

The Virginia Disability Commission's Work Group #3 (Housing and Transportation) met on Thursday, October 28 to discuss recommendations to be presented to the full Disability Commission on November 3. The following recommendations were adopted by the Work Group:

- Livable Home Tax Credit - The Work Group recommended legislation to (i) increase the cap from \$2,000 to \$5,000 per credit, (ii) make the credit available to home builders, and (iii) reserve one half of the \$1 million available annually for new construction and one half for retrofits, except that if one category of funding is not exhausted at the end of a tax year, that money can be used to fund additional credits in the other category. The Governor's Housing Policy Work Group is also considering this recommendation. The Governor's Work Group meets on November 5 to finalize recommendations.
- Housing Choice Vouchers - Barry Merchant reported that he had been in contact with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding the Housing Choice Voucher award process, and will be preparing a memorandum outline changes to the Housing Choice Voucher model that would make the process more efficient, to be submitted to the Department. The Work Group recommended that the Disability Commission review the memorandum before it is sent and prepare a letter, to be included with the memorandum, expressing the Commission's support for the recommended changes.
- Housing Need Data - The Work Group discussed the need for data on housing needs in the Commonwealth, and recommended that the Disability Commission request legislation directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study housing needs, particularly the needs of persons with physical and sensory disabilities, in the Commonwealth.
- Accessibility Standards - The Work Group discussed various options for establishing a group to evaluate existing accessibility standards and develop a standardized set of terms and a model standard for the Commonwealth. The Work Group concluded that the Disability Commission should wait to act on this issue until after the Governor's Housing Policy Work Group reports its findings and conclusions in late November, as the Governor's Work Group may have a recommendation on this issue. If the Governor's Work Group does not have a recommendation on this issue, the Disability Commission may want to consider establishing a work group to pursue development of uniform accessibility standards for the Commonwealth.
- Constitutional Amendment to Article X (Taxation and Finance), Section 6 (Exempt Property) - The Work Group recommended that the Disability Commission consider receiving information about localities' actions related to this amendment, which would allow localities to provide tax relief for disabled homeowners.