

**SUPPORT FOR RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE TO TRANSITION  
TO AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College was established in 1960 as one of five separate institutions overseen by the Board of Visitors of the Colleges of William and Mary;

WHEREAS, the Virginia General Assembly subsequently granted three of these institutions independent governing boards, leading to the creation of Old Dominion University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Christopher Newport University as independent entities;

WHEREAS, as Virginia's only junior college, Richard Bland College has responded to General Assembly directives since 2014 to develop collaborative and innovative educational approaches, strengthening educational attainment, credentialing, and workforce development for Virginia citizens, thereby supporting the Commonwealth's economic growth;

WHEREAS, the 2022 General Assembly directed Richard Bland College to provide a roadmap for transitioning to an innovative educational model that would support high-demand jobs and key industries driving economic development in Dinwiddie County, the Petersburg area, the Virginia Gateway Region, and throughout the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2022, Richard Bland College submitted its report, *A Model for Higher Education Innovation*, which defined the College as a unique, hybrid model in Virginia and recommended the establishment of an independent Board of Visitors dedicated to overseeing its unique mission;

WHEREAS, the 2023 Special Session Budget Bill (Item 156, H.1-3) directed the Virginia Secretary of Education, in collaboration with the SCHEV Director, the Secretary of Finance, and other stakeholders, to evaluate educational attainment strategies, alternative delivery methods, and economic and community development initiatives for Richard Bland College, including a specific assessment of its governance model;

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Education submitted a final report on August 14, 2024, affirming the recommendation to establish a new, independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College;

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College is a vital contributor to the educational and economic well-being of Dinwiddie County and the surrounding region, offering accessible, high-quality education and building partnerships with local employers to meet high-demand job needs;

WHEREAS, the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported Richard Bland College's transition to independent governance on December 20, 2022, recognizing the positive impact that an independent governing structure could have on the College, Dinwiddie County, and the wider region;

WHEREAS, an independent governance structure would allow Richard Bland College to be more agile and responsive to the workforce needs of Dinwiddie County and support sustainable economic growth across Southside Virginia;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors in Virginia reaffirms its strong support for Richard Bland College's transition to an independent governance structure and

commits to advocating for this legislative change in partnership with state legislators, community stakeholders, and regional partners. The Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors recognizes and supports the essential role Richard Bland College plays in enhancing the educational, workforce, and economic development of Dinwiddie County and Southside Virginia.