions, and that began kind of with a  
2 wink and a smile, but over the past five years, it has grown  
3 increasingly stern, and I think this past year we did try to draw a  
4 line in the sand and say, listen, it is going to be required that as  
5 the recipients of free money that you comply with the relatively  
6 generous still fairly loose requirements that follow along with that  
7 funding.

8 So, it is time now, and we will note that we've gotten  
9 up almost all of our institutions on board and it's time now, I  
10 believe not to backslide, we have to keep our efforts on track.

11 DELEGATE HURST: Evan, are there any other  
12 community colleges that also have general education  
13 scholarships that's been used for, like Mike has been saying, that  
14 have similarly tailored information to meet with your restraints.

15 MR. FEINMAN: In particular, I draw your attention to  
16 the AIMS scholarship in Southwest. And that was a tough period  
17 for them, as well. And it took a while for us to persuade the folks  
18 operating the AIMS scholarship, that parts of that could be  
19 funded through this prioritization and parts of it could not, and  
20 that they were going to find a different way to make good on the  
21 promises that they had made to the students, but, you know,  
22 until and unless this Committee and then the Full Commission  
23 changes its prioritization, we have to comply with the  
24 requirements that are put upon us. So, we're very sympathetic  
25 to the promises that our grantees may have made, but we can't

1 change the rules that we're given by you all to accommodate a  
2 promise that was made by a grantee to someone else.

3 MR. KAESTNER: One other item I mentioned before,  
4 that the schools, such as New River Community College, to have  
5 scholarship program, here it's ACE, and the Commission has its  
6 Workforce Financial Aid Program, you know, I think of those as  
7 STEM diagrams, where there's some overlap and not complete  
8 overlap. The fact, the Commission, or the Staff recommendation  
9 is followed, the risk to the New River Community College is that,  
10 you know, more funding may be allocated to Priority 2 and 3  
11 programs, may have high school graduates, recent high school  
12 graduates to sign up for those programs. Some schools very well  
13 may use their Workforce Financial Aid funding that they received  
14 from the Commission to fund some recent high school graduate  
15 scholarships, but not all, many of them have, you know, for  
16 retraining workers and so forth.

17 Yes, it's been a very difficult year for us, 2020  
18 certainly was a difficult year, 2021 is getting off to a bumpy  
19 start, as well. But thinking about workers that are out of work  
20 and need to train up to switch careers, folks who are maybe 30,  
21 40, 50 years old, although they may not be eligible for a  
22 program, such as New River's ACE Scholarship Program, they  
23 certainly would be ideal candidates or very well may be eligible,  
24 be recipients of Workforce Financial Aid, support from the  
25 Commission through the community college to do some type of



1 workforce credential or other degree programs whether mid-  
2 career.

3 DELEGATE HURST: Madam Chair, the only extra  
4 request that I have for this conversation is just be to have New  
5 River Community College to speak.

6 DELEGATE AIRD: Do we have a representative from  
7 New River on the line?

8 MS. COVEY: Yes, my name is Angie Covey, and I am  
9 the Executive Director of the Educational Foundation at New  
10 River. Can everyone hear me okay? There's a little bit of  
11 background noise.

12 DELEGATE AIRD: Please mute your mikes at this time  
13 so that we can hear Ms. Covey clearly. Thank you, go ahead.

14 MS. COVEY: Okay, thank you. Well, first, let me  
15 thank you for the tremendous support from the Tobacco  
16 Commission over the years, it's had a positive impact on the lives  
17 of so many of our students and we are all, community colleges  
18 are all forever grateful to you and to your work and what you  
19 have provided to our students.

20 With that said, Mountain Empire Community College,  
21 New River Community College, and Virginia Western Community  
22 College, respectfully request that the Committee and the Full  
23 Commission give further consideration to funding all eligible  
24 students who intend to transfer to a four-year college or  
25 university. Our experience has been that community college

1 students, including those that transfer to a four-year university,  
2 transfer to a university close to home, they graduate and find  
3 employment, and most often, they remain in the region. These  
4 students contribute to our economy and they contribute to our  
5 community. They are more often first generation college  
6 students whose economic situation is far more fragile than the  
7 typical image of a college student looking for a freshman  
8 experience.

9           Respectfully, we request that transfer students,  
10 including those entered fields outside of STEM-H, such as  
11 teaching, human services, law enforcement, just to name a few,  
12 should not be penalized for their career choice and supported in  
13 their effort to further their education and economic opportunity.

14           And I would like to also add on a personal note, I've  
15 worked in education for many years. I've been at New River for  
16 27, I've never seen a more damaging period to our children as  
17 we are witnessing during this pandemic. This year's high school  
18 seniors lost the second half of their junior year and they lost their  
19 summer, and now they're involved in a hodge-podge of virtual  
20 and in-person instruction.

21           With that said, I cringe at the thought of telling the  
22 current high school seniors, the class of 2021, that their options  
23 going forward are now very limited. Eliminating all but two  
24 programs would have just that result. So, please help us to  
25 make sure that all deserving students qualified get your vital

1 support. And thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

2 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much, Angie. Sorry  
3 had trouble unmuting there.

4 Delegate Hurst, did you have additional comments or  
5 questions for Ms. Covey?

6 DELEGATE HURST: I appreciate it, Madam Chair. I  
7 think that we have paid a lot of time and attention to one  
8 institution, and there are many others, and maybe there are folks  
9 from Mountain Empire and other community colleges who would  
10 like to weigh in here on this.

11 I know that we are a committee that works on  
12 motions and operates on motions, and at the appropriate time, it  
13 does not have to be now, but what I would like the Committee to  
14 consider is, I think what might be an opportunity to split the  
15 baby here and thinking about these 19 year olds who finish their  
16 first year at New River Community College with the \$80,000 that  
17 was afforded by the Tobacco Commission last year without these  
18 extra conditions. Let's at least let those 18 year olds and 19 year  
19 olds finish that second year of their certificate or their Associates  
20 degree without having New River Community College have to  
21 chase to find an extra \$50,000 worth of funding in order to make  
22 that happen.

23 If we want to move forward and say that those who  
24 are graduating from Floyd County need to be in those certain  
25 priorities in order to receive a scholarship as part of Tobacco

1 funds, that's fine with me, but I worry about the students who  
2 are going into their second, and now all of a sudden New River  
3 having to come up with \$50,000 privately, and there's only but  
4 one major utility company in our Footprint, and they've already  
5 cut us a check. If anybody has any leads on where we can get  
6 50 grand, that would be great, but it would be great if we could  
7 say at least keep the eligibility there for these folks who are in  
8 the second year.

9 DELEGATE AIRD: So, Delegate Hurst, you said a few  
10 things there, you made a comment about a recommendation  
11 you'd like the Committee to consider, but you also mentioned  
12 there may be some other community colleges that wanted to  
13 weigh in before I consider your recommendation and a motion  
14 for the Committee. Are there any other representatives that  
15 want to address the Committee at this time?

16 MS. WESTOVER: This is Kristen Westover, President  
17 at Mountain Empire Community College.

18 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you.

19 MS. WESTOVER: Well, first of all, I just want to say  
20 thank you to the Commission for your dedication and thoughts on  
21 all of this. It's been a difficult year and we are in unprecedented  
22 times. And I'm so appreciative, as is the college, of the  
23 opportunity to fund these pathways.

24 I think we've been able at Mountain Empire  
25 Community College to adjust, and to adjust our AIMS

1 scholarships towards our local foundation, to work with other  
2 local foundations to find funding for transfer and for those  
3 students who want to transfer. I would just like to share some  
4 larger thoughts about Workforce Development and the value of  
5 transfer programs to Workforce Development.

6 I sit at the table for many of our Regional Economic  
7 Development Opportunities or projects, and one of the first  
8 things that every company looks at is our educational attainment  
9 rate. We do everything we can in our region to increase that  
10 rate to a number of students who receive the certificates and  
11 Associate degrees, but also Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees,  
12 and Doctoral degrees.

13 The teachers need a clear pathway, and the pathway  
14 to education is often paved through general studies. And our  
15 superintendents tells us that they have a very difficult time filling  
16 their K-12 teaching positions, and when they can't, especially, we  
17 have a hard time getting them from the region. When they come  
18 from outside of the region, they stay just a short period of time,  
19 and then leave. They found that one of the best ways and one of  
20 the most consistent ways is to kind of grow our own. And so  
21 we'd like to make sure that we can, I think I want to share the  
22 value of that pathway and that educational experience in the  
23 overall Workforce Development spectrum.

24 We recognize how important it is that our K-12  
25 partners are successful, that they have the resources that they

1 need, and that we work with them in order to build that  
2 workforce pipeline, and it requires more than just certificates and  
3 Associate degrees, and it's so difficult in our region to get the  
4 education attainment level to be greater, we're doing everything  
5 we can.

6 I wanted to kind of share the impact. We've got a lot  
7 of different entities, and the SACSCOC was mentioned earlier,  
8 and the Virginia Community College System and the Department  
9 of Education, our local advisory boards and business advisory  
10 boards, all look at the relevance, the need, and the  
11 meaningfulness of the degrees and the credentials that we offer  
12 and with great oversight. And so I don't think that we offer  
13 things that don't have value to our students. It bothers me when  
14 we start valuing some degree pathways, whether they're transfer  
15 or whether they're Workforce.

16 So, with that, I'll hush, I apologize for taking too  
17 much time.

18 DELEGATE AIRD: No. Thank you for those words.  
19 Those were great comments and very much timely. So, I  
20 appreciate you adding those remarks and that commentary to  
21 this discussion.

22 Are there other representatives that would also like to  
23 add additional comments before we consider Delegate Hurst's  
24 recommendation? Okay, great, I'm not hearing anyone else. I  
25 just wanted to take a minute back to some of the comments that

1 were made early on and just make sure we're all clear about the  
2 direction we're headed in. I hope that it's understood that  
3 ultimately the decision that we are trying to make here is  
4 ultimately just do what's in the best interest of our students, to  
5 insure that the dollars that we are trying to leverage as best as  
6 we can, are being utilized in such a way that sets our students up  
7 for success.

8 I don't want anyone to leave this conversation  
9 thinking we are looking down on any program, looking down on  
10 the program as it has been established to be, or anything of that  
11 nature, that's just totally not the case. And so I'm grateful for  
12 Delegate Hurst's feedback and his concern and everyone's  
13 concern that has been shared.

14 And I'd like to now move us to talking about what  
15 Delegate Hurst has asked, which is although we want to insure  
16 that these dollars are aligned with the priority of the  
17 Commission, is it possible so that we do no harm to those who  
18 are actively, having to utilize these scholarship dollars, that we  
19 allow them to complete their second year without the financial  
20 burden or strain of trying to figure out where the additional  
21 dollars will come from, but then moving forward all of this, you  
22 know, allocations of these resources. So we fix and align with  
23 the priorities of the Tobacco Commission.

24 And so I think I tried to restate that for you, Delegate  
25 Hurst. If that's not correct, please correct me, but I would love

1 to get the feedback of the Committee at this time on whether or  
2 not that is a compromise that is okay with you all.

3 DR. EHRHARDT: Madam Chair, if I'm understanding,  
4 we're talking about this year's allocation for those community  
5 colleges, to be able to utilize, to move those students through,  
6 but in the future we return to where we are today. If that's the  
7 case, do we have a sense of how much that is? I don't know if  
8 you can answer that or?

9 DELEGATE AIRD: I don't know, Mike, if you can  
10 answer that.

11 MR. KAESTNER: Sure. Dr. Ehrhardt, Madam Chair, at  
12 that point, I think I may need to defer to Sara Williams, I think  
13 that likely would be information related, I guess it would be  
14 found in the latest reimbursement requests and annual grant  
15 report. Sara, do you know offhand?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: I do not know offhand, you know last  
17 year's grant, all, all the funding that New River has received has  
18 been, since we had these priorities in place. So, there's always --  
19 priorities, I don't know off the top of my head how many are in  
20 those top three priorities and how many of the students from last  
21 year would have been 4 and 5. Angie might have that  
22 information, how many students were in 4 and 5 last year that  
23 would not qualify this year. I mean are we talking half of them,  
24 20, I don't know?

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Sara, thank you for asking.



1           MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chair, if I may, it would be  
2 useful to know the number, we could also adopt from the  
3 Committee a report that we simply use the priority list. Of  
4 course, I believe Delegate Hurst and for those folks, we would  
5 take the top line, the amount of funding, that was going to the  
6 top.

7           DELEGATE AIRD: Okay, thank you so much. Does  
8 every member of the Committee understand what Evan has  
9 clarified, does everyone, was moving in that direction?

10          MS. CLARK: Madam Chair, I've got a question. I'm  
11 wondering if there are other community colleges with the same  
12 problem or sitting out there watching, saying, well, we would  
13 have requested the same amount of money, but we, you know,  
14 are encouraging putting kids into these programs to be able to  
15 get the number. I'm just a little concerned about, about, I  
16 guess, bending for one and not bending for all, and we've got a  
17 request in front of us. So, I have concern about that.

18           Evan, do you have thoughts on that?

19          MR. FEINMAN: I do, you know, we made the decision  
20 we made, and I have some concern about the precedent, we  
21 deviate from the rules. I also, and I see Liz here, I seem to  
22 recall that our authorized requirement that we, now, that doesn't  
23 necessarily mean that we can never make an exception to that,  
24 that's how I would read the code. But it should certainly also  
25 center us around the idea that, you know, when we play out our

1 rules, those rules should exist and apply to everyone. With that  
2 said, you know, rules only are valued to the extent that they  
3 serve the end they were designed to further, we certainly don't  
4 want to pull the rug out from under anybody. So, I think you  
5 heard the Staff's view, I think we could craft, an instructor, all  
6 that would accommodate, it's up to the Committee to decide how  
7 you want to proceed.

8 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much, Evan. I think  
9 the case that's been laid out, I think given the Staff  
10 recommendation, given the recommendation or request of  
11 Delegate Hurst and ultimately the Committee, I have Delegate  
12 Hurst's recommendation that has not been moved in the form of  
13 a motion just yet, or there is some additional action to solely  
14 accept the Staff's recommendation, if there is a motion for that,  
15 we will vote in either direction to determine what action will occur  
16 here. And so, I will entertain a motion at this time.

17 DELEGATE HURST: I would move that we, funding  
18 the application for 3725 out of the block, and that we amend to  
19 say that we will not essentially hold harmless recipients of  
20 Tobacco Commission funds through their scholarship to the ACE,  
21 to be still eligible for funds -- of their credentials, Associates  
22 degree, but notwithstanding -- will be able to use Tobacco  
23 Commission funds unless it complies with the Staff  
24 recommendation of moving forward.

25 DELEGATE AIRD: Delegate Hurst has made a motion,

1 is there a second?

2 MS. RATLIFF: I'll second that motion, Sandy Ratliff.

3 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you, Sandy. The motion has  
4 been moved and properly seconded. Is there an additional  
5 questions, comments, or feedback on that motion?

6 MS. EHRHARDT: Madam Chair, a question, do we  
7 need to --

8 DELEGATE AIRD: Yeah, that's a great question.  
9 Delegate Hurst, would you be willing to amend your motion to  
10 include that?

11 DELEGATE HURST: I think it is we're awarding the, I  
12 would say it probably would be so that we would come back next  
13 year, it's only for like a half dozen students, that's it's only for  
14 like these half dozen students, and those are guaranteed. Then  
15 -- fiscal year, I think we want to work with New River to try and  
16 make sure that we achieve the Tobacco Commission's goal.

17 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you.

18 UNIDENTIFIED: In addition to time delays related to  
19 the weather.

20 MS. CAPPs: Could you all repeat, could somebody  
21 summarize what the motion or what have you, there's a lot of  
22 content that I think some of us missed.

23 DELEGATE HURST: Yes, sure. I will try and put my  
24 TV anchor cap on and be distinct here and be quick. So, ACE is  
25 the Access Community College Education Program out of Floyd

1 County, has been funded by Tobacco Commission for a few  
2 years. That guarantees high school graduates who meet certain  
3 criteria, the ability to go to community college, tuition-free. So,  
4 that's for like two-year degrees, Associates, generally, or  
5 whatever they choose.

6 We want to be able to pare down what the offerings  
7 are in the future to receive Tobacco Commission funds all for  
8 that. But we have 18 year olds who went through the first year,  
9 and now we're going to say they're not eligible for their second  
10 year because they don't get, they're not getting those targeted  
11 programs that the Tobacco Commission is isolated. Now, all of a  
12 sudden, Floyd County is going to have to look for \$100,000 in  
13 order to fill that gap. The \$50,000 that was mentioned by Mike  
14 provided by ADP is for the entire community college system there  
15 and New River, which also includes Radford, Giles, Pulaski and  
16 Montgomery.

17 So, this would say that we are going to agree to all of  
18 the Staff's recommendation except to say that for those students  
19 who have already enrolled in the program, because Tobacco  
20 Commission funds for 18 years old, that they would be able to  
21 still qualify for their second year of scholarship funding even if  
22 those programs that they are in, aren't in the targeted top three  
23 priorities that the Tobacco Commission is seeking for. So, it  
24 keeps the amount at the same, \$100,000, but instead of what  
25 Staff would like to do, which is to keep the funding allocations up

1 into the top three priorities. We would still keep the funding  
2 where it needs to be at Priority 4 and 5 to the extent that it  
3 guarantees those individuals going after programs in 4 and 5, to  
4 get that second year of their two-year education.

5 I wasn't very brief, but I was trying to be thorough, I  
6 guess, I apologize.

7 DELEGATE AIRD: So, we depended on Delegate Hurst  
8 to basically give an overview of the discussion and what he's  
9 attempting to do with the motion. Is there clarity on the motion,  
10 or are there any additional questions or feedback on the motion?

11 MR. KAESTNER: From a practical perspective, you're  
12 referring back to New River's chart, does this mean you have  
13 away with the red and back to the stricken-through black, or is  
14 the suggestion instead that New River can just spend \$100,000  
15 on any program and just tell us later, I'm not trying to sound  
16 flippant?

17 MR. FEINMAN: The thing that may work to comport  
18 with the motion. I would understand it to mean that ACE  
19 students who received financial aid last year under the Tobacco  
20 Commission program are effectively Priority Zero, which is to say  
21 come off the top first before funding would then be applied  
22 through our 1 through 5 prioritization.

23 DELEGATE AIRD: That is literally what my  
24 understanding is, and so I am hopeful that everyone is in that  
25 place. I was not thinking in a way that you have asked, Mike, so

1 I hope that is not anyone's understanding, not really thinking  
2 specifically about the commitment we are phasing out of having  
3 received initial scholarship dollars -- the motion slowly.

4 So, I want to make sure it's clear, and clarity around  
5 what Evan has stated, is what we're asking for right now. Are  
6 there additional questions around that or feedback, and I will  
7 hear that at this time.

8 MS. MYERS: Madam Chair.

9 DELEGATE AIRD: I'm sorry, I can't see who's  
10 speaking.

11 MS. MYERS: This is Liz from the AG's office.

12 DELEGATE AIRD: Go ahead.

13 MS. MYERS: Request 3725 from the New River  
14 Community College.

15 DELEGATE AIRD: Yes.

16 MS. MYERS: Okay.

17 DELEGATE AIRD: Yes, it is. Thank you, thank you so  
18 much, Liz.

19 Other questions or comments? Now, at this time, all  
20 in favor of the motion as stated and restated and clarified, we'll  
21 do a roll call and we'll go through the membership and take your  
22 vote at this time.

23 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Clark.

24 MS. CLARK: Yes.

25 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Cunningham.

1 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

2 MR. FEINMAN: Dr. Ehrhardt.

3 DR. EHRHARDT: Yes.

4 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Harris. Frank was here earlier.

5 MR. HARRIS: (No response).

6 MR. FEINMAN: Come back. Delegate Hurst.

7 DELEGATE HURST: Yes.

8 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Lucas.

9 SENATOR LUCAS: Aye.

10 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Ratliff.

11 MS. RATLIFF: Yes.

12 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell.

13 MR. SHELL: Yes.

14 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Tyler.

15 DELEGATE TYLER: Yes.

16 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chair.

17 DELEGATE AIRD: Aye.

18 MR. FEINMAN: Motion carries.

19 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you all. I stated that motion  
20 has to go forward. And I think it's important just to bring closure  
21 to the discussion to just really state that as a body, I know how  
22 important it is for us to stay consistent with our priorities and to  
23 stick with the rules that we have put in place. And in no way by  
24 this action that we have taken today are we trying to delineate  
25 from that, but I think we also have our responsibility to insure we

1 do no harm to our students and to the people we are ultimately  
2 trying to benefit with the --

3 I just appreciate everyone for the diligence in talking  
4 this through in trying to make the best decision here. And so I  
5 do believe we have to now formally accept the Staff  
6 recommendation for all others outside of 3725, is that correct,  
7 Evan? And do that before we move on to the next item?

8 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chairwoman, we have to take  
9 action on the Staff recommendations.

10 DELEGATE AIRD: No, we want to do that. At this  
11 time, now that we have handled 3725 specifically, I would want  
12 to entertain a motion to accept the Staff recommendation as  
13 presented through Mike's presentation earlier.

14 SENATOR LUCAS: Madam Chair, I move that we  
15 accept the Staff's recommendations.

16 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you so much, Senator Lucas.  
17 We have a motion. Is there a second?

18 UNIDENTIFIED: Second, Madam Chair.

19 DELEGATE AIRD: Thank you, Delegate Hurst. It's  
20 been moved and properly seconded. Are there any questions or  
21 additional feedback? Hearing none, all in favor, please say aye.  
22 (Ayes). Are there any opposed? (No response). Thank you.  
23 That motion carries.

24 I do believe that completes the action for the fiscal  
25 year, for 2021 Workforce Financial Aid applications. At this time,



1 I just want to offer a reminder to everyone as it pertains the  
2 upcoming funding round. Competitive education in the spring, as  
3 we have done in the past for many members of the Committee.  
4 We are going to move that process to September instead. I just  
5 wanted to make sure that was on everyone's radar and answer  
6 any questions or concerns you might have about that. Hearing  
7 no comments about that, is there any other business?

8 MR. FEINMAN: One other business, also a reminder,  
9 Madam Chairwoman, the Commission's Talent Attraction  
10 Program, which, as folks will recall, is our program that will pay  
11 student loan debt of up to \$12,000 a year for the graduates who  
12 will move to or live in the Footprint and work in targeted  
13 professions and contribute to their communities, will open very  
14 shortly in the next two to three weeks, depending on how quickly  
15 we can pull that together, and close on April 30<sup>th</sup>. And so, we  
16 encourage everyone to spread the word far and wide, that if you  
17 know someone who has graduated in the last, Stephanie, when  
18 was the --

19 MS. KIM: 2019 through December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2021. So,  
20 past, recent, and future graduates.

21 MR. FEINMAN: So, anyone who has graduated within  
22 that window and who is planning to pursue a career in broadly  
23 STEM education, special education, civil mechanical or electrical  
24 engineering, a broad variety of IT and cyber-security fields, or a  
25 wide variety of health professions, we encourage folks to consult

1 the Commission's website in the next couple of weeks and apply  
2 for those spots. They're going to go fast.

3 UNIDENTIFIED: Can I ask a question, as a new  
4 member on this particular item? What form of outreach does the  
5 Commission particularly do to naturally spread the word about  
6 this opportunity?

7 MR. FEINMAN: It's been a challenge, so we need to  
8 work through with VCCS to try to get the word out to Career  
9 Services Offices, as well we let our various, we try through our  
10 local chambers to let the various employees know as they try to  
11 market for employees that this is a benefit that's available to  
12 folks who come to the region.

13 It, you know, we don't want to use scarce resources  
14 putting up billboards and stuff though, so it has been a challenge  
15 frankly to get the word out, and it is, we'll take folks from  
16 anywhere. You can come from Japan or London or, you know, or  
17 the U.K. or Northern Virginia or be it from the Footprint. And in  
18 any of those instances, we're very happy to have folks come live,  
19 work, contribute to the tax base and be of community service  
20 and will pay the student loans.

21 UNIDENTIFIED: The Department of Health Program,  
22 the Virginia Department of Health for primary care, health care  
23 workers has apparently opened, and that closes March 31<sup>st</sup>.  
24 That's also on our website.

25 DELEGATE AIRD: Okay. Well, I think that there are

1 some low costs digital outreach that can be done, but I certainly  
2 can talk with you all offline about that, but I hope that members  
3 will take note of this amazing opportunity and spread the word.

4 Any other business, Evan?

5 UNIDENTIFIED: On that thought, just a thought, this  
6 is Sandy Ratliff, Evan, share with us, I would love to share it on  
7 my social platforms, if you have like a, something, kind of  
8 document, or a little flier, I'd be happy to share, I think with all  
9 the Commission members, I think we could probably pretty well,  
10 there'll be like a sweep of promoting that.

11 MR. FEINMAN: We do have a charitable digital image.  
12 I will insure that we get it to you. Jordan, I think you'll listening,  
13 just see if you can dig that out and we'll circulate it.

14 DELEGATE AIRD: And I know we have a social page,  
15 I'm sure that it can be placed there, and we can all share it, as  
16 well.

17 So, thank you so much. What a great idea, Sandy.

18 I do not have any other business. We will allow for  
19 public comment again. We did so early on, but we've had a lot of  
20 discussion since we started the meeting. Is there any additional  
21 public comment at this time? Okay, hearing none, I will now call  
22 the meeting of the Education Committee adjourned. Thank you  
23 all so much.

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**PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED.**

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**CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER**

I, Medford W. Howard, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public for the State of Virginia at Large, do hereby certify that I was the Court Reporter who took down and transcribed the proceedings of the **Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Education Committee Meeting**, when held on Friday, January 8, 2021, at 1:30 o'clock p.m., (By Electronic Conference Call).

I further certify this is a true and accurate transcript, to the best of my ability to hear and understand the proceedings.

Given under my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2021.

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Medford W. Howard  
CCR