



Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Advocating for the Interests of Latinos across the Commonwealth

**2011
Report**

Office of the Governor Liaison

Mr. W. Duane Stafford

Virginia Latino Advisory Board (VLAB) Liaison

A complete copy of this report is found on our website at:

www.vlab.virginia.gov

Or by contacting:

**Office of the Governor
Attn: Mr. W. Duane Stafford
1111 East Broad Street, B042
Richmond, VA 23219
804.692.0147**

Or via e-mail:

vlab@governor.virginia.gov

Report prepared by members of the
Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Commonwealth of Virginia



Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Advocating for the Interests of Latinos across the Commonwealth

January 31, 2012

Governor Robert F. McDonnell
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor McDonnell:

The Virginia Latino Advisory Board is honored to present to you our final report regarding our 2011 activities. We thank you for your support of the Latino community through the Virginia Latino Advisory Board.

In 2011, our mission focused on generating recommendations that align with your goals regarding economic development in the Commonwealth. We investigated ways that the Virginia Latino Advisory Board (VLAB) and Latinos in Virginia can work with state agencies to enact your vision and foster employment for all Virginians.

To that end, we have prepared a report that includes recommendations for the following: 1) international trade and commerce; 2) small business growth in the Latino community; and 3) education and workforce development for adult Latinos in the Commonwealth. These recommendations represent the work of subcommittees within VLAB, utilizing the expertise of VLAB members as well as of members of state agencies and community professionals.

As members of the Virginia Latino Advisory Board, once again we take this opportunity to thank you for the opportunity to serve the Latino community in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Respectfully,

Michel Zajur, Chair
The Virginia Latino Advisory Board

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VLAB Members

Member	City
<i>Term ends 10/14/2011</i>	
Esteban Nieto	Harrisonburg
<i>Term ends 10/14/2012</i>	
Beatriz Amberman	Virginia Beach
Rosaura Aguerrebere	Falls Church
Charlotte Fritts, Treasurer	Winchester
Victor Gomez, Vice Chair	Ladysmith
Elin Doval	Richmond
Gabriel Rojas	Arlington
Gresilda Tilley-Lubbs, Secretary	Roanoke
<i>Term ends 6/30/2014</i>	
Federico Morales	Annandale
Carmen Williams	Chesterfield
Aleyda Kasten	Vienna
Flux Neo	Bluefield
Deborah Munoz	Woodbridge
Laura Ramirez Drain	Reston
Jorge Lozano	Annandale
Jason Miyares	Virginia Beach
<i>Term ends 10/14/2015</i>	
Desi Arnaiz	Manassas
Michel Zajur, Chair	Midlothian
Alexander Vanegas	Manassas
Cecilia Martinez	Alexandria
Omar Rashid	Richmond

Ex-Officio Members

Mr. Michael Eggleston
Public Safety

Mr. Jimmy Rhee
Commerce and Trade

Dr. Mirta Martin
Education

Ms. Georgia Esposito
Transportation

Executive Summary

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Latino population has grown 92% in the past decade, causing Virginia to be designated as a “New Latino State.” In response to these demographic changes, the Virginia Latino Advisory Board (VLAB) serves to advise the Governor regarding the development of economic, professional, cultural, educational, and governmental links among the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Latino community in Virginia, and Latin America. To comply with those responsibilities, the goal of the 2011 VLAB board has been to undertake research to present a factual report that presents recommendations to the Governor relative to issues of importance regarding Latinos in the Commonwealth.

This report presents three principal categories of recommendations: 1) international trade; 2) small business development; and, 3) education and workforce development. For each of these components, we present three to four final recommendations for the Governor. The recommendations are compelling and align with the Governor’s goals for jobs creation in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A summary of the recommendations is found on the following page.

We believe that these recommendations will support the agenda proposed by the Governor to foster “economic opportunity and free enterprise [as] the bedrock of a stable and prosperous Commonwealth. Virginia is home to abundant resources, fiscal responsibility and boundless human potential, and the entrepreneurial spirit is evident throughout this great Commonwealth. However, in light of the unprecedented economic difficulties facing Virginia families and business, the unacceptable high unemployment rate, and the ever-increasing competitiveness of the global economy, bold and innovative ideas are necessary for the Commonwealth to address this significant challenge. The following measures are the first crucial steps to promoting economic recovery and job creation in Virginia” (Executive Order No. 1, 2010).

Summary of Recommendations
from the
Virginia Latino Advisory Board
to
The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell, Governor
2011

International Trade:

- Prioritize efforts to increase trade with Latin America.
- Improve the cultural understanding of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (EDP) and other agencies to better equip them to engage opportunities in Latin American countries.
- Cultivate and create international opportunities by becoming a signatory to trade agreements such as those in place with Peru and Colombia.
- Institute a one-stop-shop to facilitate investment in Virginia by international businesses.

Small Business:

- Better inform the Latino community of procurement opportunities.
- Support and collaborate with existing organizations to better equip Latino businesses to operate in Virginia.
- Improve access to bidding through eVA.

Education/Workforce Development:

- For K-12 students: Provide Latino heritage and other children from economically disadvantaged situations with sufficient support and educational resources to become proficient in academic English.
- For institutions of post-secondary and higher education: Extend and promote programming aimed at orienting Latino parents and students to the U.S. educational system and highlighting the importance of college education through public schools, higher education institutions, community and faith-based groups.
- For adult learners and community programs: Provide business education and Spanish-to-English programs for Latino adults.

Recommendations

Process for Development of Recommendations

When the new board convened in February 2011, a decision was made to form subcommittees to address issues that aligned with job creation in the Commonwealth, identified as one the Governor's priorities for his administration. At that meeting, three subcommittees were formed: international trade, small business creation, and education/workforce development. Each committee was tasked with conducting research to determine ways these three areas could involve the Latino community in the state in all aspects of job creation, whether by bringing Latin American business to Virginia, helping potential Latino small business entrepreneurs to develop new businesses, or preparing a Latino workforce for existing and potential businesses in the state.

Each committee submitted three to four salient recommendations for the Governor. At the Board meeting on December 16, the recommendations were reviewed by the Board, and in a unanimous vote, the Board members approved the recommendations included below as the ones to be submitted to the Governor from the Virginia Latino Advisory Board. In each section, the recommendations are summarized, with an expanded version of each recommendation following, accompanied by the rationale for the recommendation.

International Trade
<p>1. Recommendation: We encourage state organizations to do the following: 1) prioritize efforts to increase trade with Latin America, 2) improve cultural understanding in partnerships to foster engagement in Latin American countries, 3) cultivate and create international trade agreements, and 4) institute a one-stop-shop to facilitate investment in Virginia by international businesses. Rationale:</p>
<p>2. Prioritize the efforts to increase trade with Latin America.</p> <p>The Commonwealth should increase its marketing efforts in Latin American countries to better brand the Virginia image abroad. This would include highlighting Virginia's technological and educational institutions to demonstrate a commitment to global culture and to contrast these efforts with those of competitor states. Other areas to market include Virginia tourism, and cultural and business exchanges. The GDP in Latin American countries is growing faster than anywhere else in the world, and Virginia holds a high and growing percentage of Latino residents who offer their own connections and opportunities. Finally, it might be advisable for the Commonwealth to open a trade office in Latin America, similar to those in India. VLAB strongly encourages the Governor to conduct a trade mission and to open a trade process with Latin America. We recommend that he work with VLAB to determine the details.</p>

3. Improve the cultural understanding of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (EDP) and other agencies to better equip them to engage in opportunities in Latin American countries.

America's neighbors to the south need to be better understood culturally in order to facilitate inroads to investment and exporting. We suggest aggressive cultural training in all sectors by utilizing existing organizations to facilitate connections and to bridge cultures.

4. Cultivate and create international opportunities by becoming a signatory to trade agreements such as those in place with Peru and Colombia.

When the Commonwealth signs these agreements, Virginia businesses will have the opportunity to become suppliers to foreign companies and governments.

5. Institute a one-stop-shop to facilitate investment in Virginia by international businesses.

Provide information about the ease of forming and operating businesses in the Commonwealth. The presence of several agencies that seem to compete to bring businesses from abroad can be confusing to foreign investors. Additionally, this would include creating a Spanish-language environment that would compete with the fact that a Latino company would be much more comfortable locating in Florida or Texas as opposed to Virginia. The Commonwealth must develop a bilingual digital and physical environment that highlights the advantages of investing in Virginia, with emphasis on technological knowledge, financial resources, and ecological commitment to international business.

Small Business

Recommendation: We strongly encourage state organizations to better inform Latino businesses regarding contract availability, address workforce issues, and streamline the procurement and award processes. Rationale:

1. Better inform the Latino community of procurement opportunities.

We recommend that the Small, Woman, and/or Minority-Owned (SWAM) electronic dashboard be reinstated to provide public information about the percentage of contracts being awarded to SWAM businesses. We also recommend that VLAB work with the Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) regarding how to bilingually publicize the contracts and support navigation of the certification process. The DMBE must discuss ways to increase the Latino presence in these contracts.

For several reasons, the availability of procurement opportunities is not reaching Latino suppliers. Direct marketing to the Latino community would improve this situation, whether presented in Spanish or in some other way that would better reach Latino suppliers. The July 13, 2011, “Disparity Study for the Commonwealth of Virginia,” conducted by a research firm, MGT, and submitted to the DMBE shows that Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) were paid 1.87 percent of the total prime construction dollars (over \$1.53 billion) expended by the Commonwealth during the review period.

2. Support and collaborate with existing organizations to better equip Latino businesses to operate in Virginia.

We recommend that support be provided for the several existing organizations statewide that are actively working to increase business savvy through computer training and education regarding Virginia law about how to start and certify a small business.

3. Improve access to bidding through eVA.

The state bidding system, eVA, is the result of an effort to reach more minority suppliers and streamline the bidding process. We recommend making the process more user-friendly to Latinos. We recommend that contract bundling be limited to allow for more opportunities. We recommend that a mentor system be established to provide assistance to new business entrepreneurs.

Education/Workforce Development

Recommendation: We recommend that state organizations provide support and educational resources to foster academic success for children in kindergarten through grade 12, promote college education for Latino students through increased programming for parents and students, and provide more business education and adult English classes for Latino adults. Rationale:

1. **For K-12 students: Provide Latino heritage and other children from economically disadvantaged situations with sufficient support and educational resources to become proficient in academic English.** Such an initiative will enhance success in standardized testing and college entrance exams. There also needs to be increased promotion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education in all grade levels. Encourage students to pursue higher education degrees, and licensure and certification through Career and Technical Education (CTE) at middle and high school levels. Provide support to develop robust CTE programs. Provide support for career coaches from community colleges to work with parents and students to navigate career choices.

2. **For institutions of post-secondary and higher education: Extend and promote programming aimed at orienting Latino parents and students to the U.S. educational system and highlighting the importance of college education through public schools, higher education institutions, community and faith-based groups.** We support the Governor's biennium budget for providing \$200 million to higher education, leading to increased Latino enrollment and graduation. Increase the number of Latino gubernatorial appointees serving on public college and university boards and on the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) Board.

3. **For adult learners and community programs: Provide business education and Spanish-to-English programs for Latino adults.** Provide funding for workforce development through apprenticeships, certification, and career switcher programs in adult education. Fund Adult ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. Encourage public and private partnerships in these endeavors.

Conclusions

The Virginia Latino Advisory Board respectfully submits these recommendations to the Governor. We also respectfully request that VLAB be consulted regarding recommendations the Governor decides to pursue. The Board would be pleased to conduct further research on any of these recommendations as part of the initiative for the 2012 Virginia Latino Advisory Board.

Committee Members 2011

Workforce Development/Education	Small Business/Job Creation	International Trade
Members	Members:	Members:
*Charlotte Fritts	Beatriz Amberman	*Debbie Muñoz
Elin Doval	Elin Doval	Beatriz Amberman
Esteban Nieto	Jason Miyares	Victor Gomez
Gabriel Rojas	Flux Neo	Aleyda Kasten
Gresilda Tilley-Lubbs	Carmen Williams	Jorge Lozano
	Michel Zajur	Carmen Williams
		Michel Zajur

*Indicates Committee Chair

Dates and Locations of 2011 Board Meetings

Friday, February 18, 2011, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Friday, April 29, 2011, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Friday, July 29, 2011, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Friday, October 7, 2011 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Richmond Federal Reserve Bank
701 S. Byrd Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220

December 16, 2011 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Demographics

According to statistical data published by the Pew Latino Center (www.pewhispanic.org), the 2010 Latino population in the United States counted 50.5 million Latinos, comprising 16.3% of the total population. The nation's Latino population was 35.3 million in 2000, representing a growth of 43% over the decade. Similarly, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the 2010 Latino population counts at 631,825, up from 329,540 in 2000, representing a change of 302,285, or 92%. This growth in the Latino population causes Virginia to be designated a "New Latino State" (Pew Latino Center, 2008). Based on this statistical information, it is evident that Latino strengths and challenges must be taken into account as policies and initiatives are formed at state and local levels.

Latinos are considered the fastest-growth segment of the nation's population. This exponential growth has an impact on every aspect of society, including commerce and education. Latinos are opening businesses at a rate three times faster than the national average (www.census.gov). In regard to education, the student population of America's suburban public schools has shot up by 3.4 million in the past decade and a half, and virtually all of this increase (99%) has been due to the enrollment of new Latino, black, and Asian students. Young Latino adults in the United States are more likely to be in school or in the workforce than their counterparts were in previous generations.

Reflecting these demographic changes, the Virginia Latino Advisory Board (VLAB) serves to advise the Governor regarding the development of economic, professional, cultural, educational, and governmental links among the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Latino community in Virginia, and Latin America. To comply with those responsibilities, the goal of the 2011 VLAB board has been to undertake research to present a factual report that presents recommendations to the Governor relative to issues of importance regarding Latinos in the Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,

Gresilda Tilley-Lubbs, Secretary,

Virginia Latino Advisory Board

January 23, 2012



Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Advocating for the Interests of Latinos across the Commonwealth

Appendix A: Overview of the Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Overview

The Virginia Latino Advisory Commission (VLAC) was created by executive order in October of 2003 by former Governor Mark R. Warner to provide information about the growing Latino community in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The VLAC was signed into law and made a permanent board two years later on October 15, 2005.

Today the Virginia Latino Advisory Board (VLAB) serves at the pleasure of Governor Bob McDonnell so that his administration can best serve the Latino constituents of Virginia. The VLAB meets four times a year to hear from local communities across the state to discuss issues facing Latinos in Virginia.

The Board consists of 21 citizen members appointed by the Governor, 15 of whom must be of Latino descent. The initial appointments of VLAB members are staggered to include seven members for a one-year term, six members for a two-year term, five members for a three-year term, and three members for a four-year term. After the initial staggering of terms, board members will serve a term of four years.

The Virginia Latino Advisory Commission, which then became the permanent Virginia Latino Advisory Board, was created in recognition of one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Virginia and the nation as a whole. Latinos in Virginia are native-born U.S. citizens from all parts of the country and foreign-born residents from all over the world. The Latino community represents a diversity of cultures and languages, unique needs and skills, countless contributions, and endless potential for the Commonwealth. The mission of the VLAB is to serve these Virginians who enrich our state and to call upon government officials, local communities, and all constituents to take part in the positive changes that are making Virginia an even better place to live.

Authority

CHAPTER 636 of the Code of Virginia

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 24 of Title 2.2 an article numbered 21, consisting of sections numbered [2.2-2459](#), [2.2-2460](#), and [2.2-2461](#), relating to the Latino Advisory Board..

[H 2420]

Approved March 23, 2005

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 24 of Title 2.2 an article numbered 21, consisting of sections numbered [2.2-2459](#), [2.2-2460](#), and [2.2-2461](#), as follows:

Article 21.
Latino Advisory Board.

§ [2.2-2459](#). *Latino Advisory Board; membership; terms; compensation and expenses.*

A. *The Latino Advisory Board (the Board) is established as an advisory board, within the meaning of § [2.2-2100](#), in the executive branch of state government. The Board shall consist of 21 nonlegislative citizen members, at least 15 of whom shall be of Latino descent, who shall be appointed by the Governor and serve at his pleasure. In addition, the Secretaries of the Commonwealth, Commerce and Trade, Education, Health and Human Resources, Public Safety, and Transportation, or their designees shall serve as ex officio members without voting privileges. All members shall be residents of the Commonwealth.*

B. *After the initial staggering of terms, nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed for a term of four years. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired terms. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two successive four-year terms; however, after the expiration of the remainder of a term to which a member was appointed to fill a vacancy, two additional terms may be served by such member if appointed thereto.*

C. *The Board shall elect from its membership a chairman and vice chairman. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Meetings of the Board shall be limited to four per year and shall be held upon the call of the chairman or whenever the majority of the members so request.*

D. *Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§ [2.2-2813](#) and [2.2-2825](#).*

§ [2.2-2460](#). *Powers and duties; acceptance of gifts and grants.*

A. *The Board shall have the power and duty to:*

1. *Advise the Governor regarding the development of economic, professional, cultural, educational, and governmental links between the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Latino community in Virginia, and Latin America;*

2. *Undertake studies, symposiums, research, and factual reports to gather information to formulate and present recommendations to the Governor relative to issues of concern and importance to the Latino community in the Commonwealth; and*

3. *Advise the Governor as needed regarding any statutory, regulatory, or other issues of importance to the Latino community in the Commonwealth.*

B. *The Board may apply for, accept, and expend gifts, grants, or donations from public or private sources to enable it to carry out its objectives.*

§ [2.2-2461](#). *Staff; cooperation from other state agencies.*

The Office of the Governor shall serve as staff to the Board. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Board upon request.

2. That the intent of this act is to codify the Latino Advisory Commission, which exists pursuant to an executive order of the Governor, as the Latino Advisory Board, a permanent advisory board in the executive branch.

3. That the initial appointments of nonlegislative citizen members in accordance with this act shall be staggered as follows: seven members for a one-year term, six members for a two-year term, five members for a three-year term, and three members for a four-year term.

4. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on October 15, 2005
