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VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION  
FALL FULL COMMISSION TWO-DAY MEETING  
BERRY HILL RESORT AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
3105 RIVER ROAD  
SOUTH BOSTON, VIRGINIA

EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 4, 2022

EVANS & COMPANY  
COURT REPORTERS  
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- 3 CAROLINE LANE, COURT REPORTER
- 4 APPEARANCES
- 5 Delegate Kathy J. Byron, Chair  
Delegate Louise Lucas, Vice Chair (by phone)
- 6 Ms. Gretchen B. Clark  
Ms. Amanda C. Cox
- 7 Mr. Joel Cunningham, Jr.  
Ms. Sandy J. Ratliff
- 8 Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.  
Mr. Gary Walker
- 9  
COMMISSION STAFF
- 10 Joyce Knight  
Sara Williams
- 11 Sarah Capps  
David Bringman
- 12 Andy Sorrell  
Vicki Humphreys
- 13 Stephanie S. Kim  
Emily Van Pelt
- 14 Suzette Patterson
- 15
- 16 COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION  
Elizabeth, "Liz" Myers
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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4 MR. SORRELL: Delegate Byron.

5 DELEGATE BYRON: Here.

6 MR. SORRELL: Delegate Lucas.

7 SENATOR LUCAS: (By phone) Here.

8 MR. SORRELL: Mrs. Clark.

9 MS. CLARK: Here.

10 MR. SORRELL: Mrs. Cox.

11 MS. COX: Here.

12 MR. SORRELL: Mr. Cunningham.

13 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Here.

14 MR. SORRELL: Ms. Ratliff.

15 MS. RATLIFF: Here.

16 MR. SORRELL: Senator Ruff.

17 SENATOR RUFF: Here.

18 MR. SORRELL: Mr. Walker.

19 MR. WALKER: Here.

20 MR. SORRELL: Delegate Wampler.

21 (Negative response)

22 MR. SORRELL: All right. We have a  
23 quorum, Madam Chairman.

24 DELEGATE BYRON: We have the minutes on  
25 the website. Do I have a motion to approve

1       them?

2               UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:   Move.

3               UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:   Second.

4               DELEGATE BYRON:   We have a motion, and a  
5       second to approve the minutes.

6               All in favor say "aye."

7               (All affirm)

8               MR. SORRELL:   Any opposed?

9               (Negative response)

10              MR. SORRELL:   We provide the opportunity  
11       to speak at the time that their application is  
12       being reviewed.

13              DELEGATE BYRON:   Are there any public  
14       comments from anyone?

15              (Negative response)

16              DELEGATE BYRON:   Okay.   Hearing none, we  
17       will get started.

18              We are going to review the public  
19       education applications.

20              MS. HUMPHREYS:   Thank you, Delegate  
21       Byron.

22              We received 11 applications, one of which  
23       was withdrawn, so we will be considering ten  
24       tentative applications today.

25              The first one is from Mountain Empire

1 Community College.

2 Commission funds are requested to  
3 continue the development of their Center for  
4 Workforce and Innovation in Appalachia  
5 Virginia.

6 This facility is located on a former  
7 public school building and houses several of  
8 Mountain Empire's training program and provides  
9 an opportunity to expand capacity and  
10 programming beyond space constraints of their  
11 main campus.

12 So their proposal desires to utilize the  
13 Tobacco Commission's support for developing a  
14 machining laboratory which would result in the  
15 creation of a Precision Machine degree program  
16 that they require to meet the demands of local  
17 industries.

18 Grant funds will be used for required  
19 building renovations, and for equipment  
20 purchases. This request also supports the  
21 expansion of the CDL driver's license program.  
22 And funding will be utilized to transition a  
23 part-time instructor to full time and to  
24 purchase an additional commercial vehicle for  
25 the program.

1           And this will allow Mountain Empire to  
2 offer four additional cohort classes each year.

3           Matching funds will be provided for  
4 adjunct faculty support, \$90,000. Komatsu, a  
5 local corporation, will provide an additional  
6 cash match of \$15,000 and there is a pending  
7 Department of Energy AMLER application of  
8 \$264,732.

9           (Indiscernible)

10          DR. EMILY GREER: My name is Emily Greer.

11          (Indiscernible)

12          MR. SORRELL: This proposal, does it  
13 require a match?

14          DR. EMILY GREER: It does require a  
15 match.

16          MS. HUMPHREYS: We have awarded an  
17 additional 30 CDL credentials each year and the  
18 Precision Machining Degree program will  
19 graduate eight participants each year.

20                 We have provided two previous grants to  
21 support the development of the facility and its  
22 associated programs. 425,905 in 2018 and  
23 253,595 in 2020 to assist with building  
24 upgrades and equipment needs for the Lineman  
25 CDLs and Dental Assistant programs.

1           The current request will expand the CDL  
2 Program to meet the growing demand for the  
3 credentials. Over the past 12 months there  
4 were 294 active job advertisements for CDL  
5 drivers in the MECC's service region.

6           The ability to add four additional  
7 cohorts, to offer that training on nights and  
8 weekends will help fill those positions.

9           So this Precision Machining degree  
10 program is going to strengthen the region's  
11 ability to retain existing industry and attract  
12 new ones. The majority of the equipment  
13 requests is for the addition of a CDL  
14 (Indiscernible)

15           So by expanding the capacity of the CDL  
16 program will help Mountain Empire to alleviate  
17 months-long waiting lists and help them  
18 increase the number of folks qualified to  
19 become available for employment.

20           Staff recommends the approval of the full  
21 amount for \$419,732 contingent upon the receipt  
22 and documentation of all required matching  
23 funds necessary to complete the project.

24           DELEGATE BYRON: (Indiscernible)

25           THE REPORTER: I'm sorry, I can't tell

1 who is speaking.

2 MR. SORRELL: Chairman Byron.

3 DELEGATE BYRON: (Indiscernible)

4 MS. HUMPHREYS: Our next proposal is for  
5 Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation  
6 for career and technical education  
7 credentialing.

8 They are requesting \$40,425 to cover  
9 student certification costs within the  
10 high-demand field of advanced manufacturing.

11 Current state policy apparently prohibits  
12 our community colleges from embedding  
13 certification costs into tuition, which  
14 eliminates the ability to use most scholarship  
15 funds to cover these costs.

16 While certification testing fees are \$150  
17 or less, they still represent a significant  
18 financial burden for students and limits their  
19 ability to earn certifications, which assists  
20 them in the job market.

21 The Patrick & Henry Community College  
22 foundation requested funding to cover those  
23 certification and testing fees within the  
24 advanced manufacturing field, will help  
25 increase the number of people with



1 certifications earned and improve student  
2 success upon entering the job market.

3 Matching funds is a total of \$79,426  
4 committed. Patrick & Henry Community College  
5 is providing \$20,000 to support annual dues to  
6 Festo NC2 and Siemens. And then federal  
7 funding commitments from two sources, a  
8 postsecondary Perkins Fund and Defense  
9 Manufacturing Community Support will be used  
10 for Staff Professional Development.

11 An estimated 100 students per year will  
12 receive nationally recognized industry  
13 certifications with an estimated 537  
14 certifications anticipated to be awarded  
15 annually from organizations like the American  
16 Welding Society, the American Society of  
17 Mechanical Engineers, Siemens and NIMS.

18 We have supported advanced manufacturing  
19 industry and certification costs in the past  
20 for Patrick & Henry through the two grants  
21 awarded to the New College Institute for the  
22 Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence.  
23 And this funding request continues this  
24 initiative and reflects the success that  
25 Patrick & Henry has maintained in delivering

1 training to provide a qualified workforce for  
2 the regional employees in the area.

3 Virginia FastForward Program provides  
4 support for certification costs for non-credit  
5 short-term workforce program. Whereas, this  
6 funding request is to support students in the  
7 for-credit programs to obtain these industry  
8 recognized certifications that are embedded in  
9 multiple career study Certificates and  
10 Associate Degree Programs.

11 The proposal includes letters of support  
12 from Ten Oaks, Thomas Industrial Fabrications,  
13 and Mechanical Designs of Virginia.

14 And the college's People Soft Oracle  
15 program will be used to track the student  
16 completion rate.

17 This project is going to provide direct  
18 educational program outcomes within the  
19 Advanced Manufacturing priority area, and staff  
20 is recommending full funding in the amount of  
21 \$40,425.

22 SENATOR RUFF: Do you know how many  
23 certifications they did in 2021?

24 MS. HUMPHREYS: I'll double check and see  
25 if I have that.

1 DELEGATE ADAMS: Madame Chairman, I  
2 support the proposal, but I think it is  
3 important that we have a track record for all  
4 these things as to what they are being  
5 certified in.

6 MS. HUMPHREYS: The number of students  
7 annually enrolled is 156. The anticipated  
8 increase would lead to 257 students enrolled.  
9 annually. That is an increase of 101  
10 enrollment.

11 And they anticipate completing 42  
12 credentials annually, and that is up from ten  
13 annually.

14 SENATOR RUFF: Are they required to  
15 declare that they need financial support for  
16 this?

17 MS. CAPPS: As far as financial needs?

18 SENATOR RUFF: Yes.

19 MS. CAPPS: I'm not aware.

20 Did we get someone from Patrick & Henry?

21 MS. HUMPHREYS: No. I don't think so --  
22 I think this is an opportunity that is  
23 available for any student in the program will  
24 have the opportunity to get those  
25 certifications

1           SENATOR RUFF:  Madame Chair, I would hope  
2   that there would be a contingency -- this is  
3   extremely susceptible that there be some kind  
4   of technical -- I'm a hundred percent -- the  
5   first one is hundred percent, but there should  
6   be some criteria to establish how you deal with  
7   it -- each program.

8           MS. HUMPHREYS:  Yes, sir.  Those are --  
9   let me read into some of the language of the  
10  project rationale.  They say "many students are  
11  unable to afford it."

12           So it didn't say all students.

13           So that's telling me that perhaps there  
14  is a consideration for financial need in these  
15  cases.

16           SENATOR RUFF:  Thank you.

17           MS. CLARK:  Madame Chairman, I have a  
18  question.

19           Does the college track those receiving  
20  these awards and do they move on and actually  
21  work in this profession, that they get the  
22  certification from?

23           MS. HUMPHREYS:  Patrick & Henry has an  
24  extremely strong workforce development program  
25  and -- yes.  These students are getting placed

1 in jobs and they are getting their welding  
2 degree. And they are driving trucks, and they  
3 are definitely becoming part of the workforce.  
4 So, yes, they have lot of strong tracking of  
5 the students and the success.

6 DELEGATE BYRON: With the rest of the  
7 workforce (indiscernible).

8 MS. HUMPHREYS: Whatever the best  
9 practices are, I expect Patrick & Henry would  
10 be following them.

11 We don't have a specific citation in  
12 their proposal. However, they do specifically  
13 state that they will track the student  
14 completion rate.

15 DELEGATE BYRON: Any other questions?  
16 Okay.

17 MS. HUMPHREYS: Okay. The next proposal  
18 from the Southern Virginia Higher Education  
19 Center, their welding program expansion for  
20 which they requested \$264,802.

21 What the Southern Virginia Higher  
22 Education Center would like to do is expand  
23 their Welding Training Program to first include  
24 a new and enhanced curriculum component  
25 focussed on planning and executing a metal

1 fabrication project. They currently offer  
2 Welding Levels 1 through 3 courses.

3 Secondly, they would like to add a  
4 Welding Level 4 curriculum, It focuses on  
5 aluminum and stainless steel welding.

6 This expansion is a direct response to  
7 employer-specified needs for advanced skill  
8 sets and abilities.

9 This welding program is highly successful  
10 and has prepared almost 100 individuals for  
11 welding jobs since 2014.

12 And the requested funding will be used  
13 toward the support of an additional full-time  
14 instructor, a part-time lab assistant, which is  
15 required for safety purposes, and recruitment  
16 marketing materials, long-lived supplies and  
17 equipment and equipment marketing materials and  
18 a small scale renovation to the welding lab.

19 Matching funds in the amount of  
20 \$236,222.50 is committed. The Southern  
21 Virginia Higher Education Center is a  
22 foundation providing \$211,000 in cash match for  
23 partial support of the new staff, recruitment  
24 marketing materials, equipment, supplies and  
25 materials for the new program and renovations

1 for the welding lab. In-Kind Match is valued  
2 at \$24,926, and that is for current existing  
3 support of the Welding Program Lead Instructor.

4 The outputs here will be creating another  
5 level, attaining current welding programs,  
6 attainment of the Welding Level 4 Certification  
7 by eight participants annually, and the  
8 development of that expanded curriculum for  
9 welding levels one through three, which would  
10 apply annually.

11 Demand continues to climb for qualified  
12 welders, application forecasts the need to hire  
13 22 new welders annually over the next decade in  
14 the service area. And the center thinks this  
15 will add critical new elements for their  
16 training program, focused on letters of support  
17 that they have received from Hitachi Energy,  
18 Old Dominion Machine and Fabrication, Lewis  
19 Metal Works and Comfort Systems, USA, Mid  
20 Atlantic.

21 Of particular note, HITachi Energy  
22 generates 35 percent of its revenue from  
23 stainless steel and aluminum welding, which  
24 would be part of the level four addition.

25 So this would add a potential to earn up

1 to seven industry-recognized credentials for  
2 students, and their -- and Hitachi anticipates  
3 70 new welding positions that they will be  
4 hiring within the next three to five years.

5 Starting salary for welders at Hitachi ranges  
6 from \$19 to \$25 dollars an hour pay range.

7 We have to note that in the original proposal  
8 \$41,890 of the proposed income matching  
9 funds were tied to oversight positions, not  
10 directly involved in the creation and delivery  
11 of the new program.

12 And a portion of the supplies that were  
13 proposed as cash match were directly related to  
14 the welding level four program.

15 So as such, the total costs of the  
16 program were dropped to \$472,445, of which the  
17 Tobacco Commission proposes to fund \$236,222.50.

18 The center submitted a revised project  
19 budget to reflect the additional cash match  
20 required for that remainder by rebudgeting some  
21 of the expenses requested from the Tobacco  
22 Commission to the center.

23 So at this point, we are recommending  
24 approval of a \$236,222.50 grant award.

25 And the second proposal projects



1 sufficient revenue for state funding to  
2 continue to support the program after the  
3 project period is complete.

4 SENATOR RUFF: Dr. Adams, did I hear that  
5 Hitachi was going to help you-all in this  
6 process?

7 DR. BETTY ADAMS: Yes. My name is Dr.  
8 Betty Adams. I am the executive director of  
9 the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center.

10 Hitachi Energy has been very involved  
11 in helping support our welding programs -- both  
12 the adult program that we are talking about  
13 right now, but also the Academy, which provides  
14 credential-based training for juniors and  
15 seniors in three public school systems.

16 In fact, Hitachi has assigned one of  
17 their welders to serve as a career technical  
18 academy instructor.

19 They need welders so badly, as so many of  
20 our other employers, and most of our completers  
21 have been offered jobs.

22 Hitachi Energy has offered jobs -- these  
23 are high school seniors -- jobs making more  
24 than 20 dollars an hour. This is before they  
25 graduated from high school.

1 MS. HUMPHREYS: Moving along, the  
2 Virginia Technical Institute requesting \$32,250  
3 for the Advanced Industrial Management  
4 Mechanics Laboratory.

5 Virginia Technical Institute is a  
6 non-profit workforce training center for  
7 construction trades and technical occupations.  
8 They are located in the Town of Altavisita, in  
9 the southern border with Campbell County.

10 The goal of this laboratory project is to  
11 create an interactive laboratory that would  
12 incorporate local methods and practices  
13 commonly found in the local manufacturing  
14 industry.

15 The requested funding, which would be  
16 used towards the purchase of interactive  
17 trainers in pneumatics, hydraulics,  
18 electro-hydraulics and electrical disciplines  
19 as well as initial fees with Smart Automation  
20 Certification Alliance, which offers specialist  
21 certification for Industry 4.0 technical  
22 skills.

23 \$31,952 estimated from Amtek Company for  
24 the Portable Pneumatic and Portable Basic  
25 Hydraulic Learning Systems was provided.

1           These interactive trainers will show the  
2 core concepts in a hands-on manner, but more  
3 importantly can incorporate troubleshooting  
4 faults which industry has repeatedly stated is  
5 a weakness in their workforce.

6           These trainers will replicate many issues  
7 found in manufacturing shutdowns, and require  
8 students to employ critical thinking skills in  
9 a controlled environment resulting in a higher-  
10 skilled workforce.

11           Cash match for the project includes  
12 \$12,000 from the Greater Lynchburg Trust,  
13 already secured for purchase of a lathe and  
14 mill. And a second request of \$7,000 to be  
15 submitted to the Trust-in-Kind Match valued at  
16 \$20,250 for the market value of new equipment  
17 donations by Fluke, Incorporated.

18           Expected outputs is the creation of the  
19 laboratory, Industrial Maintenance increased by  
20 ten annually, from 5 to 15 students, and an  
21 increase in Industrial Maintenance Mechanic  
22 Certifications by six annually, going from five  
23 to eleven certifications.

24           It will also add SACA Certified Industry  
25 4.0 Mechanical Specialist Certifications for 11

1 annually.

2 VTI has a solid track record for meeting  
3 the needs of manufacturing companies in the  
4 region. It is a modest request to enhance  
5 their industrial maintenance program to address  
6 some pretty critical needs of the manufacturing  
7 companies in the area.

8 They list seven companies in current  
9 openings for industrial maintenance positions  
10 and Goodyear Danville office provided a letter  
11 supporting the request.

12 Completion of the laboratory setup with  
13 utilization of the interactive trainers is  
14 targeted for May 2023. Students will be  
15 qualified for an additional industry recognized  
16 credential from SACA and Staff notes that the  
17 mill and lathe equipment purchases from \$12,000  
18 match occurred April 2022.

19 And staff recommends that this be allowed  
20 towards a cash match for these awards.

21 The Commission is limited to only  
22 accepting 25 percent in kind match for the one  
23 to one match requirement.

24 So with this limitation, the total amount  
25 of grant funding that we can recommend is

1     \$25,285.

2             So the additional cash match would have  
3     to be generated through VTI, and VTI has  
4     indicated a plan to submit an application to  
5     Greater Lynchburg Trust for that amount.

6             They have a great relation with area  
7     employers in connecting graduates to open  
8     positions.

9             So we will recommend approval of a  
10    \$25,285 grant award contingent on VTI securing  
11    the remaining required matching funds.

12            DELEGATE BYRON: (Indiscernible)

13            THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. Who is  
14    speaking?

15            UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was Delegate  
16    Byron.

17            THE REPORTER: Okay.

18            DELEGATE BYRON: I asked if the \$25,285  
19    grant of award was contingent on the \$7,000 and  
20    she replied --

21            MS. HUMPHREYS: I replied that it was.  
22    Staff would need a one to one match.

23            THE REPORTER: This is a little  
24    embarrassing. I'm not only having trouble  
25    hearing, but, obviously, I'm having trouble

1 seeing.

2 So just letting you know, if I ask who is  
3 talking.

4 SENATOR RUFF: Madam chairman, someone is  
5 here from VTI.

6 You have heard the difference in the  
7 request and amount that they are proposing to  
8 grant.

9 How will that affect the equation?

10 DAVID SAGE: It shouldn't affect the  
11 equation. If we have to pull some money out of  
12 our financial institution itself, we can do so,  
13 but we are going to submit another grant to  
14 cover that.

15 SENATOR RUFF: Thank you

16 MS. BYRON: Any other questions?

17 (Negative response)

18 MS. HUMPHREYS: Okay. Our next proposal  
19 is coming from Southside Virginia Community  
20 College, Adult Education for Southside Race to  
21 GED/NEDP. They are requesting \$70,000.

22 Again, the proposal provides incentive to  
23 cover credential testing fees for individuals  
24 pursuing a high school equivalency diploma.

25 To receive a GED, individuals must

1 receive a passing score in four subjects --  
2 math, science, social studies, and language  
3 arts.

4 The objective of this program is to  
5 increase basic education attainment levels in  
6 order to help families move out of poverty and  
7 into jobs and towards self-sufficiency.

8 The majority of this requested funding,  
9 \$60,000 is to support scholarships for the GED  
10 test fees. And then another \$10,000 in grant  
11 funding is requested to support marketing and  
12 promotional efforts for each person.

13 To be eligible for support individuals  
14 must be a resident of the Tobacco Region, 18  
15 years or older, enrolled in an adult education  
16 program, and must pass an official practice  
17 test with a score of 145 or better.

18 Students are also required to attend  
19 classes to remediate any deficient skills  
20 before taking a retest in a subject for which  
21 they did not meet minimum passing requirements.

22 This match of 700 -- I'm sorry -- match  
23 of \$74,529 was provided from the Virginia  
24 Department of Education grant to Region 13 and  
25 14. These grants can only be used for adult ed

1 instruction, not testing fees. So these will  
2 go to support the Pearson Vue Test Center  
3 administrator costs, which is shared by the two  
4 regions, testing proctors, and the regional  
5 program manager for testing and grant  
6 oversight.

7 The base line enrollment currently for  
8 the adult education program in the region is  
9 1,311 individuals. That is projected to  
10 increase by 13 percent to 1,481 participants  
11 enrolled.

12 And individuals receiving their GED is  
13 estimated to increase 25 percent from 80  
14 students annually to 100 students.

15 We supported -- we, as the Commission,  
16 have supported GED attainment programs in both  
17 the Southern and Southwest areas of the region  
18 for more than a decade.

19 We made four past grants to the Southside  
20 Race to GED program totaling about \$289,000.  
21 And the sustainability of this program depended  
22 on the continuing grant support.

23 The Commission's most recent grant  
24 awarded in May 2018 for \$82,000 has a balance  
25 of \$26,822 and is estimated to cover testing



1 fees through the end of December 2022.

2 So these grant funds that they are  
3 requesting will go to continue covering those  
4 testing fees over the next two years.

5 Let's see. Staff is recommending  
6 approval of a \$70,000 grant award, contingent  
7 on a Marketing Plan being approved by staff in  
8 advance of disbursement of grant funds approved  
9 for marketing.

10 DELEGATE BYRON: Questions on the  
11 application?

12 MS. HUMPHREYS: Our next project is from  
13 a proposal from Southwest Virginia Higher  
14 Education Foundation. This is to establish the  
15 -- a Virtual Cadaver Lab.

16 The amount requested is \$100,000.

17 This lab is going to provide an  
18 opportunity for interprofessional training  
19 across five programs, including Doctor of  
20 Pharmacy, Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia, Family  
21 Nurse Practitioner, and RNs, RN to BSN.

22 Governor school students will also  
23 utilize the lab in their own programs.

24 Two virtual cadaver tables, along with  
25 numerous support task trainers for the skeletal

1 system, brain, joint, heart, et cetera, will be  
2 included with that and the total cost for the  
3 table and related task trainers is \$211,000.

4 So our funds are requested for the  
5 purchase of one of those tables at \$100,000.

6 The Southwest Virginia Higher Education  
7 Center is providing \$61,754 towards the  
8 purchase of a virtual cadaver table and related  
9 training equipment. The A. Linwood Holton  
10 Governor's School will provide \$50,000 for the  
11 table and related equipment.

12 The lab will provide 5,000-plus training  
13 hours to approximately 350 students enrolled in  
14 the five programs mentioned before.

15 So these are going to be minor increases  
16 in enrollment, but provides a valuable  
17 enhancement for the healthcare programs located  
18 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education  
19 Center.

20 Currently, nothing similar exists in the  
21 region, and the creation of this space, as well  
22 as the future development of a regional  
23 simulation laboratory will allow the Higher  
24 Education Center to attract and grow multiple  
25 healthcare programs with varying levels of

1 credentials.

2 Interprofessional education, is an  
3 emerging trend for healthcare education  
4 programs, and requires that the students work  
5 together in a collaborative environment. And  
6 this lab will provide space for that learning  
7 model.

8 Only modest increases in credential  
9 attainment are expected as a result of this  
10 project. That is not unusual for program  
11 enhancement projects considered in the  
12 Competitive Education Program.

13 The potential for the Lab to have a  
14 positive effect for existing students is also  
15 important. Research has shown that the  
16 interpersonal education learning opportunity  
17 results in better educational outcomes for  
18 medical professional students as well as better  
19 health outcomes for patients.

20 Southwest Virginia is notoriously  
21 medically underserved by all types of health  
22 care providers. This project presents an  
23 opportunity to provide state of the art  
24 training to produce a better trained workforce  
25 needed to meet the region's critical workforce

1 demand.

2 The application accompanied by strong  
3 letters of support from the Appalachian College  
4 of Pharmacy, Virginia Highlands Community  
5 College, and the College of Health Professions,  
6 the A. Linwood Holton Governor's School and  
7 King University School of Nursing.

8 It is solidly matched by private and  
9 local contributions.

10 This request is for equipment only. The  
11 Higher Education Center provides ongoing  
12 support for operating expenses of the lab.

13 We are recommending approval of a  
14 \$100,000 grant award.

15 DELEGATE BYRON: Is there someone here  
16 from Wytheville Community College?

17 MS. HUMPHREYS: David Matlock is on his  
18 way. He is listening on the phone.

19 DELEGATE BYRON: Listening by phone?

20 MR. SORRELL: We have a hard enough time  
21 hearing where we are.

22 DELEGATE BYRON: How many students do  
23 they have that would utilize this?

24 Do you know?

25 MS. HUMPHREYS: About 350.

1 DELEGATE BYRON: 350.

2 MS. HUMPHREYS: In five programs.

3 DELEGATE BYRON: All right. Any other  
4 questions?

5 MS. CLARK: Can someone explain what a  
6 virtual cadaver lab is?

7 I don't know what that is.

8 MS. HUMPHREYS: It is one of those tables  
9 that you can actually like do pretend surgery  
10 on, or you can give a better answer, but they  
11 actually can actually perform really intricate  
12 medical things, but it is all virtual. It's  
13 not like I have a victim there.

14 MS. CLARK: So are you wearing goggles,  
15 like for virtual reality?

16 MS. HUMPHREYS: No. It is like a 3D  
17 image of a cadaver. It is actually created  
18 from still photos and documentation. And  
19 people can work on it together. If they take  
20 stuff off, they can put it back.

21 DELEGATE BYRON: They actually go in and  
22 they will practice a surgery -- a real  
23 specialized surgery before they do it. So --  
24 and it will tell you if you mess up, or if the  
25 guy is dying or having a heart attack or

1 something.

2 So it will tell you if you hit the wrong  
3 thing. It is better than us.

4 MS. HUMPHREYS: So it is a highly  
5 efficient way of teaching anatomy.

6 DELEGATE BYRON: It is really a great  
7 opportunity for Southwest Virginia. I don't  
8 know how many there are in the state, but it is  
9 a great opportunity.

10 MS. HUMPHREYS: It really has a potential  
11 to be a model for medical education.

12 DELEGATE BYRON: Anybody else? Okay.

13 MS. HUMPHREYS: Our next proposal from  
14 Wytheville Community College to -- a request  
15 for \$100,324 to support enhancement of their  
16 healthcare program.

17 They are going to expand their simulated  
18 training opportunities through the use of  
19 virtual reality technology, and in addition,  
20 there will be a simulated pharmacy lab space  
21 created for the pharmacy tech program.

22 So this will create the opportunity to  
23 expand that pharmacy tech program to offer an  
24 advanced credential.

25 Matching funds will be provided for

1 Wytheville Community College utilizing Perkins  
2 Grant funding in the amount of \$50,000, and  
3 Equipment Trust Funds, in the amount of  
4 \$10,524.

5 An additional \$39,800 has been provided  
6 by Wytheville Community College for the recent  
7 purchase of a MedDispense Cabinet for that  
8 pharmacy lab space.

9 Modest increases in credential attainment  
10 are expected from several of WCC's healthcare  
11 programs.

12 This request supports several existing  
13 healthcare programs.

14 Virtual reality, again, is a newer option  
15 for traditional healthcare simulation training,  
16 which has been a familiar investment for the  
17 Commission over the past two decades.

18 We have done numerous Manikin simulation  
19 labs, at higher education facilities across the  
20 tobacco region.

21 Keeping up with the virtual reality  
22 technology will allow the simulation to become  
23 even more life-like and provides hands-on  
24 real-world training opportunities for community  
25 college students.

1           Wytheville Community College anticipates  
2   that more students will complete the program,  
3   for the tasks that require certification  
4   examinations.

5           The largest increases in enrollment are  
6   the result of the restart of the Certified  
7   Nursing Assistant Program, which has been  
8   dormant during the last couple of years of the  
9   COVID pandemic.

10          The dedicated lab space for the Pharmacy  
11   Tech Career Studies Program -- certificate  
12   program will provide Wytheville Community  
13   College with the space necessary to offer an  
14   advanced level of CRC option. Currently they  
15   only offer the basic. The lab space will  
16   simulate a pharmacy lab -- will simulate a  
17   pharmacy environment.

18          There is a clear and documented need for  
19   healthcare professionals in the TRRC region.  
20   The application provided us with documentation  
21   of job demand in the service area for graduates  
22   of all healthcare programs.

23          Clinical opportunities are limited for  
24   students who rely on simulated training to  
25   prepare them for the workforce.



1           It is a well detailed application. They  
2 have got a great track record of being  
3 committed to an outstanding learning  
4 environment in their healthcare program. These  
5 enhancements will bring expanded capabilities  
6 to their facilities and ongoing maintenance of  
7 the equipment and software beyond the grant  
8 period.

9           We are recommending full funding of  
10 \$100,324.

11           DELEGATE BYRON: I was just trying to  
12 read over this. And I have seen and --  
13 actually years ago did some simulation nursing  
14 training in Lynchburg and that worked out  
15 really well.

16           But you also talk about student retention  
17 problems and graduation rate issues that are  
18 going on.

19           And I am not sure how much we really need  
20 to go into that, how much is really COVID  
21 related or not.

22           And if you are tracking all of that so  
23 that we know, you know, the investments, where  
24 they end up with.

25           So all that is tracked.

1 MS. CATRON WOOD: Yes. My name is Catron  
2 Wood from Wytheville Community College.

3 We did track all of our graduates,  
4 especially our health programs, because all of  
5 those programs require special program  
6 accreditations. So we probably track those  
7 more closely than many of our programs that we  
8 offer.

9 Retention rates certainly have been  
10 affected by COVID, and just attitudes about  
11 going into health care.

12 So in our research, a lot of our faculty  
13 have been asking for this virtual reality,  
14 because it will do a couple of things. It will  
15 help you be more precise, as you mentioned with  
16 the cadaver tables, where you can actually  
17 touch, not a real human being, but inserting  
18 needles to do IVs or those kinds of things,  
19 inserting catheters, being able to do that with  
20 virtual reality technology really enhances the  
21 learning.

22 The other piece of virtual reality is it  
23 can create team situations, so where you may be  
24 training a nurse, but also have an LPN or a  
25 doctor, so you can kind of get that -- how does

1 the healthcare team function together?

2 In virtual reality, you can create like  
3 the simulation, you know, you have a crisis, a  
4 patient is coding, so how can you work together  
5 to do that?

6 So much of the research indicates that  
7 virtual reality will help us be better at that.

8 And we feel that doing that will help our  
9 students better understand what the real world  
10 is to prepare them better for their  
11 certification exams and so forth.

12 So we think that is an exciting  
13 opportunity to really expand.

14 Wytheville, fortunately, is really known  
15 for our health program, so we see this as kind  
16 of the next step beyond the Manikins that we  
17 have been using.

18 MS. HUMPHREYS: Thank you very much.

19 The proposal for the Institute for  
20 Advanced Learning and Research, for the ExTRA  
21 program, Expanding Talent through Registererd  
22 Apprenticeship.

23 There is a request for \$497,690 to  
24 support development of a regional work-based  
25 learning program for the creation of new

1 apprenticeship opportunities by employers  
2 within the 15 localities of Southern Virginia  
3 that are included in Go Virginia Region 3.

4 IALR is proposing to focus on the  
5 expansion of apprenticeships for -- in five  
6 categories in the area -- occupations in  
7 construction, healthcare, early childhood  
8 education, manufacturing, and information  
9 technology.

10 Three critical areas of funding support  
11 are identified. One, continuing support for a  
12 dedicated apprenticeship coordinator to provide  
13 technical assistance to employers in designing  
14 these apprenticeship opportunities, two,  
15 incentives to employers to cover the direct  
16 costs of the required Related Technical  
17 Instruction -- that's anticipated to be 144  
18 hours per year per apprenticeship, and is  
19 limited to \$2700 per year per apprentice.

20 And then finally, development of a  
21 Regional Apprenticeship Consortium, a website  
22 and marketing material to support recruitment.

23 The IALR plans to provide assistance for  
24 36 new apprentices each year for three years  
25 for a total of 180 apprentices, with employers

1 providing wages and fringe benefits, averaging  
2 sixteen dollars per hour, which would result in  
3 more than seven million dollars of match  
4 contribution from the private sector.

5 New apprenticeships will be registered  
6 through the Virginia Department of Labor and  
7 Industry, and apprentices who succeed in this  
8 program will receive their Journeyworker  
9 credentials, which is a nationally recognized  
10 certification demonstrating an individual has  
11 completed an apprenticeship and has the ability  
12 to perform all tasks of the trade in the area  
13 certified.

14 \$116,940 match committed from the  
15 Danville Regional Foundation to support fifty  
16 percent of the Apprenticeship Coordinator's  
17 travel and office supplies as well as training  
18 support for the eight employees.

19 Of that seven million, \$497,890 in  
20 employer fees, for apprenticeship wages and  
21 benefits.

22 They anticipate 61 apprentices will  
23 receive their Journeyworker credentials during  
24 the grant period.

25 This proposal is a follow-up to the 2021

1 education application from IALR approved in  
2 September 2021, \$64,800 for 50 percent of the  
3 Apprenticeship Coordinator position for two  
4 years.

5 That grant required development of the  
6 implementation plan with a list of employers  
7 from sectors who were interested in  
8 establishing the apprenticeship program, and  
9 details for the credentials for the different  
10 apprenticeship programs associated training  
11 needs.

12 The IALR received a Go Virginia grant to  
13 do a survey of employers, which provides them  
14 with detailed information, including current  
15 job openings in targeted sectors, with examples  
16 of program providers and durations of  
17 apprenticeship along with cost estimates for  
18 training.

19 The survey that they did of businesses --  
20 over 100 companies responded and 87 employers  
21 expressed interest in considering offering  
22 apprenticeships in the near future, which is  
23 within a three-year period for the purposes of  
24 this proposal.

25 These employers indicated their highest

1 needs were for information and technical  
2 assistance, funding for related technical  
3 instruction, both of which are addressed as  
4 critical elements of this proposal.

5           There are some companies in the region  
6 within the targeted sectors, who already employ  
7 apprentices, and IALR clarified their primary  
8 focus will be on employers that are starting  
9 new apprenticeship programs, and secondly on  
10 providing assistance to employers willing to  
11 scale existing programs by adding  
12 apprentices/employees.

13           They also clarified their intention to  
14 leverage other available funding, to support  
15 the related technical instruction, including  
16 encouraging employers to apply for the  
17 Commonwealth CRAFT Grant, which provides 3,000  
18 per apprentice, up to 36,000 per employer in  
19 certain sectors, available through the end of  
20 June 30, 2023, as well as utilizing Virginia's  
21 FastForward and G3 funding, where apprentices  
22 are eligible.

23           Staff noted that IALR has made  
24 significant strides in developing partnerships  
25 in support of implementation of apprenticeship

1 programs. And there were many many  
2 enthusiastic letters from local employers, from  
3 many sectors -- SOVAH Health, Axxor, GCAPS,  
4 Nucor, just to name a few -- Hitachi.

5 So the Department of Labor and Industry  
6 Division of Registered Apprenticeship has  
7 established IALR as a regional intermediary  
8 sponsor dedicated to working with them to  
9 identify state and federal resources to support  
10 the expansion of registered apprenticeships.

11 We are recommending funding in the amount  
12 of \$497,890 conditioned on IALR's program  
13 design, including parameters to make certain  
14 that when apprentices who are eligible for  
15 federal Pell grants or state FastForward and G3  
16 funding to support the employers selected  
17 related technical instruction, that these other  
18 sources of financial assistance be utilized  
19 prior to TRRC funding being committed.

20 MS. BYRON: Any questions from anyone?

21 SENATOR RUFF: I've got a question.

22 MS. HUMPHREYS: Yes.

23 SENATOR RUFF: (Indiscernible)

24 THE REPORTER: Could you speak up?

25 SENATOR RUFF: (Indiscernible)



1 MS. JULIE BROWN: Good afternoon. I am  
2 Julie Brown from the Institute for Advanced  
3 Learning and Research.

4 And, yes. We think about looking at  
5 where we can access funds to assist with this.  
6 So I am on our West Piedmont Board, so we would  
7 absolutely partner with them to see that they  
8 are -- the apprentices are eligible, but  
9 ultimately the employer is going to chose the  
10 candidate. From behind the scenes, we will be  
11 looking to see, based on the training that the  
12 employers select, if it is through a Community  
13 College, is it G3, FastForward eligible, had to  
14 apply the process that they are not eligible  
15 for those funds, then that is where these  
16 dollars will assist for that technical  
17 instruction.

18 SENATOR RUFF: Thank you, ma'am.

19 DELEGATE BYRON: Anyone else?

20 Okay. Thank you.

21 MS. HUMPHREYS: The next is Mount Rogers  
22 Development Partnership for Virtual Reality  
23 Career and Techincal Education Workforce  
24 Training. Support is requested in the amount  
25 of \$50,000 to provide virtual reality career

1 exploration and job training technology  
2 equipment to Career Technical Education program  
3 in Bland and Wythe Counties.

4 The Virtual Reality Technology will allow  
5 students to explore several career pathways and  
6 to participate in training simulations in their  
7 program of study, focusing on nursing,  
8 machining, welding in Wythe County while the  
9 Bland CTE program will focus on auto service  
10 technology, certified nurse aid, and business  
11 information system.

12 Matching funds of \$50,000 from Perkins  
13 funding is anticipated to be distributed from  
14 Bland County Public Schools and Wythe County  
15 Public Schools.

16 The project is similar to the proposal  
17 under consideration from Wytheville Community  
18 College due to use of virtual reality  
19 simulation to enhance training in a variety of  
20 CTE Programs.

21 But unlike the Wytheville Community  
22 College proposal, this project appears to be  
23 more aligned with career exploration  
24 opportunities for students in high school,  
25 Career Technical Education programs.

1           We also require that all projects  
2 submitted to this competitive education are  
3 enrolled in a nationally recognized workforce  
4 credential or degree.

5           But while students enrolled in the  
6 program may obtain workforce verification and  
7 credentials, the proposal lacks sufficient  
8 evidence to document that funding would benefit  
9 the program.

10           The 46 new credentials awarded as a  
11 result of this project appear to be a result of  
12 additional program enrollment due to the career  
13 exploration opportunities available using  
14 virtual reality platform.

15           Assuming these programs can accommodate  
16 additional enrollment, this is a worthy result  
17 of the project.

18           However, again, no direct link with  
19 completion and job placement was provided.

20           While this is an interesting addition to  
21 CTE programs, it does not appear to be the  
22 highest use of Commission funding, and could  
23 set a precedent for similar requests for high  
24 school and CTE programs across the region.

25           Because of this, we are recommending no

1 award.

2 DELEGATE BYRON: Any questions?

3 MS. CLARK: I have one.

4 DELEGATE BYRON: Yes.

5 MS. CLARK: Is there an opportunity for  
6 Mount Rogers to refine the application and come  
7 back at a later date to make sure that  
8 (indecipherable).

9 MS. HUMPHREYS: Sure. I would be happy  
10 to keep working with them to see if we can find  
11 that alignment or that placement. I would be  
12 happy to.

13 MS. CLARK: Thank you.

14 MS. HUMPHREYS: Next is Southside  
15 Virginia Community College Foundation for fiber  
16 Technician Training Program, which will cost  
17 \$478,253.

18 This will create a two-prong Fiber  
19 Technician Training Program to address critical  
20 workforce demand for fiber technicians in the  
21 Southwest Virginia Region.

22 This program will supply needed workforce  
23 for broadband fiber installation and  
24 information technology workers to support fiber  
25 industry installation and services for data

1 services operations.

2 The offerings will take advantage of two  
3 existing facilities, Southside Virginia  
4 Community College and Occupational Technical  
5 Center at Pickett Park. Currently, the Power  
6 Line Worker Training School will be expanded to  
7 offer the OptIC Fiber Technician certification  
8 through the Fiber Broadband Association.

9 The second location at the Center for  
10 Information Technology Excellence at the Lake  
11 Country Knowledge Center in South Hill, which  
12 the Community College will continue to provide  
13 a BICSI Authorized Training facility.

14 Project costs include a full-time faculty  
15 member, an adjunct faculty member, program  
16 administration support, substantial equipment  
17 and material purchases and the initial  
18 marketing program during the start-up phase.

19 The matching funds total \$547,500. This  
20 includes \$345,300 committed by Southside  
21 Virginia Community College for instruction in  
22 marketing and private contribution from  
23 Microsoft of \$190,000 towards equipment and  
24 supplies and \$12,200 from S&N Communications  
25 toward supplies and materials.

1           The expected outputs would be to  
2    establish the new Fiber Technician Training  
3    Program with a BICSI Authorized Training  
4    Facility with the Lake Country Advanced  
5    Knowledge Center equipping of the new program  
6    for Fiber Broadband Association OpTIC training  
7    at the Occupational Technical Center.

8           They plan to serve 132 students annually,  
9    beginning in January 2023, with 116 students  
10   earning credentials, 121 workforce  
11   certifications awarded annually, based on the  
12   following estimates.

13           OpTic certification, and various BICSI  
14   Installer and Technician certifications will be  
15   offered.

16           This project provides a comprehensive  
17   fiber workforce training program to address  
18   immediate workforce needs for the region's  
19   electronic cooperatives, Microsoft and other  
20   construction contractors and IT communications  
21   serving the area.

22           Grant funds will primarily support  
23   personnel costs during the three-year start-up  
24   period, including support for a BICSI  
25   Instructor, an adjunct instructor during the

1 first year, and a portion of the administrative  
2 assistant position to support the program over  
3 a three-year period.

4 Other funds from the Commission will be  
5 used for long-lived supply purposes for the  
6 start-up of both the BICSI lab and the FBA  
7 OpTIC classes, as well as Contractual Services  
8 to be used toward fifty percent of the initial  
9 marketing campaign to launch the program.

10 The application accompanied by compelling  
11 letters from employers including ComNet  
12 Communication, indicating a need for 30 persons  
13 with BICSI certifications to be hired for the  
14 Southern Virginia market over the next two  
15 years and from S&N Fiber Optic Services, with a  
16 need to fill 100 to 200 jobs to meet projected  
17 demand, as well as support letters from  
18 Mecklenburg Electric Cooperatives's EMPOWER  
19 Broadband and from IES Communications,  
20 verifying their role in doing fiber contract  
21 work in the region for Microsoft.

22 This project will establish the only  
23 BICSI authorized training facility outside of  
24 the Northern Virginia, Richmond and Charlotte,  
25 North Carolina metropolitan areas. This

1 project aligns favorably with Virginia's  
2 economic development and workforce goal, based  
3 on the labor demand figures, continued high  
4 speed fiber network expansion, and efforts to  
5 attract more data centers to the Commonwealth.

6 We are recommending full funding at  
7 \$478,253.

8 (Indiscernible)

9 KEITH HAWKINS: Good afternoon. Keith  
10 Hawkins.

11 Yes. So there are two credentials in  
12 this request. One is the fiber installation  
13 training, which as everyone in here is familiar  
14 with, that would be your last mile. Some of it  
15 is underground. Some will be on poles --  
16 utility poles.

17 The BICSI is the piece that is inside and  
18 that includes the splicing and that specific  
19 request came from MICROSOFT's provider.

20 MS. HUMPHREYS: Thank you.

21 (Indiscernible)

22 DELEGATE BYRON: Any other questions?

23 MR. HAWKINS: Thank you.

24 DELEGATE BYRON: And the last one was  
25 withdrawn.



1 MS. HUMPHREYS: That is correct.

2 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay. That is the ten  
3 grants.

4 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chairman, if we  
5 could turn to page 5 or six. We can do this  
6 all at once, or we can do it in blocks.

7 (Indiscernible)

8 THE REPORTER: I am going to ask both of  
9 you to speak up. I can't hear you.

10 SENATOR RUFF: I want VPI to be taken out  
11 of the blocks.

12 DELEGATE BYRON: That would be 4091.  
13 Okay. Grant 4091 -- we will take that out of  
14 the block for right now.

15 Is there a motion on the other?

16 SENATOR RUFF: I move that be accepted as  
17 proposed by staff.

18 MS. MYERS: Madam chair?

19 MS. HUMPHREYS: Yes, ma'am.

20 MS. MYERS: I just wanted to remind our  
21 members of requirements, if anyone needs to  
22 recuse themselves, and have that matter be out  
23 of the block.

24 DELEGATE BYRON: Do we have a second to  
25 accept the staff recommendation for the

1 remaining grants?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

3 DELEGATE BYRON: All in favor say "aye."

4 (All affirm)

5 DELEGATE BYRON: Any opposed?

6 (Negative response)

7 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay. We are back to  
8 grant number 4391.

9 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman --  
10 (indiscernible).

11 THE REPORTER: I'm going to ask both of  
12 you to speak up.

13 DELEGATE BYRON: We have not identified  
14 enough matching funds to make that work.

15 I would be much more comfortable if we  
16 made a contingency that if they could raise  
17 more than that \$7,000, then we would match,  
18 would allow that match

19 MS. HUMPHREYS: I just want to clarify  
20 the staff recommendation was based on the  
21 amount that we are able to recommend due to the  
22 limited match. (Indiscernible).

23 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman, I  
24 understand that, but if after they have heard  
25 this conversation that they can find \$7,000

1 match, we shouldn't try to. (indiscernible).

2 MS. HUMPHREYS: Our recommendation was  
3 based on the project costs, and so we awarded  
4 them more money and they got more matched -- we  
5 don't know what else they would be spending it  
6 on.

7 I don't know who presented the situation  
8 clearly. VTI -- we were in a very engaged  
9 discussion with VTI and we reviewed the  
10 application and they were aware of the need to  
11 come up with additional match to meet our  
12 requirements, so that they were expecting the  
13 least amount.

14 They are not as familiar -- they are a  
15 two-person staff. They have a very small staff  
16 at VTI, so they don't write grants, you know,  
17 every week. They are less familiar with the  
18 different agency requirements. So this was a  
19 project where we needed to get them caught up  
20 to speed on what the Commission's limitations  
21 were. I don't know if that helps.

22 DELEGATE BYRON: VTI has been here for a  
23 long time doing a great job, grant writers.  
24 They could apply for \$10,000 and get it  
25 tomorrow.

1           But apparently that seems to be part of  
2 the issue at hand. You need to talk to  
3 Campbell County about that.

4           But I think there has been a motion, and  
5 you are saying that it is not necessarily  
6 needed to accomplish what they are trying to  
7 do.

8           MS. HUMPHREYS: If the Commission chose  
9 to award this at a higher amount than the  
10 original request amount, we would ask that the  
11 overage be approved by staff. We would need to  
12 see what additional lab expenses they would  
13 include. I think I am missing -- I might be  
14 missing an issue.

15          SENATOR RUFF: Well, I'll just remove it  
16 and back off.

17          DELEGATE BYRON: It was such a small  
18 request. I think he did not want something to  
19 stand in the way of getting the money that was  
20 needed.

21          Did you want to speak?

22          DAVID SAGE: David Sage, again from  
23 Virginia Tech.

24          As far as the finances, we do believe we  
25 can secure those through a third party. And we

1 can also pay that as an organization to match  
2 the grant fund ourselves out of our general  
3 funds, if we could establish a partner's match.

4 Is that a mistake in my understanding of  
5 the grant?

6 MS. HUMPHREYS: I think Senator Ruff is  
7 going to offer that perhaps original fund grant  
8 request. As you are aware, we have to satisfy  
9 the match requirement, if we award -- if the  
10 Commission awarded a higher grant amount, it  
11 may allow for additional project expenses.

12 I don't know if additional equipment is  
13 required in this for your lab. If that is the  
14 case, then that --

15 DAVID SAGE: We could always add to our  
16 labs, yes. We could add more trainings for our  
17 program. That's correct.

18 DELEGATE BYRON: Anything else?

19 SENATOR RUFF: I'll move that we accept  
20 the staff recommendations for project number  
21 4091.

22 DELEGATE BYRON: Do we have a second?

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Second.

24 DELEGATE BYRON: All in favor say "aye."

25 (All affirm)

1 DELEGATE BYRON: Any opposed?

2 (Negative response)

3 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay. That is approved.

4 Ms. Kim, you are next.

5 MS. KIM: I just wanted to give you an  
6 update on the town attraction program. The  
7 program has been around for the last few years,  
8 and then also to request funding for this  
9 upcoming year.

10 And, as you know, we have two different  
11 programs that we are running. One is a  
12 partnership with the Virginia Department of  
13 Health, which targets medical professionals.  
14 So those are things like physicians, nurses,  
15 dental professionals, mental health,  
16 pharmacists.

17 And so far they have awarded over a three  
18 year period \$3.9 million.

19 That is federal and state funds. And I  
20 understand that they just received a three-year  
21 Federal Grant to continue the program.

22 And then our talent attraction program,  
23 which is for non-medical occupations -- over  
24 the last four years, we have awarded \$5.6  
25 million to that program.

1 I will say for one qualifier for the  
2 Virginia Department of Health program, we did  
3 make sure last year that we insured the  
4 admission funds were for last dollar, so we  
5 were not vying for or state funds, which  
6 actually made them only award less than  
7 \$500,000.

8 So they do have a carry-forward balance,  
9 that they said would be sufficient for this  
10 coming year's award.

11 (Indiscernible).

12 These are specific federal programs that  
13 have very specific guidelines and requirements.  
14 So there is a two-year commitment to be in a  
15 health professional shortage area, that  
16 includes most of our localities.

17 You can see here -- by locality, where  
18 these awards were made from the Virginia  
19 Department of Health. Halifax probably has the  
20 most, but just to give you an idea over the  
21 last three years.

22 For a talent attraction program, the top  
23 eligible qualifications are public school  
24 teachers in science, math, technology, if you  
25 are planning for a career in technical ed,

1 language development, physical and occupational  
2 therapist -- they are not considered part of  
3 the primary health care professionals for the  
4 Virginia Department of Health.

5 We also fitted for electrical engineers,  
6 and computer system analyst.

7 If you recall, when we started the  
8 program, we had a study done, analytics that  
9 determined the hardest to fill occupation. And  
10 they varied a little bit by the region, so we  
11 were trying not to pick certain occupations for  
12 this region, but not for that region, so we  
13 checked which occupations were hardest to fill  
14 across the region, that were repeated.

15 (Indiscernible).

16 We did exclude special education teachers  
17 this past round. That was mostly because a lot  
18 of the applicants were not people who went to  
19 school to be special ed teachers.

20 They were under provisional licenses that  
21 they would have to go through some training and  
22 some courses in order to become a licensed  
23 special ed teacher.

24 So 2019 is really the only year that we  
25 have a pretty good picture of the outcomes from



1 the program, because in 2019 when we had made  
2 awards, we looked at people who had already  
3 graduated.

4 Whereas currently, we actually include  
5 future graduates. There were times when we had  
6 to give them incentives to look for jobs, and  
7 interview for jobs before graduation and take  
8 jobs after graduation.

9 But just for 2019, which is mostly  
10 incomplete, there were a few delays due to  
11 COVID.

12 But we did receive 140 applications that  
13 year, and awarded 92.

14 80 of them accepted the award. So for  
15 whatever reason, some may have decided not to  
16 stay in the area or didn't accept a job in the  
17 region.

18 The average award, two-year award was  
19 \$17,810. We do award up to \$12,000 per year  
20 for a two-year commitment, and then we offer a  
21 two-year renewal for another application.

22 They can receive up to \$48,000 over four  
23 years.

24 So just, as a side note, the average debt  
25 of those applicants, or awardees was \$58,000.

1 I will tell you, in the most recent year,  
2 it was higher. It is about \$70,000.

3 (Indiscernible) for a two-year commitment  
4 worked and lived in the region and committed 50  
5 hours of community service.

6 Of these awarded, 47 have requested  
7 renewal. So they will receive another \$908,000.

8 Just to give you an idea of the different  
9 -- just for comparison, year over year, just  
10 know that 2020, '21 and '22 are still in  
11 progress.

12 Some of those have not graduated yet or  
13 they have just recently graduated. They have  
14 six months to find a job and then they have to  
15 work for a year, so some of these are still in  
16 progress, but you can see how many applied, how  
17 many were awarded and how many were renewed.

18 To give you an idea of over the last four  
19 years, what occupations were most awarded --  
20 there were a lot of teachers in that.

21 And especially (indiscernible).

22 Seeing the charts, the next few charts,  
23 (indiscernible) into an adaptive workforce  
24 areas, but we had to make a few changes to put  
25 them in (indiscernible).

1           As you can see, how the task awards are  
2           from where they work.

3           I will say that where they live and where  
4           they work -- most of those are pretty similar.  
5           They might live in one workforce area and work  
6           in another workforce area, but they are pretty  
7           similar.

8           Also I did some comparison based on  
9           population, because while some areas have a lot  
10          more awards, they also have a greater  
11          population.

12          As you can see from this graph, the  
13          population compared to the percentage of work  
14          and percentage of folks that live in that  
15          region.

16          So there are some regions here, less than  
17          their percentage share by population.

18          So we are requesting a few changes to the  
19          coming year's program. We do want to add  
20          special education because we do know there is a  
21          severe shortage of special education teachers  
22          across the region.

23          We did -- Jordan and Emily and I have  
24          been working on this policy wise and follow up  
25          with all these applicants, about working with

1 the Department of Education in determining a  
2 special education teacher licensure, looking at  
3 career and technical education and technology  
4 teachers.

5 We do want to add special education  
6 teachers, but we want to qualify them, that  
7 they should have a renewable license to become  
8 a special education teacher, versus those who  
9 really only have a bachelor's degree, who have  
10 been pulled in to become special education  
11 teachers with a provisional license, and then  
12 they have three years to get their renewal.

13 So I think we put that qualifier that  
14 they have to have a CP or PGP renewable license  
15 as a special education teacher, K through 12.

16 We would like to renew most of the career  
17 technical technology and computer teachers.  
18 And that is mainly because after speaking with  
19 the Department of Education, most of the career  
20 and technical education teachers are often  
21 coming from industry. They are not recent  
22 graduates, which is who we are targeting. They  
23 are -- a lot of people who have transitioned  
24 from a career in industry and are now coming to  
25 be a teacher. So they would not qualify unless

1 they had recently received a Bachelor's or  
2 higher degree.

3 And then technology and computer teachers  
4 is a little harder to define.

5 We have several applicants, one in  
6 particular, who is English as a Second Language  
7 teacher who is trying to finish as a technology  
8 and computer teacher. She did teach her  
9 students computers.

10 I think all the teachers have to probably  
11 teach some of their students technology of  
12 computers. So to be able to define a teacher  
13 as a technology teacher or a computer teacher  
14 -- there is not a particular license that you  
15 can clearly define that.

16 A lot of teachers teach a class in  
17 computers or a class, but they are usually  
18 teaching something else.

19 We are also thinking of requesting a  
20 minimum loan balance in order to apply.

21 The idea of this program is that it would  
22 be an incentive for them to come new to this  
23 area, work area, and volunteer in the  
24 community.

25 So if someone has an \$8,000 loan balance,

1 I am not sure us giving them \$8,000 over four  
2 years is enough incentive for them to decide to  
3 take a job in our region, if they weren't  
4 already.

5 So with a \$20,000 loan balance, we are  
6 thinking our money would actually maybe be an  
7 incentive to actually move to the area and to  
8 look for jobs in our area.

9 We are also factoring in the federal loan  
10 forgiveness program, if that is taking away  
11 10,000. I know those are only for federal  
12 loans, but that could impact those.

13 We are also looking at narrowing the  
14 graduation date between May of 2022, and  
15 December of 2022.

16 So they would have to have a Bachelor's  
17 degree or higher during that time frame.

18 And the idea is that we were trying to  
19 attract people to the region, not just  
20 (indiscernible).

21 So we have to differentiate that by  
22 trying to put a graduation date range.

23 We have been considering the federal loan  
24 forgiveness. It is only for the federal loan,  
25 not for private loans. (Indiscernible).

1           We do have a couple of issues with  
2 collection on some unfulfilled -- so we  
3 definitely want to fulfill one year of the  
4 two-year commitment.

5           And we tell them if they did not fulfill  
6 this year commitment, you owe that first year  
7 payment back.

8           So I don't know how far the Commission  
9 wants to go, but there is some potential that  
10 they are in default.

11           The administrative costs of small loan  
12 forgiving, with paying out \$2,000 for a student  
13 loan repayment takes a lot to verify all the  
14 documentation and all of that.

15           And then, as I said, we are probably want  
16 to reassess occupation after a certain amount.

17           So the recommendation to adopt the change  
18 in rules, and we are recommending 3.6 million  
19 dollars which is available in the budget.

20           Normally we would split that with the Virginia  
21 Department of Health, but since they don't have  
22 any additional funding, there is nothing there.

23           Based on the 2019 data and how it was  
24 used, we will need probably an additional 1.1  
25 million, if the rate is the same for 2020

1 through 22, and we would probably need an  
2 additional 1.1 million dollars.

3 And them -- oh, sorry -- .9 million for  
4 the prior and 1.1 million for the renewals in  
5 2023 and 1.9 million.

6 And then the Department of Health would  
7 require matching any additional funding.

8 Any questions?

9 DELEGATE BYRON: (Indiscernible).

10 MS. KIM: I can tell you the total awards  
11 that we have made is 5.6 million over four  
12 years. I think the total, if you were looking  
13 at how much we have allocated -- is that what  
14 you are asking?

15 DELEGATE BYRON: Basically.

16 MS. KIM: I believe -- I have looked for  
17 actual allocation -- we have carried forward  
18 (indiscernible).

19 I know last year we allocated one and a  
20 half million. In most years -- but I think  
21 that that was the first year.

22 DELEGATE BYRON: Well, just so the 1.9  
23 million on top of the 5.6.

24 MS. KIM: Right -- the past four years.

25 MR. BLEVINS: The collections for



1 unfulfilled -- what percentage of those have  
2 not lived up to that?

3 MS. KIM: We won't have the -- we really  
4 only have the data for 2019. 2020 is still in  
5 progress, but I would say probably three  
6 people. It was just a few.

7 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman, do we  
8 have a mechanism -- we are requiring two years,  
9 but do you have a mechanism to see how much  
10 they incurred, just doing a temporary basis or  
11 are we actually drawing people to come and  
12 stay?

13 MS. KIM: Well, we generally don't award  
14 more than 50 percent of their loan balance for  
15 a two-year commitment.

16 But we have an idea that they would ask  
17 for renewal at the end of two years. I would  
18 give them the other half. So ideally we keep  
19 them in the area for four years. If they  
20 request renewal and they do keep up with their  
21 employment and their residence and volunteer  
22 hours.

23 The idea is that when we put our  
24 stipulation on them as part of the Pell grants  
25 to them, to not award more than 50 percent of

1 their loan balance with a two-year commitment,  
2 so that they can request another two years.

3 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman, as we  
4 move forward, I think we need to keep a  
5 constant understanding of what is happening --  
6 ten years from now, how many of these people  
7 actually stayed in the region?

8 I think that is important. If we are  
9 going to continue to fund this, we need to know  
10 whether it is something temporary or we just do  
11 something that really enhances the welfare of  
12 our people.

13 MS. KIM: The thought is that if someone  
14 stays in the region for four years, they need  
15 to work and volunteering. We have to be  
16 engaged in the community for four years. We  
17 feel like, hopefully, that would make them  
18 pretty committed to the area, because after  
19 four years, they decide: Okay, I am not going  
20 to stay around any longer," and move out.

21 But I think it is less likely after they  
22 have been in the region for four years.

23 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman,  
24 (indiscernible).

25 MS. HUMPHREYS: It looks like only 47

1 renews -- does that mean what 49 percent of the  
2 awards did not renew?

3 What happened? Did they move or did they  
4 just not feel like filling out the paperwork?

5 (Indiscernible).

6 MS. KIM: I will say -- there was a few  
7 -- a handful that I actually communicated with  
8 were teachers that got out of teaching. So I  
9 don't know how to address that problem, but  
10 there were some that moved in the area, and  
11 there were some that had their loans paid off,  
12 that they didn't reapply.

13 DELEGATE BYRON: Any other questions?

14 SENATOR RUFF: We need a motion.

15 DELEGATE BYRON: We need a motion on the  
16 recommendation to continue the funding of  
17 (indiscernible).

18 SENATOR RUFF: I move that we adopt the  
19 changes for the rules of occupation of medical  
20 workers.

21 DELEGATE BYRON: All in favor say "aye."

22 (All affirm)

23 DELEGATE BYRON: Any opposed?

24 (Negative response)

25 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay. The first

1 recommendation was adopted.

2 Okay. So we don't -- what happens if we  
3 don't do the funding?

4 MS. KIM: Then we don't award any more  
5 TAP awards.

6 DELEGATE BYRON: Say that a little  
7 clearer.

8 MS. KIM: So if you don't have any  
9 funding for 2023, we will not have a TAP  
10 program for 2023. We will not be making  
11 awards.

12 MS. CLARK: Did you mention there were  
13 any other funds from last year that would  
14 apply?

15 MS. KIM: Well, based on the 2019 data of  
16 renewals, we actually will have a slight  
17 shortfall of about almost a million from  
18 previous years, assuming the same rate of  
19 renewal. And we only have one year of data,  
20 but assuming renewals based on the same rate,  
21 we actually need additional funding to take  
22 care of renewals at the same rate.

23 Or we can be more selective in our  
24 renewals if we don't have that money. We would  
25 just have to deny it.

1           We have been pretty generous of trying to  
2 renew anyone who applies for a renewal, if they  
3 fulfilled all the requirements the first two  
4 years.

5           DELEGATE BYRON: And you mentioned this  
6 important issue, but of course we don't know  
7 exactly how the federal programs will look. If  
8 it changes, we will have to look at it again,  
9 and we will have a clear view of what -- that  
10 you know who they will loan for and who they  
11 will not.

12           So how are you handling that?

13           MS. KIM: Yeah. You know based on the  
14 average loan balance, which last year the  
15 average loan balance was \$70,000. I don't know  
16 that this \$10,000 loan forgiveness will make a  
17 huge difference in our program.

18           The only reason we want to have a minimum  
19 was because somebody who has a low loan balance  
20 of eight or \$10,000 first might be forgiven, and  
21 then, secondly, it is probably an incentive to  
22 get them to move here year round.

23           DELEGATE BYRON: So the 1.9 is that for  
24 new rewards or is that --

25           MS. KIM: No. That would be another

1 round of -- we usually open it up in January or  
2 March, so we would then award in the spring.

3 DELEGATE BYRON: One more question.

4 MS. CLARK: I am sorry. I am just not  
5 super familiar with the way the funds work --  
6 1.1 million for 2023.

7 Those are supplemental funds for the TAP  
8 award?

9 MS. KIM: The 1.9 million were not used  
10 last year. They can be used for this coming  
11 year, 2023. So they will make those awards in  
12 March or April.

13 MS. CLARK: Okay.

14 MS. KIM: So that's kind of a separate  
15 mental health program award.

16 And then the other one is for us, that we  
17 administer.

18 MS. KIM: Thank you.

19 SENATOR RUFF: Madame Chairman, I move  
20 that we defer the --

21 THE REPORTER: Repeat that please.

22 SENATOR RUFF: I move that we defer the  
23 decision on this until the January meeting.

24 (Indiscernible).

25 MS. KIM: At the very beginning that is

1 for application and then awards are made in  
2 April.

3 And that is a cash award before they  
4 graduate, so when they are making decisions  
5 about looking for a job and if they are about  
6 to graduate in May, that they would have this  
7 award in their back pocket and they move to an  
8 area and find a job in an area where they would  
9 get loan forgiveness.

10 DELEGATE BYRON: You know, I think one of  
11 the things that I am struggling with is the  
12 intent, I am sure, was well intended, but just  
13 not having all the information and the return  
14 in front of us as far as how much is really  
15 effecting people or even learning from some of  
16 these folks that have been in -- has been a  
17 little bit of a hindrance for me in putting two  
18 million dollars into the program.

19 MS. KIM: There has been some articles  
20 and some (indiscernible) some who said they may  
21 not have returned, even though they grew up in  
22 the area. They had looked elsewhere, but  
23 because of this program had decided to move  
24 back.

25 It's hard to tell that -- it is a long

1 term program if we award this coming January --  
2 they may not graduate until December of 2023.

3 And they have six months to find a job,  
4 and then they have to work twelve months after  
5 that, actually 24 months, full time, twelve  
6 months, so they have a pretty good idea to stay  
7 in the region.

8 MR. SORRELL: Madame Chairman --

9 DELEGATE BYRON: We have a motion on the  
10 floor. We need a second.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll second.

12 DELEGATE BYRON: Any further discussion?

13 MR. SORRELL: (Indiscernible).

14 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry.

15 MR. SORRELL: Yes. There is the  
16 opportunity for a virtual meeting, if necessary  
17 before the January meeting if that is something  
18 that the Commission would find more time for  
19 more information.

20 MS. KIM: What additional information  
21 would you like?

22 DELEGATE BYRON: We have a motion we need  
23 to vote on. I just think that it doesn't  
24 appear that the committee (indiscernible).

25 We do have a motion. Let's take a vote



1 on that.

2 All in favor say "aye."

3 (All affirm)

4 DELEGATE BYRON: Any opposed?

5 (Negative response)

6 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay. That motion

7 passes.

8 Okay. We have no public comment, so I'll

9 entertain a motion to adjourn.

10 MS. HUMPHREYS: I make that motion to

11 adjourn.

12 DELEGATE BYRON: Okay.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

14 DELEGATE BYRON: All in favor say "aye."

15 (All affirm)

16 DELEGATE BYRON: We are adjourned.

17

18 (Proceedings concluded.)

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25

1 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA AT LARGE, to wit:

2 I, Caroline Lane, Court Reporter, Notary  
3 Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia at  
4 Large, and whose commission expires February 28,  
5 2023, do certify that the foregoing is a true,  
6 correct, and full transcript of the testimony  
7 adduced.

8 I further certify that I am neither  
9 related to nor associated with any counsel or party  
10 to this proceeding, nor otherwise interested in the  
11 event thereof.

12 Given under my hand at Roanoke, Virginia,  
13 this 22nd day of November, 2022.

14

15

16

17



18

Caroline Lane, Notary Public

19

Notary Registration No. 238126

20

Commonwealth of Virginia at Large

21

22

23

24

25

	<b>\$500,000</b> 55:7	<b>180</b> 36:25
<hr/>		
<b>\$</b>	<b>\$547,500</b> 45:19	<b>19</b> 16:6
<hr/>		
<b>\$10,000</b> 23:10 51:24 69:16	<b>\$58,000</b> 57:25	<hr/>
<b>\$10,524</b> 31:4	<b>\$60,000</b> 23:9	<b>2</b>
<b>\$100,000</b> 25:16 26:5 28:14	<b>\$61,754</b> 26:7	<hr/>
<b>\$100,324</b> 30:15 33:10	<b>\$64,800</b> 38:2	<b>20</b> 17:24
<b>\$116,940</b> 37:14	<b>\$7,000</b> 19:14 21:19 50:25	<b>200</b> 47:16
<b>\$12,000</b> 19:12 20:17 57:19	<b>\$70,000</b> 22:21 25:6 69:15	<b>2014</b> 14:11
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