

March 4th, 2019

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Northam:

The undersigned organizations, associations, and businesses are writing to express our support for HB 1966 related to the Uniform Statewide Building code; issuance of building permits. HB 1966 initially passed the House of Delegates on February 4th by a vote of 94-4; passed the State Senate, with amendments, on February 18th by a vote of 97-1; and passed by House of Delegates again on February 18th by a vote of 96-1.

HB 1966 ensures that applicants for building permits receive timely reviews, written explanations of reasons for permit denial, and timely re-reviews. HB 1966 also clarifies existing Code language to ensure that revenues generated by local building department fees are re-invested back into the department so that they can continue to hire new staff, implement technology upgrades, and streamline and modernize the department's processes. Furthermore, although initial drafts of HB 1966 had a potential fiscal impact to the Commonwealth, the General Assembly made several amendments to eliminate that fiscal impact.

Local building departments are on the front lines of driving economic development and community revitalization around the Commonwealth. Whether you are renovating your home, expanding your existing office space, opening a new restaurant or brewery, or building a single-family or multi-family housing development, local building departments are responsible for ensuring that new, rehabilitated, and existing structures in the Commonwealth comply with the Uniform Statewide Building Code, the Statewide Fire Prevention Code, and the various other codes that have been established to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all Virginians in the places where they live, work, and spend time with friends and family.

Virginia has long been recognized as one of the best places to work, live, start a business, and raise a family. Extended and unpredictable permit review periods, as well as understaffed local building departments, have a substantial impact on a homeowner's or business owner's decision to pursue a new construction, renovation, or expansion project. HB 1966 will help bolster our local building departments so that communities around the Commonwealth can continue to realize the type of positive investment and reinvestment that we've seen in recent years.

We respectfully request your support of this important legislation.

Respectfully,

Home Builders Association of Virginia
Abacus Property Solutions
Carytown Merchants Association
Dodson Property Management
Genesis Properties
Historic Housing
Kiwi Development LLC
Main Street Realty
Mitchell Homes
Nelius, LLC
Oregon Hill Business Association
Robinson Street Association
Secco Wine Bar
Spy Rock Development
SWA Construction
The Fan Area Business Alliance
Urban Core
Weyerhaeuser

Virginia Association of REALTORS
Bellevue Merchants Association
Cava Capital
First Richmond Associates
Harrison & Bates, Inc.
Hourigan Construction
Lion's Paw Development Company
Manchester Alliance
Monroe Properties
NorthMarq
Pareto, LLC
RVA Business Works
Shockoe Partnership
Stylecraft Homes
Thalhimer Realty Partners
The Monument Companies
Virginia Commonwealth Bank

Virginia Manufacturers Association
Brookland Park Association
Costen Floors
Fulton Hill Properties
HG Design Studio
Hull Street Merchants Association
Lynx Ventures
Miller and Associates
Nelius LLC
Nota Bene Restaurant
Property Results, LLC
Scott's Addition Boulevard Association
SMBW
SWA Architects
The Crescent Group
The Nolde Company
Walter Parks Architects