



"Looking Toward Tomorrow's City"

Virginia
Beach
Vision, Inc.

February 13, 2008

The Honorable Lacey E. Putney
Virginia House of Delegates
Post Office Box 406
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Delegate Putney:

On behalf of Virginia Beach Vision, Inc. and its membership of 110 business and civic leaders, I ask you to **support inclusion of funding for Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) in the pending bond package for higher education and passage of SB 613, establishing EVMS as a state agency.**

Since EVMS was founded and chartered by the state in 1964, the Hampton Roads region has grown to become home to 25% of the Commonwealth's population. Additionally, the region, like the state and the nation, faces an aging population and a growing shortage of health care providers. EVMS already has a measurable impact on the availability of physicians. Today, 1 in 4 doctors in Hampton Roads is either a graduate or faculty member of EVMS. To keep pace with demand, it is now necessary for EVMS to increase its student capacity.

Both VCU and a new Virginia Tech medical school to be located in Roanoke are included in the bonding package, each to receive \$59 million. Neither of these regions have the concentration of population found in Hampton Roads.

With the national attention EVMS has generated for the Commonwealth through its Jones Institute and cutting edge research in diabetes, EVMS has proven a tremendous bargain for the state within the educational and medical community. It is time the Commonwealth became a full funding partner with the school to continue this success.

The EVMS Board of Visitors has unanimously approved the request to make EVMS a state agency, and has agreed to work with the state and the General Assembly to develop a plan for this transition, including state appointments to the EVMS Board and oversight by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Virginia Beach Vision supports passage of SB 613 to formally reconstitute EVMS as a state agency and encourages your adoption of this legislation and inclusion of EVMS as an equal partner with the other medical schools in the bonding package.

Respectfully,

Stephen R. Davis
President of the Board

Cc: Virginia Beach legislative delegation
Harry T. Lester, President, EVMS

Post Office Box 68051 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23471-0051 Phone (757) 497-1447