

Education

Governor Warner's commitment to spare state support for local education from budget cuts was honored. While this was certainly welcome news for Fairfax – given it could've been worse! – we still bear the impact of last year's \$40 million loss due to the way the state school funding formula works. See more inside under "Our Fair Share."

New federal testing requirements also are causing concern. To quote Delegate Dillard, Chairman of the House Education Committee, "*We've all heard of the tail that wags the dog...[this] is the dog's tail on steroids...*" By 2006, Federal law will override Virginia's demanding testing schedule, which is just beginning to show what it can do to spur school performance but which may become newly controversial next year when it is used as the sole criteria for whether a student gets a diploma. Under the federal plan, students will be tested twice as often. A school will fail if any one of 4 specific groups in it fails: the low income, minorities, English-as-a-Second-Language, or the disabled.

Transportation

I was pleased to be the chief co-sponsor of legislation to put changes into law to plug prior abuses and allow us to hold VDOT accountable for on-time and on-budget performance. Part of this financial management reform can be found by going to <http://dashboard.virginiadot.org>. Instead of bogus numbers generated for a press release, you will find the actual figures being used internally.


The gas tax has lost over 60% of its buying power since 1987 due to inflation and cars consuming less gas. Many proposed projects have had to be dropped. Nevertheless, Governor Warner created a program to direct funds to the Top Ten Projects in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads under \$2 million that will do the most to reduce pollution and relieve congestion.

Dear Voters -

Even though this annual report covers a number of challenging issues, much goes on that is good. I especially enjoyed being with a group of local students this spring whose science teacher involved them with restoring the Chesapeake Bay.

Hope you also feel you are involved in making life around you a little better for people you know or for future generations.

Have a good summer and
let me hear from you –

 Cut here to return questionnaire — — — — —

website: v

mailto:vwatts@erols.com

FAX: 703

Phone: 7

PERMIT NO.1517
MERRIFIELD, VA
PAID
U.S. POSTAGE
PRSRT STD

Annandale, V
8717 Mary Le
Delegate Vivi