



THE THOMAS JEFFERSON  
INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

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**Picking Low Hanging Fruit from the State Budget:  
Sensible Reductions in State Spending**

By:  
Melanie Scarborough

Introduction:  
Delegate Chris Saxman, Chairman  
Cost Cutting Caucus

December 2005

## Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy

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The work of the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy is geared toward educating our political, business and community leadership about the issues facing our society here in Virginia. The Institute offers creative solutions to these problems in a non-partisan manner.

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Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy  
9035 Golden Sunset Lane  
Springfield, Virginia 22153  
703/440-9447  
email: [info@thomasjeffersoninst.org](mailto:info@thomasjeffersoninst.org)  
website: [www.thomasjeffersoninst.org](http://www.thomasjeffersoninst.org)

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## Foreword

Over the years, the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy has issued several studies on how to bring the state budget under better business-like management. This Institute has detailed various efforts that have been made in other states, made suggestion on what can be done in Virginia, held conferences and seminars on this topic with state employees and state legislators, and written dozens of guest columns on this subject.

This study, *Picking Low Hanging Fruit from the State Budget: Sensible Reductions in State Spending*, outlines dozens of ideas where the General Assembly can cut unnecessary and non-priority spending from the state budget.

These proposals are not meant to be the only ones that should be considered, but they are among what should be quite easy to accomplish. Clearly, if the General Assembly won't get rid of the Milk Commission and the Sweet Potato Board, then our taxpayers are destined to see state government continue without critical reform and modernization of its spending habits.

We are proud that the Chairman of the General Assembly's Cost Cutting Caucus, Delegate Chris Saxman (R-Staunton), has written the Introduction to this study. He chairs a Caucus with over 30 members from both political parties who look for items in the budget that can and should be cut or reduced as well as long-range solutions to bring state spending into a more business-like methodology.

The ideas in this study are those of the author, Melanie Scarborough, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Thomas Jefferson Institute or its Board of Directors. This study is brought to the public in order to generate an open and healthy discussion on the state budget and how it might be trimmed back before the large items are confronted such as transportation, public education, higher education and health care. It is these areas where future Jefferson Institute studies will focus. Nothing in this study is meant to influence pending legislation.

Michael W. Thompson, Chairman & President  
Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy  
December 2005



## Introduction

The budgeting process in Virginia is an odd one. First we determine approximately how much revenue will be generated by the economy over a two year period and then we determine how to spend it all.

Rather than asking questions like, “What should government do and how much money will it take to accomplish it?” Instead we only ask, “How much will we have to fight over this year?”

This study demonstrates the need to focus our attention on what is being done, or not, with your tax money. The concept of a million dollars here or there becoming real money is not new and is accurate. It is an intriguing concept because it serves several purposes:

- 1) Allows anyone to easily understand bureaucratic waste
- 2) Focuses on spending value – do we get our money’s worth?
- 3) Shows the difficulty of cutting even obvious spending excesses
- 4) Gives credence to the need for broad based reforms

The concept also can create problems in addressing government wasteful spending:

- 1) The largest cost drivers are camouflaged by the attention on smaller issues
- 2) Makes people distrustful of the entire government and breeds contempt
- 3) Sets up unnecessary political battles which erode confidence in government

This study is valuable on many levels and I commend the Thomas Jefferson Institute for once again leading the good government charge here in Virginia. This study continues to focus attention on the spending side of the ledger.

Chris Saxman, House of Delegates  
Chairman Cost Cutting Caucus



## Executive Summary

“A million here, a million there, and pretty soon you’re talking about real money!”

Former U.S. Senator Everett Dirksen from Illinois is credited with uttering those words about the federal budget. But they could just as easily be said about state budgets – Virginia’s as well as most others.

When Virginia’s General Assembly adjourned this year, lawmakers passed up the opportunity to address a long-standing problem: *Although taxpayers send more money each year to fund state government and auxiliary agencies, no one knows exactly where all the money goes, how it is spent, or whether the funds produce the promised outcomes.*

Following the economic turn down of four years ago, beginning in late 2000 and then exacerbated by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, our state government faced some fiscally difficult times. However, that has changed in the past 15 months. Last year’s surplus (as of June 30, 2004) was \$324 million *before* the tax hike of \$1.4 billion went into effect in the current two-year budget. The surplus for the first year of the current two-year budget was just short of \$2 billion and the bi-annual budget cycle is only half over! *If the economy isn’t knocked off track with surging oil prices, there is every reason to expect \$1 to \$2 billion in additional surplus by the end of this budget cycle, June 30, 2006.*

The real challenge confronting Virginia at this time doesn’t seem to be a lack of revenue. Rather, the challenge is controlling the increases in spending. The average annual growth of spending was more than 8.12 percent between 1997 and 2006. In just 10 years, the budget has increased by more than 100 percent. And at the current rate of spending increase, the biennium budget will reach more than \$110 billion in the 2012-2014 budget period – only four budget cycles from now.

For the ordinary citizen it’s hard to conceptualize “billions of dollars,” or even “hundreds of millions.” For most taxpayers, “real money” is spending \$750,000 a year to staff a Depression-era commission to supervise the milk supply (and arguably keep prices artificially high). “Real waste” is learning that, until this year, Medicaid paid for Viagra for high-risk sex offenders (a practice now stopped).

But for *any* Virginian – including most members of the General Assembly – it’s impossible to determine what is actually in our state budget which offers no detail, little history, and no performance benchmarks.

A new state budget format is being designed by the Warner Administration that will hopefully give legislators, the Governor’s staff and appointees, business leaders and interested citizens a better grasp of the issues which cannot be found in the current budget document. If this new budget format does not provide the needed detail that other state budgets provide, then more work will need to be done on this document by the next governor.

In the meantime there are some budget areas that deserve careful review. These candidates for budget cuts seem self evident and easily understood. These are outlined in this study and are meant only as a starting point in this discussion of prioritizing the spending in our state budget and ridding it of unnecessary spending.

Clearly, the major budget drivers are public education, Medicaid and public safety. These items deserve serious thought and will create a huge debate once they become the focus of budget reform. This study looks at “the low hanging fruit” that should be easier to trim from the state budget.

A new bi-annual budget will be debated when the General Assembly convenes in January next year. Before the new two-year budget is passed, lawmakers should pluck the low-hanging fruit of unnecessary items off the spending tree, devise a sound budgetary system that is transparent, and restore taxpayer confidence that has been badly damaged by the whipsaw effects of tax cuts predicated on overestimated revenues and tax increases justified by revenue projections that turned out to be too low.

## **Budget Pork?**

The national organization Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW) annually releases the “Congressional Pig Book,” a report outlining the costs of the time-honored tradition of “congressional pork.” United States Senator John McCain highlights many of the items in this annual report on the front page of his official website.

CAGW defines “pork” as meeting at least two of the following seven criteria –

- Requested by only one member of Congress;
- Not specifically authorized;
- Not competitively awarded;
- Not requested by the President;
- Greatly exceeds the President’s budget request or the previous year’s funding;
- Not the subject of congressional hearings, or
- Serves only a local or special interest.

Fortunately, it seems Virginia’s budget has fewer items meeting those criteria than do the budgets of many other states. That is not to say, however, that there are none at all.

### **Special Projects and Non-State Agencies**

There were more than \$30 million in budget items added into Virginia’s budget at the committee and subcommittee levels of the Appropriations process this year alone. Some are one-time capital projects designed to renovate or build museums, theaters and education centers. Others are small donations, ranging from \$7,000 to \$250,000, added by individual members of the General Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

These funds go to buildings “of historical significance,” for constructing memorials to war participants, to convert buildings into community centers, to restore cemeteries or for relatively small donations to cultural and historical societies. Few of these items are major expenditures, but added together total tens of millions of dollars.

There may well be a rationale for each item, and the private organizations that manage these sites may well be efficient non-profits. Yet, they continue to fit the criteria used for purely “pork barrel projects” – not competitively awarded, not part of the regular appropriations process, not a part of the original budget request.

Taxpayers deserve better than to have millions of dollars added to the budget without hearings or effective accountability. If the projects are genuinely worthy of taxpayer support – and not just legislator examples of “bringing home the bacon” – a better system must be devised to sort out the worthy from the unworthy. Without such a system, funding of legislator “pet projects” will remain a consequence of influence and political favoritism rather than merit.

If the General Assembly wishes to underwrite these and other projects as worthy, and since most of these grants are administered by the Department of Historic Resources, the General Assembly should provide for these funds in the Department’s budget and direct the Department to develop a method for evaluating grants on a competitive basis.

## **Outmoded Programs?**

“The closest thing to eternal life is a government program,” said Ronald Reagan. This also seems to be the case with some state programs here in Virginia.

Today, dozens of programs, large and small, continue to exist and even thrive when they should be candidates for dissolution. A few examples:

### **Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation Program**

In 1940, two-thirds of Virginia homes lacked indoor plumbing. Today that percentage is estimated to be about half of one percent.<sup>ii</sup> But Virginia’s Indoor Plumbing Program not only hasn’t gone away; it’s *expanded*. To be eligible for assistance, homeowners no longer need to lack indoor-plumbing; the program now pays for upgrades of existing facilities.

And today the program no longer limits itself to installing plumbing. When a plumbing project is undertaken; the state now requires that the entire house be brought up to code. So a program that originally helped poor people get indoor toilets now distributes \$16 million in federal funds and \$3 million from the state for whole-house renovation. Additionally, the legislature directs program administrators to “make every reasonable effort to provide participants basic financial counseling....”<sup>iii</sup>

The Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation Program also may provide “relief from overcrowded conditions.” So, home additions that have nothing to do with plumbing also may be built at taxpayers’ expense. Additionally, “each beneficiary household receives training in house maintenance, cleaning, and budgeting.”<sup>iv</sup> Since when does Mopping 101 and a tutorial in checkbook balancing have any bearing on indoor plumbing?

Why not use the money for its original purpose rather than add new dimensions to the program?

### **The Milk Commission**

The Milk Commission was created in 1934 to supervise the producer-price, supply, and sale of milk in Virginia. Today, its apparent purpose is to employ eight individuals full-time at a cost of more than \$750,000. Its stated mission has nothing to do with health and safety, but rather is to “assure Virginians a constant supply of fresh and wholesome Grade-A milk at a fair and reasonable price,”<sup>v</sup> which may have been necessary during the Depression, but almost certainly is not today.

### **Tobacco Tax Stamps**

Wholesalers of tobacco products are required to pay state and local excise taxes on what they deliver to retailers. In the early days of our nation, it was customary for stamps to be placed on products like alcohol and tobacco to enforce the payment of these excise taxes.

More than 200 years later, in the age of hand-held computers, Virginia continues to be one of fewer than 20 states using tobacco stamps affixed to every cigarette pack. Modern accounting techniques relying on monthly sales statements and periodic audits of wholesalers might be a more efficient enforcement tool than a stamp process created when Virginia was a colony.

One argument used against an audit process is that Virginia’s Tax Department has just three employees to audit tobacco sales, and 30 or more field auditors would need to be hired at a cost of \$1.6 million. But the state currently and correctly reimburses wholesalers for their cost in affixing the stamps in their warehouses. This year that cost will exceed \$4 million.

\$1.6 million vs. \$4 million: You do the math.

### **Prison Warehouses**

When Virginia contracted out for the design, construction, and operation of two new prisons, administrators noted a significant difference in cost between prisons they operated and those to be operated by the private sector. One reason: state prisons maintained a warehouse (and staff to protect it) for a 30-day supply of food; privately-run prisons maintained only a five day supply.<sup>vi</sup>

When state prison administrators asked why state prisons had a warehouse for a 30-day supply of food, the answer was, “We’ve always done it that way.” In fact, the practice harkens back to the days of mule trains and dirt roads, when inclement weather could delay food delivery for weeks and prisons *had* to have a large supply of food on hand.

But in the age of overnight delivery systems, the state prisons haven’t changed – and to this day state prisons still maintain a 30-day supply of food in their warehouses.<sup>vii</sup>

### **Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)**

In 1903, when the boll weevil was devastating the cotton business from the fields to the clothing factories, a special agent in the U. S. Department of Agriculture initiated demonstration farms to show rural Americans the most efficient ways to farm and conserve their produce.<sup>viii</sup> A century later, the U. S. is no longer predominantly rural – and modern farmers are likely to turn to computers when they need advice. Yet Virginia taxpayers spend nearly \$80 million a year to fund 107 county extension offices.

The VCEs effort to maintain relevance in urban regions is almost comical. In Northern Virginia, the VCE provides vital information and step-by-step procedures for... visitors to public restrooms. Laminated posters read, in total:

- 1. Wash hands.*
- 2. Use soap.*
- 3. Wash hands and count to 20.*
- 4. Rinse completely.*
- 5. Dry hands with paper towel.*
- 6. Put paper towel in trash.*

This constitutes agricultural advice so critical it demands taxpayer funding? Why not simply require such signs to be in the restrooms and let the establishments go out and buy these from the private sector?

Northern Virginians can receive help from their extension agencies with “Soil Testing and Fertilization Recommendations” or “Insect, Disease, and Weed Identification and Control Measures,” presumably all for the “farmer” with a dozen tomato plants in his backyard. Local VCEs also instruct on “Appreciating Snow” (most Virginians likely would prefer spending taxes on snow *removal*), “Gourds Give Year-Round Pleasure,” “You Can Grow Hardy Kiwis,” “Plant a Tree to Celebrate Your Wedding,” and a host of other non-farming matters.<sup>ix</sup>

Aren’t these questions that local plant and flower nurseries answer every day? Do we really need taxpayer-funded programs for the suburban gardener?

At the 4-H conference center in Front Royal last spring seminars were scheduled in

mandolin-making and “Beginner’s Bluegrass.” Why not simply let local music clubs do this if there is a need for it?

Many – perhaps most – of the VCE’s programs have no relationship to agricultural guidance.<sup>x</sup> Its Family and Community Sciences program offers instruction on:

- Adolescents & Teens
- Health Care
- Loss of Income
- Marriage & Divorce
- Stress
- Insurance
- Estate and Retirement Planning

The VCEs clearly have exceeded their original mission in order to justify continued state funding.

## **Government’s Role – Or Charity’s?**

Government becomes more expensive as it shifts to taxpayers those roles that could be (or previously were) performed by charities or private enterprise. For instance:

### **The Auxiliary Grant program**

Virginia’s Department of Social Services says the purpose of the Auxiliary Grant Program is to provide additional income for individuals living in assisted-living facilities who either receive Supplemental Security Income or are not eligible for it because of excess income.

“Individuals receiving an auxiliary grant also receive a personal allowance,” the department explains. “The personal allowance is used by the resident for such things as clothing, medical co-payments, personal toiletries, tobacco products, sodas, snacks, over-the-counter and non-prescription medications, prescriptions not covered by Medicaid, dental care, eyeglasses, provision of a personal telephone and long-distance service, personal transportation, and activities outside of what is offered by the assisted living facility or adult foster care provider.”<sup>xi</sup>

To many minds, sodas, cologne, cigarettes, candy bars, and private phone lines are what former Governor Doug Wilder might have described as “niceties, not necessities.” Most nursing-home residents have relatives who can provide them with niceties. Scout troops, church groups, and civic organizations routinely deliver niceties to nursing homes, and should be encouraged to do so. This is not a role government should play.

## **Financial Assistance for Public Broadcasting**

Virginia taxpayers still contribute more than \$3 million annually to support PBS, even though the need for alternative television fare is long past. Decades ago, when three commercial networks offered homogenous entertainment, public television was a public service. But with the expansion of cable and pay-for-view channels, TV viewers have hundreds of options available to them. There is no reason for taxpayers to fund television programs that are educational and edifying when the History Channel, the Discovery Channel, Arts & Entertainment, the Science Channel and many others provide the same service as a commercial enterprise. PBS offers many fine programs and has a devoted audience, but there is no reason that audience should not pay for the service just as they would pay for any other.

## **Spendfest?**

As the state struggles with funding Medicaid and keeping up with the projected increases in college enrollment and the need for infrastructure development, the items below seem to be less-than-priority and should be considered for cutting out of the budget.

- While claiming that it needs more money from taxpayers, the College of William & Mary maintains a suite of offices in Washington, D.C., on pricey Massachusetts Avenue. The W&M suite includes a fully equipped conference room that can accommodate up to 25 people; a workstation with computer and internet access; a smaller room furnished with a sofa, chairs, and TV/VCR -- suitable for smaller meetings; and other offices available for visitors' use.<sup>xii</sup> Staffed by only two individuals, the office seems to exist for little reason other than to provide comfortable surroundings for visiting school officials. Its stated mission is to reach out to local alums and prospective students, but such lavish office space is not needed for two people to perform those tasks. Moreover, the suite is located inside the Carnegie Endowment Building, which has conference rooms and offices that W&M could rent as needed. And the neighboring Council on Foreign Relations has a conference room that W&M may use at no charge.<sup>xiii</sup>

How many significant scholarships could be awarded to needy students if this office space was not so plush?Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

- The Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield County receives generous state funding for renovation and upkeep even though the park -- in the midst of a suburban area -- serves primarily as a neighborhood pool. If the state ceded Pocahontas park to the locality, those who most use the park could pay for it.<sup>xiv</sup>
- For years, politicians from both parties have pledged to end state funding of the Virginia Equine Center in Lexington, operated by the Virginia Horse Center Foundation, a 501(c) (3) organization.<sup>xv</sup> The 2003 state budget pledged to wean the Center off of taxpayer support by the year 2008.

Instead, the original 2004-2006 biennium budget called for the Center to receive \$890,000 from taxpayers this year and \$170,000 next year. This year, the General Assembly increased these amounts by \$720,349. And then Governor Warner increased the total by another \$10,000.<sup>xvi</sup> Why is the legislature spending taxpayers' money to essentially make a charitable donation to this foundation? The horse industry in Virginia and those participating in horse shows should pay for this facility.

- The current two-year budget gives nearly \$6 million to the Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation, the state's new facility for sexual predators to fund 137 staff positions. As of last year, the center housed nine inmates.<sup>xvii</sup>
- Excise taxes are levied on producers of certain agricultural products and distributed to various boards charged with promoting those products. Most have a uniform mission set by the legislature: "The [Title] Board shall have power to expend funds to provide for programs of research, education, publicity, and the promotion of sale and use of [product]; to manage the funds so as to accumulate a reserve for contingencies; to establish an office and employ such technical, professional and other assistants as may be required; to contract for research, publicity, advertising, and other promotional services."<sup>xviii</sup>

Most boards have seven to 12 members, appointed by the governor. Board members generally receive no direct compensation, but are reimbursed for official expenses. Although the money for these Boards doesn't come from the general fund, excise taxes are passed along to consumers. So, ultimately, taxpayers provide the:

Bright Flue-Cured Tobacco Board: \$174,000;  
Corn Board: \$250,000;  
Egg Board: \$210,000;  
Pork Industry Board: \$204,787 and 1 staff position;  
Soybean Board: \$410,000;  
State Apple Board: \$309,883 and 1 staff position;  
Peanut Board: \$325,000;  
Sweet Potato Board: \$3,835;  
Cattle Industry Board: \$500,000; .  
Virginia Small Grains Board: \$300,000;  
Virginia Horse Industry Board: \$130,000;  
Virginia Sheep Industry Board: \$47,550;  
Virginia Irish Potato Board: \$25,000;  
Virginia Cotton Board: \$225,000.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the need to promote the "Virginia Irish Potato" using government funding is surely an outdated concept. Taxpayer funds – whether raised by excise taxes or income taxes – ought not to be expended on behalf of specific industry sectors for programs that could just as easily be conducted by private trade associations.

## Wilder Commission Report

Shortly after taking office, Governor Mark Warner established the Governor's Commission on Efficiency and Effectiveness, chaired by former Governor Douglas Wilder.

In December 2002, the "Wilder Commission" issued its recommendations. Among those proposals was elimination of 15 percent of existing state agencies and departments (estimating a savings of more than \$500 million from streamlinings, outsourcings, and eliminations); specific identification of real savings totaling approximately \$750 million annually by changing the way the Commonwealth performs business operations (without any reduction in current services); and proposals for continuous improvement of government operations.

A number of these recommendations were implemented within one year, either by the Warner Administration or the General Assembly. Others were designed to be phased in over a two to four year period. But a number of recommendations have not been implemented, either because of decisions by Governor Warner or the General Assembly or both. Among the items rejected or otherwise not acted upon –

- Merging the Virginia Museum of Natural History into the Science Museum of Virginia
- Merging the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department into the Department of Conservation and Recreation and maintaining it as a separate division within the department
- Consolidating the Charitable Gaming, Racing, and Lottery departments
- Integrating Richard Bland College into the community college system
- Assessing the value of privatization of ABC (Alcohol Beverage Control) retail operations
- Merging Chippokes Plantation into the Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Merging the Departments of Blind and Vision Impaired, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Rehabilitative Services
- Removing Virginia Correctional Enterprises as a mandatory supplier for universities
- Reducing inventory balances in VDOT, DOC and ABC by 20 percent
- Requesting that the Auditor of Public Accounts develop a standard for inventories in excess of \$10,000 and require that inventory of less than \$1 million per agency be captured in the accounting system as inventory
- Standardizing inventory management practices across state agencies
- Enhance government planning and efficiency by giving the people the right to re-elect the Governor as in 49 other states
- Change the budget cycle so that an incoming Governor would offer modifications to the second year of a biennial budget upon taking office, and then be able to his own biennial budget in the second year of his or her term.
- Fund a performance-based compensation system
- Revisit the actuarial assumptions of the retirement system and consider moving the retirement system to a partial or total defined contribution or hybrid plan.

Unquestionably, Governor Warner and the Virginia General Assembly made significant headway in acting on the recommendations of the Wilder Commission. But there remains an urgent need to leave no stone unturned in demanding efficiencies in government – and those common sense efficiencies should take precedence over political considerations that frequently immobilize legislators from taking action. These Wilder Commission recommendations need to be acted upon and if not implemented, the taxpayers have a right to know why that decision was made.

## **Conclusion**

Gov. Doug Wilder led Virginia through lean financial times in the early 1990s by remaining true to his conviction that “niceties aren’t necessities.” It might be nice for William & Mary officials to have an office in Washington -- but is it necessary? It is nice for elderly people to have perfume and candy, but should taxpayers supply them? It is nice when county extension agencies offer help with growing flowers, but is that a proper role for government?

According to the Jeffersonian model, government should provide collectively only what cannot be supplied individually: *e.g.*, police forces, fire departments, public education, environmental protection. It is not the role of government to lay first claim on income and divvy up the spoils.

With Virginia’s state revenue increasing by more than \$3.5 billion over the two-year biennium, lawmakers face the temptation of excess. Careful examination of present state spending reveals in many cases duplication, anachronism, unnecessary funding -- even spending that is downright silly. Citizens are best served by legislators who will defend the taxpayers’ money as their own. Virginians who work hard to bring home the bacon to their families don’t want to see their taxes squandered by our elected officials on items such as those outlined in this study

There are likely more items buried in the state budget that can’t be found easily with the current document that is crafted to keep the spotlight off of specific spending. This report highlights just a few of the areas that should be candidates for the cutting table in January when the new General Assembly convenes.

## Footnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> <http://leg2.state.va.us/WebData/05amend.nsf/ebea1c0863d2f61b8525689e00349981/ef2694d649ac8b7285256fb500501d0b?OpenDocument&Highlight=0,531>
- <sup>ii</sup> Theodore Koebel, “Virginia Housing Facts – Units Lacking Indoor Plumbing,” Virginia Indoor Plumbing Program.
- <sup>iii</sup> Department of Housing and Community Development budget, Item 111.B.2.
- <sup>iv</sup> Home Investment Partnership Program 2004 Program Design and Annual Action Plan Draft, p. 20.
- <sup>v</sup> Mission Statement, Virginia’s Milk Commission.
- <sup>vi</sup> Adrian T. Moore, Geoffrey F. Segal, and John McCormally, “Infrastructure Outsourcing: Leveraging Concrete, Steel, and Asphalt with Public-Private Partnerships,” Reason Foundation, September 2000.
- <sup>vii</sup> Email exchange with Geoffrey F. Segal, January 17, 2005.
- <sup>viii</sup> Virginia Cooperative Extension Service.
- <sup>ix</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xi</sup> Virginia Department of Health and Human Services.
- <sup>xii</sup> The College of William & Mary.
- <sup>xiii</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xiv</sup> Robert Lauterberg, former Director of the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget.
- <sup>xv</sup> “ten Questions for John F. R. Scott, III”; *The Virginia Horse Journal*, 2004.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Virginia State Budget Adoption and subsequent amendments, 2005.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation, “Presentation to the House Appropriations Committee,” January 21, 2004.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Virginia Code 3.1-796.11:2.

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### **About the Author**

Melanie Scarborough writes a column on Virginia politics for the *Washington Post*, in which she frequently criticizes the growth of state government and the higher taxes required to support it. According to Will Vehrs, editor of *Commonwealth Clips*, "A lot of Virginia conservatives wish at least a few Virginia Republicans had the 'chops' of Melanie Scarborough."

In addition to writing for the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy, Ms. Scarborough has written papers for the Lexington Institute, the Cato Institute, and the Alexis de Tocqueville Institute. Before moving to Washington, she was an award-winning editorial writer for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Her work also has appeared in *Roll Call*, the *Indianapolis Star*, the *Washington Times*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Daily Oklahoman*, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, *The World & I*, the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, the *Virginian-Pilot*, the *Fredericksburg Freelance-Star*, and *Mississippi Magic*, among others.

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*“... a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.”*

*Thomas Jefferson*

*1801*

Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy  
9035 Golden Sunset Lane  
Springfield, Virginia 22153  
703.440.9447  
info@thomasjeffersoninst.org  
www.thomasjeffersoninst.org