



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR  
**GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY**  
IN EACH REGION

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## **GO Virginia Board Certifies Regional Councils** *Regions now eligible to apply for Growth & Opportunity Fund Planning Grants*

**RICHMOND** – GO Virginia ([www.govirginia.org](http://www.govirginia.org)), the business-led initiative to create more higher-paying jobs in Virginia through regional collaboration, took a significant step forward today by certifying the nine regional councils representing each part of the state. The Board also adopted the guidelines related to how each of the nine regions must thoroughly analyze their economies and identify opportunities for economic success.

"As we look to grow and diversify our economy in every region, the regional councils will play a vital role in the implementation of GO Virginia," **Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board Chairman John O. "Dubby" Wynne** said. "Each region has worked hard to identify leaders who are representative of their respective regions and who are committed to leveraging the power of public and private sector collaboration to create more higher paying jobs. We look forward to working with the regions to identify new opportunities for growth."

GO Virginia's nine regional councils are on the front line of the critical analysis to review the challenges facing our regions, prioritize opportunities for growth, and to make recommendations on how the state's investments through GO Virginia should be allocated. Similar to the structure of the state Board, each regional council has a majority of members from the private sector who will work with stakeholders in higher education, economic development, workforce training, local government, regional planning, and other areas to shape how each region implements projects leading to more higher paying jobs. It is currently expected that each region will be eligible for a grant of up to \$650,000 to undertake this planning exercise. Each region is also expected to begin building the capacity to ensure accountability with regard to how public dollars are spent.

Although no projects will be funded until after each regional council completes its planning process, it is anticipated that the councils will be supporting projects that lead to growing existing businesses and developing existing clusters, scaling up small and mid-size companies; establishing start-ups from commercializing research and supporting entrepreneurs; and looking for potential joint economic

development activities to generate investment and higher paying jobs that lead to growth of Commonwealth's economy.

Upon acceptance of the regional plans in September, the regions will then solicit applications to fund projects aligned with their plans, with the first project grants expected shortly thereafter. Throughout the planning and project selection process, there will be numerous opportunities to engage the public to shape how each region works to grow and diversify its economy.

**About the GO Virginia coalition:** The coalition is comprised of business and community leaders, partners in education and government, and interested Virginians from across the Commonwealth who support regional cooperation on private-sector growth, job creation, and career readiness. Bipartisan and business-led, the coalition favors state incentives to encourage collaboration among business, education, and government in each region, providing a framework for implementation of the private sector-focused strategies of leading business organizations and political leaders in both parties. Learn more and join the coalition at [www.govirginia.org](http://www.govirginia.org).

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