

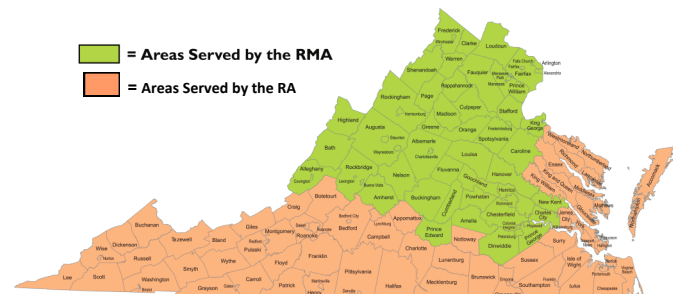
VRF MISSION STATEMENT

The **Virginia Retail Federation** is the advocacy arm of the Retail Alliance® and the Retail Merchants Association. The Federation's mission is to advocate on behalf of local and regional independent retailers, as well as franchise and national retailers through a network of locally focused representatives and chapters that access grass-root retail communities throughout Virginia.



The first major accomplishment of the VRF in its inaugural session was its recognition by members of the House, Senate, Attorney General's, Governor's and the Lt. Governor's Offices as an organization with integrity, energy, and financial backing. The Retail Alliance® and the Retail Merchants Association and have spent many years developing positive working relationships with elected officials. Those efforts have enabled the VRF to move forward with a single voice for the retail industry.

For more information on these and other legislative issues, please visit www.virginiaretailfederation.com. Your comments & suggestions are always welcome. Contact Margaret Ballard, 757-455-9395 or email mballard@retail-alliance.com George Peyton, 804-662-5500 or email gpeyton@retailmerchants.com



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STAYING ON TOP OF THE HILL



Highlights from the first Virginia Retail Federation (VRF) General Assembly 2008

1 Sales Tax Absorption VRF opposed legislation that would have allowed retailers to absorb the sales tax at any time during the year. Preventing the wholesale use of Sales Tax Holidays as an advertising gimmick at any time during the year preserves the significance of the 3 current Sales Tax Holidays.

2 Felony Threshold VRF prevented the passage of the bill (SB351) that would have raised the felony threshold from \$200 to \$500.

3 Plastic Bags A ban on plastic bags was prevented by an agreement between the VRF and legislators that introduced the bill. Further action on this issue will take place this summer.

4 Rebates VRF prevented the passage of a bill that would have made it a prohibited practice for retailers to advertise merchandise for sale in a manner that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the selling price of the goods was the ultimate price to be paid by the customer after the customer redeems the manufacturer's rebate.

5 Antiques VRF opposed the bill that would require any person, firm, partnership, association, or corporation engaged in the business of buying or selling antique, vintage, or collectible items to designate such items as antique, vintage, or collectible.

6 Child Safety VRF testified in opposition to the Child Toy Safety Act of 2008, which was carried over to next year. This bill did not provide clarity as to how a retailer selling toys would be notified of a manufacturer's recall, yet it would hold that retailer legally accountable for injuries incurred by selling a recalled toy.

7 Petty Larceny VRF supported SB618 which mandates that a person who is convicted of petty larceny for a 2nd time must undergo substance abuse screening as part of the sentence.

8 Smoking The House General Laws subcommittee defeated 3 Senate bills that would have banned smoking in restaurants, all public places, or given localities the ability to regulate smoking. VRF opposed these bills.

9 Homestead Act VRF opposed this bill because tax relief for homeowners would create tax increases for retailers and other businesses. This local option tax relief bill was defeated in the Senate. A large coalition of business organizations spear-headed by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce helped defeat this bill.

10 School Calendar VRF opposed the bill because many retailers rely on the employment of school age employees during the busy summer season. HB 255 would have allowed schools to open prior to Labor Day, and was defeated.

11 Employee Restroom Access VRF opposed this bill because of security risks. HB 733 would have required retail stores without public restrooms to allow customers, with certain medical conditions, to use employee restrooms. The bill failed in committee.

12 Credit freeze HB1311 and SB576 passed. Both bills were introduced at the request of the financial industry and supported by most organizations, including VRF. The bill allows any consumer to freeze access to his/her credit report.



Delegate Bobby Orrick and George Peyton, Vice President, VRF



Margaret Ballard, Vice President, VRF, and Attorney General Bob McDonald

