

One of the essential elements of a representative democracy is for elected officials sent “to do the people’s business” to have a working knowledge of the people, area and interests he or she represents. The opportunity to add comments here will assist in my efforts to represent the people of Culpeper and the 17th senatorial district.

Culpeper, like much of Virginia, is undergoing dramatic democratic change brought by many new residents moving into the area at an unbelievably rapid rate. This historic change places demands on core government services which are challenged to meet the public’s needs. School construction and staffing are a huge expense as populations increase with school aged children. Additional deputies, larger jails and more court staff are required to meet the need of providing essential public safety. Communities deserve and demand state of the art fire, rescue and other essential life support systems. Our roads and highways have become clogged with more traffic than the design of our current system will absorb. The list goes on with more libraries, parks & recreational facilities, and affordable, accessible health care.

No matter what specific political philosophy one holds; there is little question in my mind that more people equals more core government services. The key is how it is provided, who pays for it and how is it managed. Given the two options of a having either a stagnant, declining state or one that is vibrant with “growing pains”, my preference is the latter. It is a huge challenge to meet these demands; but it is challenge ripe with many fruits.

As one to whom you have entrusted the responsibility of making state governmental decisions on your behalf, I will continue as I have for the past twenty-two years as a State Senator: to take my work seriously, exercising caution and care in using your tax dollars. At times when the political debate becomes shrill with “Do or Don’t”, I like to think instead, “How do we do this in the most cost effective, manageable way?” Often I draw back to a basic tenet of government, “Trust the people”...after all, it is to whom and for whom that I work. My effectiveness is enhanced by meeting with and hearing from you.

My service on the Senate Committees of Finance; Education and Health; and Transportation, coupled with being number four in seniority of forty senators, enables me to work on your behalf. I work more efficiently when I hear from you and I invite your active participation by contacting me:

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I am your representative, and as such, your input is essential.
It is your government...I represent you.