



2015-2016

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

TO

THE HONORABLE TERENCE R. MCAULIFFE

[●], 2016

VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Patrick Henry Building

1111 E. Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23219

<http://vaab.virginia.gov/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS (to be confirmed)

I. Executive Summary2

II. Introduction4

III. Board Activities6

IV. Findings and Recommendations9

 1. Enhanced Asian Muslim Awareness9

 2. Economic Development - The New Virginia Economy..... 12

 3. Voter Engagement - Every Vote Matters..... 17

 4. Access to the Commonwealth - Connecting to a Constituency..... 19

V. Looking Forward..... 21

VI. References.....23

I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board ("**VAAB**") submits this executive summary of its annual report to the Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe for review and action.

Since its last report, submitted October 6, 2015, the VAAB engaged in numerous fact-findings and community discussions throughout the Commonwealth to identify and research the opportunities and critical needs of Asian American Pacific Islander ("**AAPI**") communities. Our efforts have identified four topics critical to AAPI communities and recommends specific action items for the administration:

- Enhanced Asian Muslim Awareness
- Economic Development
- Voter Engagement
- Access to the Commonwealth

Enhanced Asian Muslim Awareness. Anti-Muslim sentiment -- from religious profiling to violence to bullying -- remains an extraordinary challenge for the Muslims in the Commonwealth of Virginia. State government, in partnership with the Muslim community and other stakeholders, can help break down these social injustices and unlawful acts by enhancing education to raise awareness of these issues and providing much needed support in three key areas: education, law enforcement and youth outreach.

Action items:

- The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) should continue to sponsor diversity training, education and awareness for teachers and students, partnering with subject matter experts.
- VDOE should include religious awareness (including Islam) as part of the cultural competency curriculum and manual for Virginia schools.
- Education/training curriculum for Virginia's law enforcement agencies should include religious cultural competency, including education about Islam and Virginia's Muslim communities, partnering with subject matter experts.
- Anti-Bullying efforts, particularly addressing bullying experiences among Asian Muslim students and youth, must be given a higher and visible platform by the Governor and the Secretary of Education.

Economic Development – The New Virginia Economy. Following last year's efforts to canvas the board rooms and executives of Asian and U.S. companies in Virginia driving economic growth, we focused on two primary issues this year. First, we revisited the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement and analyzed its potential impact on Virginia. Second, we investigated the role that Virginia's colleges and universities have in spurring economic development and trade through their outreach to points in Asia. During the past year, we held two board meetings devoted to each of these topics.

Action items:

- While the TPP is not directly influenced by state actions, there may be clear benefits, but also lingering questions regarding its impact on Virginia,

particularly with respect to dispute settlement. To that end, outreach to those Virginia businesses, labor groups and other interests potentially impacted the most by TPP and soliciting their feedback would be well-received “business community building.”

- Highlight and promote Virginia’s college and university international economic outreach with private sector through targeted business forums, collaboration with state and regional economic development organizations and chambers of commerce and Department of Commerce-sponsored roundtables.

Voter Engagement - Every Vote Matters. Nationally, Asian Americans make up only about 4 percent of eligible voters. But in Virginia, the AAPI population constitutes roughly 5 percent of Virginia’s electorate, and based on recent electoral results, that segment could prove decisive in a close race.

Action item: · Review recent election data from the Board of Elections to address longstanding issues as noted in the Presidential Commission on Election Administration report in 2014. In addition, allow access to this data to prominent political scientists and educators, to review best practices and increase efficiencies.

Access to the Commonwealth- Connecting to a Constituency. The Virginia Asian Advisory Board can and has impact on the various issues effecting the AAPI community, however due to the nature and tenure of appointed Boards, the impacts may not be sustained. Through the research and interviews conducted by the Virginia Asian Advisory Board, it became obvious that there were some common areas of need that each of the various agencies have encountered in interactions with the AAPI communities. It would be of great benefit for all, if a dedicated official/office existed to serve as a resource for the AAPI community and the Administration. Its mission would be to serve as the access point for the AAPI community and cultural, linguistic resource for the Commonwealth.

Action item: · Create a higher-level staff position within Constituent Services, or other appropriate department/agency, with the mission of serving as a permanent access point for the AAPI community and cultural and linguistic resource for the Commonwealth and continuity of focus on the AAPI communities’ value and issues.

These are executive summaries of the topics included in this comprehensive report submitted to the Governor for action. Full discussions of these topics and recommendations are addressed in the Findings and Recommendations section of the report.

II. INTRODUCTION

Established by statute in 2001 as a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board ("VAAB" or "Board") serves as a formal liaison between the administration and the diverse and rapidly growing Asian American Pacific Islander ("AAPI") communities in the Commonwealth.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-2450 of the Code of Virginia, the Board is pleased to submit to the Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe this Annual Report as a summary of its activities, findings and recommendations through June 2016. The current Board comprises leaders in the AAPI community across Virginia. The members are respected in their relative fields of expertise and commitment to their community.

The following individuals currently serve on the Board:

Hudaidah Bhimdi of Alexandria, Partner Immigration and Criminal Defense firm Murray Osorio, PLLC

Imran Akram of Great Falls, CEO of NuAxis Innovations

Chandrashekar Challa of Henrico, COO of the Challa Law Offices

Cheol Chang* of Fairfax, IT Specialist

Julia Kim Chun** of Vienna, Chief of Staff at the Office of Delegate Mark Keam

Jason Chung of Oakton, Director of Asian Pacific American Initiatives, Republican National Committee

Sal Hundal of Vienna, President & CTO of SoltecOne, Inc.

Eric Ljn of Chesterfield, Principal at The VIE Group and Associate Broker at Keller Williams Commercial Realty and United Real Estate

Barbara McLennan** of Williamsburg, Author and Adjunct Faculty at the College of William & Mary

Victoria Mirandah of Richmond, Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management with Capital One

Komal Mohindra ** of Falls Church, Senior Private Sector Development Specialist, The World Bank Group

Rumy Mohta * of Midlothian, CEO, Atlas Branding & Communications

Patrick Mulloy of Alexandria, Trade Lawyer and Consultant for Non-Profits, former five-term Commissioner on the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Binh Nguyen of McLean, Assistant Professor of Radiology and Academic Chief of Cardiothoracic Section in the Department of Radiology at the National Military Medical Center

Natalie Nguyen of Alexandria, Counselor at Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Kirtesh Patel of Salem, Pharmacist and CEO of OMMA Management Company

Tony H. Pham** of Henrico, General Counsel to the Richmond City Sheriff's Office – The Honorable C.T. Woody, Jr.

Dilip Sarkar of Norfolk, retired vascular surgeon and associate professor of surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School

J.R. Smith of Glen Allen, Partner at Hunton & Williams LLP

Francis Stevens*** of Midlothian, Officer at the Capitol Police Department

Leonard Tengco** of Virginia Beach, Member, Virginia Beach School Board (District 1-Centerville) and Attorney, Legal Aid.

Alice Tong** of Alexandria, Eastern States Advocate, Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)

* Cheol Chang was removed from his seat September 2015. The Governor appointed Rummy Mohta in September 18, 2015 to fill the vacant seat.

** Julia Chun Kim resigned from her seat on November 11, 2015, due to relocation. Tony Pham resigned from his seat on November 19, 2015, for personal reasons. Barbara McLennan resigned from her seat on December 1, 2015, for personal reasons. The Governor appointed Komal Mohindra, Leonard Tengco and Alice Tong on January 11, 2016 to fill the respective seats.

*** Francis Stevens resigned from his seat ???, for personal reasons.

The current Board also includes the following designee from the Governor's administration:

Anthony Fung Deputy Secretary of Technology who replaced **Zaki Barzinji** of the Office of Secretary of Trade and Commerce on May 16, 2016

The former and current Executive Committee members are:

Aug 21, 2014 through June 30, 2016

- Chair – Eric Lin
- Vice Chair – J.R. Smith
- Secretary – Hudaidah Bhimdi
- Treasurer – Kirtesh Patel

July 1, 2016 to present

- Chair – J.R. Smith
- Vice Chair – Eric Lin
- Secretary – Hudaidah Bhimdi Ahmed
- Treasurer – Kirtesh Patel

III. BOARD ACTIVITIES FOR 2014-2015

A. Business Meetings

The Board held 8 public meetings during the year. The Board held six general meetings on each of July 30, 2015, November 12, 2015, December 8, 2015, February 2, 2016, March 18, 2016 and May 16, 2016. Additionally, the Board convened two regional town hall meetings on each of December 8, 2015 and March 18, 2016. The March 18, 2016 meeting was held in Blacksburg, Virginia on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This is particularly significant as this is the first time that a VAAB meeting was convened in the Shenandoah Valley since the Board's creation in 2003.

Lack of Quorum. The Board failed to achieve quorum during its July 30, 2015 and March 18, 2016 meetings. The failure to achieve quorum at the March 18, 2016 meeting was a result of rescheduling issues. However, there were several members who did miss more several meetings. The attendance log for the current Board is attached as Exhibit A hereto.

FOIA Limitations.

As previously noted in our submitted reports, the Commonwealth's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) rules exacerbate the challenge of consistently achieving quorum because such rules require in-person meetings and generally prohibit Board member meeting participation through 21st century technology.

The Board has sought guidance from the Office of the Attorney General as well as the FOIA Advisory Council, and understand that the balance between transparency in our Government and efficiency is often difficult to maintain. As the VAAB serves in an advisory capacity, it is our hope that advisory boards be allowed to operate with working papers and working committees that fall outside of FOIA regulations.

Guest Speakers. During the course of the year, guest speakers attended several meetings and members of the VAAB engaged with state officials/staff as well as community organizations in a variety of ways. Presenters who attended the VAAB meetings included:

- Governor Terence R. McAuliffe
- Levar Stoney - Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Anthony Fung - Deputy Director of Technology
- Irma Palmer - Director of Constituent Services
- John Vithoukas - County Manager, Henrico County
- Edward Gresser - Assistant United States Trade Representative for Trade Policy and Economics
- Brett Gibson - Legislative Representative, AFL-CIO
- Rizwan Jaka - Chairman, All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center
- Marita Etcubanez - Director of Programs, Asian Americans Advancing Justice
- Naznin Saifi - Executive Director, Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
- Lisa Ward - Executive Vice President of Philanthropy, Service Source
- Lauren Goldschmidt - Rehabilitation Division Manager, Service Source
- Karen Korematsu - Founder & Executive Director, Fred T. Korematsu Institute

- Christine Chen – Executive Director Asian American Pacific Islander Vote
- Dr. Karl Markgraf – Associate Vice President for Internal Affairs, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Roop Mahajan – Director of the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Rangaswamy Muniappan – Director, IPM Innovation Lab, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Rolf Mueller – Associate Professor Mechanical Engineering, Virginia Tech
- Krisha Chachra – Vice-Mayor and Town Council Member, Blacksburg
- Tanya Pruett – Department of Elections
- Susan Lee – Department of Elections
- Leah Dozier Walker – Community and Minority Affairs Liaison, Virginia Department of Education

B. Outreach and Fact Finding Activities

In addition to formal Board meeting activity, VAAB members met with the following organizations and their representatives in the furtherance of the VAAB mission and creation of this report.

- Brian Moran – Secretary of Public Safety
- Nancy Rodrigues – Secretary of the Administration
- Anne Holton – Former Secretary of Education
- Zaki Barzinji – Senior Associate Director of Public Engagement at the White House
- Jimmy Rhee – Special Secretary, Office of Minority Affairs for the State of Maryland
- Cynthia Norwood – Senior Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
- Joshua Heslinga – Assistant Attorney General (Technology & Procurement Division), Office of the Attorney General
- Alan Gernhardt – Staff Attorney, FOIA Advisory Council
- Dr. Jennifer Lee, Former Deputy Secretary of Health
- Dr. Guru Ghosh – Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Menah Pratt-Clark – Vice Provost for Inclusion and Diversity & Vice President for Strategic Affairs, Virginia Tech
- Narasimha Shenoy – Commissioner and Chair, Pennsylvania Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Rob Buscher – Commissioner, Pennsylvania Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs & Festival Director, Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival
- Brad Baldia – Commissioner, Pennsylvania Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Cirian Villavicencio - Chairman at California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs & Professor, San Joaquin Delta College
- Sandra Choi – Global Markets, City of Norfolk
- Larry Lombardi – Former Business Development Manager, City of Norfolk
- Michael Cutter - Business Development Manager, City of Norfolk
- Imad Damaj – Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Mona H. Siddiqui – Assistant Attorney General, Virginia Office of the Attorney General

- Dr. Y.A. Liu – Alumni Distinguished Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, Virginia Tech
- Beth Armstrong – Director of University Scholarships and Financial Aid, Virginia Tech
- Amy Marschean – Senior Policy Analyst, Department of Rehabilitative Services
- Michel Zajur – Chairman, Virginia Latino Advisory Board and Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Office of Minority Health and Health Equity
- All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center
- Organization of Chinese Americans – Central Virginia
- Asian American Society of Central Virginia
- Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans of Virginia
- Asian Business Association of Hampton Roads
- Asian American Business Owner's Association
- ALTRIA Employee Resource Group - EAST
- Capital One Employee Resource Group
- Genworth Financial Employee Resource Group
- Suntrust Employee Resource Group
- Chinese Student and Scholars Association – Virginia Tech
- Asian American Pacific Islander Vote
- Asian American Justice Center
- Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center

Also during the course of the year, by the VAAB either hosted or was invited to participate in the following forums, panels and discussions:

- Commonwealth Council on Aging 7/8/15
- VAAB Town Hall – Oakton VA 12/8/15
- 12th Annual APA Legislative Policy Forum 2/2/16
- Institute of Corean American Studies Symposium 2/22/16
- Japanese Americans Citizens League/OCA Asian Pacific Americans Advocates Leadership Summit 2/27-3/1/16
- VAAB Town Hall – Blacksburg VA 3/18/16

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB) was created to recognize the importance of the contributions of the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in Virginia, and to advise and inform the Governor on issues facing AAPI constituents. During its 2015/2016 term, the VAAB engaged in numerous fact-finding and community discussions throughout the Commonwealth to identify and research these opportunities. As this is the final report of this administration, we have endeavored to build upon the work of previous Boards and encourage future Boards to do the same. In this report, the Board narrowed its focus on the four prevailing and current issues identified below.

A. ENHANCED ASIAN MUSLIM AWARENESS

According to the Pew Research Center, in 2015 there were roughly 3.3 million Muslims in the United States or about 1% of the total US population. Pew estimates that the Muslim population will double by the year 2050. The Commonwealth of Virginia estimates that there are approximately 170,000 Muslims residing in the state, with a large concentration in Northern Virginia.

In 2014, Pew Research Center published a large study about American attitudes towards individuals of different faiths. The study concluded that 55% of Americans voiced an unfavorable opinion of Islam.

Anti-Muslim sentiment, from religious profiling, violence and bullying remains an extraordinary challenge for the Muslims in the Commonwealth of Virginia. State government, in partnership with the Muslim community can build better education, raise awareness and provide much needed support in three key areas below:

- Education
- Law Enforcement
- Youth Outreach

Education – Developing Appropriate Competencies

Education is paramount in tackling the key issues we outlined above. We believe that a concerted focus on education in schools, law enforcement and community will make a positive difference.

We began our research with exploring what was available through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), specifically searching for tools, research and information for teacher, students and parents/public on cultural and religious awareness.¹

Findings

- The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has developed a cultural competency curriculum and manual for schools (K-12).
- The curriculum is a good resource for local school divisions to use as a guiding document to further develop their own cultural competency training curriculum
- There is a special section on cultural competency as it relates to Asian Americans and bias awareness.

- A significant gap that exists is that there is no information or awareness about religious diversity and competence. Given that Asian Muslim issues we cited earlier are based on religious elements, cultural competency on racial or ethnic dimensions, do not address the Muslim issues and challenges that currently exist.
- VDOE sponsored Diversity Training in 2015 attended by approximately 250 school personnel. Examples of topics covered included culturally responsive teaching practice, family and community engagement, using data to identify and address discipline disproportionately, building strong relationships with students. Despite options shared above, the Commonwealth does not require teaching to complete cultural competence as part of their professional development hours.
- SOL Curriculum – Islam is part of the World Geography SOL curriculum framework.²

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommend that the Commonwealth of Virginia require that teachers complete cultural competence as part of the professional development hours.
- Recommend that the VDOE include awareness about religion (particularly Islam) as part of the cultural competency curriculum and manual for schools in Virginia.
- VDOE continue to sponsor Diversity Training, Education and Awareness partnering with subject matter experts for teachers in the Commonwealth.
- Provide incentives for teachers to attend and successfully complete the curriculum such as educational credits or special certification
- Strongly suggest that the VDOE conduct focus groups with students, teachers and parents to understand the current challenges and issues facing students and teachers alike – data and information gathering is key to understanding what solutions will need to be built and implemented.

Law Enforcement – A Critical Partnership

American Muslims share that they are living through an intensely painful period of anti-Muslim sentiment after the recent attacks in Paris and the San Bernardino's shootings. Law enforcement plays a critical role in helping maintain calm and order when issues arise. Equipping them with a higher level of awareness, education and training will better enable them to more effectively do their job in increasingly difficult situations.

A partnership between religious communities and law enforcement is instrumental in fighting the larger problem with violence and terrorism. Law enforcement officials must be able to identify what is Islamic within American Muslim communities and what is terrorism that has nothing to do with any religion. We must fight the stigmatization of any community, we must fight against the stigmatization of any community, and learn from the issues that Europe is facing in this regard today. Inclusion, integration, civic engagement and partnership create a more collaborative environment.

Findings

- In researching the aspect of law enforcement we recognize that this is a multi-pronged approach; evaluating the options within the state law enforcement agency and the local county, city and district law enforcement agencies.
- It was challenging to take inventory of the what kind of training, education and awareness existed for law enforcement agencies both at the state and local levels. At the local levels, each jurisdiction is responsible for conducting their own training and education.
- Similar to the findings in our Education section, we note that cultural competency training and education for state law enforcement is lacking in awareness of religions, particularly Islam.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend that the education/training curriculum for the state's law enforcement agencies be developed and enhanced to include religious cultural competency, including education about Islam and Virginia Muslim Communities.
- There are several organizations such ADAMS (All Dulles Area Muslim Society) and Unity Productions Foundation (UPF) that we strongly recommend that the Virginia State Police (VSP) reach out to, to develop education curriculum referenced above.
- Conduct focus groups or town halls particularly in densely populated areas of Muslim citizens (Northern Virginia) to foster dialogue between law enforcement and the community and in the process build mutual trust and understanding. These are 2 critical components in creating an atmosphere that effectively addresses differences.
- Encourage local Police Departments in conducting training curriculum for their officers in partnership with the local Muslim communities.

Youth Outreach – Fostering an Environment Free From Bullying

We included Youth Outreach as an important third pillar our 3 areas of focus primarily because as bullying is on the rise in American schools, Muslim children are experiencing higher instances of bullying. According to Pew Research Center, 1 in 3 or 4 US students say they've been bullied in schools. Among Muslim students, 1 in 2 report being bullied or harassed at school. Research by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, the reason why Muslim children are being bullied vary from the American mainstream's limited knowledge, misperceptions and stereotypes about Muslim. Little is being done to redress the situation.

Findings

- In 2013, the Virginia Board of Education adopted a Model Policy to address bullying in schools as a result of the implementation of Section 22.1-276.01 (which defines bullying).³
- We explored results of the Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey (administered by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services). The latest available report is the 2015 Technical Report.⁴
- In March 2010, Muslim Mothers Against Violence (MMAV) surveyed 78 Muslim youth between the ages of 12 and 17 in Northern Virginia about their experiences in school. Eighty percent of the youth responded that they had been subjected to bigoted taunts and

harassment, with three-quarters indicating the epithets had occurred more than once. Fifty percent reported being called names in front of teachers and school administrators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Anti-Bullying efforts, particularly addressing bullying experiences among Asian Muslim students and youth must be given a higher and visible platform. We recommend the Governor explore appropriate opportunities within his platforms or within the platforms of the Secretary of Education, to elevate the problem, educate school personnel about unique experiences of bullying of Asian Muslim students, and eliminate bullying of Asian Muslims in schools within the Commonwealth. Particular emphasize to be placed on bullying on the basis of ethnicity or religion.
- Leverage the recommendations we suggested under Education to bolster education and awareness and to reduce or eliminate altogether, bullying among our youth and students
- Partner with organizations such as Muslim Mothers Against Violence and Unity Productions Foundation to develop outreach to educate and eradicate youth bullying.

B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – THE NEW VIRGINIA ECONOMY

Trade and investment between Virginia and Asia continues to expand and the shoots of Virginia’s New Economy are evident in Virginia/Asia trade. Global investment in Virginia supports nearly 490,000 jobs in Virginia, which jobs, together with related supply chain work-force, enjoy higher compensation relative to overall state averages. From 2009 to 2014, foreign companies announced more than 15,000 new jobs in Virginia and over \$4.6 billion in investments.

According to the International Monetary Fund, China, Japan, India and South Korea combined GDP comprised almost 27 percent of global GDP in 2015. Spurred by China’s and India’s predicted hyper growth, these four countries alone will produce almost 30 percent of global GDP by the year 2020. As shown in the following chart, these countries, along with Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia, also received over \$4.1 billion in aggregate of Virginia exports in 2015, which formed almost 23% of all Virginia exports during 2015, holding steady since 2013. All Asian countries combined receive approximately 28% of all Virginia exports, a figure that continues to grow relative to other regions.

Virginia Total Exports to Leading Asian Countries

Partner Country	United States Dollars			% Share			%Δ 15/14
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	

World	\$17,903,989,806	\$19,255,244,148	\$18,136,736,372	100	100	100	-5.81
China	\$1,871,475,213	\$2,000,142,373	\$1,704,976,800	10.45	10.39	9.4	-14.76
Japan	\$554,058,055	\$552,583,332	\$582,383,146	3.09	2.87	3.21	5.39
Singapore	\$526,153,881	\$528,374,218	\$349,390,956	2.94	2.74	1.93	-33.87
Taiwan	\$458,392,923	\$519,886,716	\$577,579,713	2.56	2.7	3.18	11.1
Korea, South	\$368,389,431	\$428,634,082	\$485,943,886	2.06	2.23	2.68	13.37
Indonesia	\$308,083,204	\$307,956,686	\$229,372,016	1.72	1.6	1.26	-25.52
India	\$213,851,797	\$229,567,787	\$237,450,755	1.19	1.19	1.31	3.43
Total for 7 Asian Countries	\$4,300,404,504	\$4,567,145,194	\$4,167,097,272	24.01	23.72	22.97	

Recognizing the underlying strength inherent in balanced and fair trade, Virginia took a significant step forward in 2015, creating the Virginia International Trade Alliance (VITAL), a new initiative managed by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). VITAL is focused solely on increasing international trade between Virginia and foreign markets. Historical Virginia/Asia trade growth and future forecasts underscore the importance of the Asian market for Virginia's long-term economic stability.

Following last year's efforts to canvas the board rooms and executives of Asian and U.S. companies in Virginia driving economic growth, we focused on two primary issues this year. First, we revisited the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement and analyzed its potential impact on Virginia. Second, we investigated the role that Virginia's colleges and universities have in spurring economic development and trade through their outreach to points in Asia. During the past year, we held two board meetings devoted to each of these topics.

Trans Pacific Partnership: An Opportunity for Growth

The proposed Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) emerged in 2015 as an important multilateral free trade agreement that, if passed, could materially impact foreign trade between Virginia and Asia. Acknowledging this import, the VAAB tailored one of its meetings to better understand the arguments for and against the trade initiative. Our proponent was the Policy Director at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), while the leading opponent was a trade attorney for the AFL-CIO.

The TPP is a proposed regional free trade agreement (FTA) among 12 countries: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam. Asia is viewed as vital to U.S. trade and security interests. According to the USTR, the Asia Pacific region is a key driver of global economic growth and accounts for nearly 60% of global GDP, and roughly 50% of international trade. The TPP initially was conceived in 2003 by Singapore, New Zealand and Chile. In March of 2008, under President George W. Bush, the United States joined the negotiations.

On November 14, 2009, President Obama recommitted the United States to engage in negotiations with the TPP countries to achieve "the goal of shaping a regional agreement that would have broad-based membership and high standards worthy of a 21st century trade agreement." The TPP aims to liberalize trade in all goods and services, and to include trade commitments beyond those contained in the WTO. It aims to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and investment

matters among its parties, and to serve as a template for future trade agreements among other Asian countries that might later wish to join such as Korea, Taiwan and even China. It contains 30 separate chapters dealing with issues such as government procurement, investment, dispute settlement, rules of origin, tariffs, intellectual property, labor and the environment. There is a separate related agreement dealing with currency practices.

The USTR formally informed the Congress on December 14, 2009 of the Administration's intent to enter into negotiations with the TPP countries to achieve a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This was a most important step as under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution Congress, not the President, has jurisdiction over foreign commerce. While the President might negotiate trade agreements they cannot enter into effect unless legislation implementing them is passed by both Houses of the Congress and signed into law. Most of our nation's trade agreements over the past 40 years have received congressional consideration under "fast track" procedures now known as Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) which had expired in 2007. TPA authority is given to the President in legislation passed by the Congress. Such authority gives the President the assurance that trade agreements, if they follow goals and procedures set out by Congress will be given expedited consideration by the Congress with limited debate, no amendments and a guaranteed up or down vote.

Congress passed, and the President signed, new legislation granting the President new TPA authority on June 29, 2015. It gave the President "fast-track" trade authority for agreements reached before July 1, 2018. TPP negotiators announced on October 5, 2015 that they had reached an agreement. On November 5, 2015 a copy of the agreement was made public and the President notified the Congress that he intended to sign it. The agreement, however, cannot go into effect unless it is approved by the Congress, and whether the Congress will do so is controversial.

Potential Impact of TPP on Virginia. The following five key areas of the TPP impact Virginia the most.

- 1) Tariffs. TPP countries would eliminate tariffs on U.S. manufactured goods and on almost all U.S. farm products, most eliminations occurring immediately. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, such tariff reductions would be of major benefit to Virginia's top five export sectors:
 - Chemicals. Virginia exported \$177 million in chemicals to TPP countries in 2014 and 97.2% of all such future exports would go duty free to TPP countries.
 - Forest products. Virginia exported \$123 million in forest products to TPP countries in 2014 and 98% of such future exports would be duty free.
 - Textiles and Apparel. Virginia exported \$88 million of such products to TPP countries in 2014 and 92.6% of such future exports would go duty free.
 - Information and Communication Technologies. Virginia exported \$73 million of such products to TPP countries in 2014 and 99.6% of such future exports would go duty free.
 - Health Products. Virginia exported \$47 million of such products to TPP countries in 2014 and 99.9% of such future exports would go duty free.

The U.S. Department of Commerce also contends that almost 91,000 U.S. jobs were supported by Virginia's exports in 2014, and that figure would increase as trade expanded with TPP countries under the new agreement. The Obama Administration contends the TPP would spur economic growth and strengthen out geopolitical position in Asia.

- 2) **Rules of Origin.** The TPP Rules of Origin chapter defines what it means for a product to be produced in a TPP country, and therefore eligible for lower TPP tariffs. USTR claims that Rules of Origin will help U.S. companies to produce domestically but still remain in the value-chain of production. TPP critics, however, contend that the Rules of Origin in NAFTA required that 62.5% of a product had to be produced in a NAFTA country to be eligible for lower tariffs while that number in the TPP is only 45%. This means that goods primarily produced in a non-TPP country, like China, Korea or Thailand, will get the benefit of the lower TPP tariffs if incorporated in a product exported by a TPP member nation.
- 3) **Currency Manipulation.** The Obama Administration claims that for the first time in the context of a free trade agreement, countries have adopted a declaration that addresses currency practices. Under the declaration all TPP countries commit to avoid unfair currency practices, such as currency manipulation. Critics of the provision contend that it is not enforceable and the countries that will be in the TPP have repeatedly manipulated their currencies to gain trade advantages, and will continue to do so as the TPP itself does not include enforceable currency provisions.
- 4) **Investor State Arbitration.** The TPP agreement established an Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism that is designed to protect investors from having their investments expropriated, or significantly reduced in value. Disputes over expropriation would not be resolved in the courts of the countries receiving the investments, but in special corporate-controlled arbitration tribunals. U.S. law professors publically contend that the ISDS provisions would permit foreign corporations to challenge measures adopted by countries to protect public health and the environment if they have a negative impact on the value of the corporation's investment. Such suits would not be brought in our courts but in special corporate-controlled arbiter tribunals. These critics contend that the ISDS mechanism could impinge on U.S. sovereignty.
- 5) **Government Procurement.** The TPP contains government procurement provisions, similar to those found in the WTO's government procurement agreement. As we noted in our 2015 Report such provisions, if Virginia signs on, could interfere with the ability of our state government to award contracts for public purposes such as to aid minorities or veterans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- While the TPP is not directly influenced by state actions, there may be clear benefits, but also lingering questions regarding its impact on Virginia, particularly with respect to dispute settlement. To that end, outreach to those Virginia businesses, labor groups and other interests potentially impacted the most by TPP and soliciting their feedback would be well-received "business community building."

Virginia's Universities and Colleges are Under-Recognized and Under-Utilized Drivers of Economic Development.

Virginia's colleges and universities have supercharged traditional notions of foreign student exchange and studies abroad, particularly with respect to Asia. From sponsoring investment summits attracting global business leaders, to opening campuses in partnership with foreign education institutions, to developing innovative cross-border research incubators in partnership with Global 500 companies, Virginia's higher education institutions are under-recognized and under-utilized drivers of economic development for the Commonwealth.

Sampling some of the efforts away at the state's colleges and universities, a clear recognition and embrace of "globalization" is evident.

Traditional Exchange. Two exemplary examples of Virginia public colleges and universities expanding on traditional exchange programs involve William & Mary College and George Mason University.

William & Mary enjoys the highest percentage of undergraduates participating in study abroad compared to any other public university in the United States. It also hosts more than 1,000 international students and scholars from over 65 countries (speaking more than 40 languages), and efficiently organizes all of its international outreach and weaves this cultural diversity into the fabric of the college through its Reves Center for International Studies. Asia features prominently in this exchange. The economic value of a good "exchange" experience on an impressionable young adult (whether an American going abroad or a foreign student visiting the U.S.) cannot be overstated. A common, tangible example of this in Virginia, Shandong Tranlin Paper Co., Ltd. settled on the Commonwealth for its \$2 billion Chesterfield County greenfield pulp and paper factory and resulting 2,000 new Virginia jobs due, in part, to Jerry Peng's (Chairman and CEO of Tranlin Inc.) experience as a graduate student at the University of Virginia Darden's School of Business.

Mason Korea is George Mason University's 2,000 student academic campus provides a gateway for Korean and other East and Southeast Asia students to study under the refined academic rigors of a traditional U.S. education and for George Mason's U.S. students to explore Asia. Faculty also enjoy the benefits of these types of foreign campus extensions through multicultural academic research that is impossible to replicate by staying home.

Focused Economic Development. The University of Virginia's world-renown Darden School for Business, and its Center for Global Initiatives, has made Asia a key focus of academic study and cross border investment. Through its "Asia Initiative," Darden created the Shanghai Investment Summit, bringing a Davos World Economic Forum approach from Wall Street in the West to Main Street in the East. The annual summit explores global trends and opportunities in cross-border investing and provides actionable investment strategies that can be tracked and pursued by students, academics and private industry. This summit is paired with a Global Leadership Forum, connecting prominent political, business and social leaders from the Asian and broader community with the university's alumni, students and guests.

Innovative Incubators at Home and Abroad. Virginia Tech's innovative applied science incubator, in partnership with the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center (VTCRC), and its foreign campus joint venture with Shandong University in China, in partnership with the Development Park Qingdao and related free trade zone, are taking undergraduate and graduate American and foreign students, teaching them with world-leading researchers and in world-class facilities and partnering with angel investors and traditional Fortune 500 companies to move ideas and products from labs to consumers. Virginia Tech has deployed a similar Asia-focused outreach in India through its Virginia Tech MARG Swaranabhoomi, India Trust in partnership with the VTCRC. These two programs formally link Virginia Tech through physical campuses and very focused research, development and applied sciences in the world's two most populous countries.

While perhaps not appropriate for every Virginia university or college, Virginia Tech recognizes the unique advantages that public/private partnerships provide in an academic setting. Students gain access to cutting edge research and, ultimately, employers creating jobs in Virginia; employers

enjoy tailored training and minimized R&D risk by partnering with the University. This model brings some of the best, innovative minds to Blacksburg from all over the world, with Virginia Tech's foreign campuses and outreach serving as a funnel.

In spite of these specific successes and others unreported, it is clear that Virginia's universities and colleges are under-recognized and under-utilized drivers of economic development for the Commonwealth. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership together with regional economic development organizations regularly work closely with Virginia's higher education institutions on economic development initiatives. Some schools, such as Virginia Tech, even enjoy a standalone Office of Economic Development. While there remains natural and healthy competition among our universities and colleges, growing the collective pot and driving economic growth into Virginia will benefit all. Better coordination and information and resource sharing could alleviate inefficiencies and counterproductive initiatives. VITAL Partners include all of the major Virginia public colleges and universities and could serve as a conduit for such enhanced collaboration.

Talent Drain. One difficult issue Virginia Tech and similarly situated Virginia universities and colleges face is foreign talent drain. While our schools do a great job attracting the best and brightest, often the visa limitations for foreign students pushes highly trained and motivated students away just as they hit their stride on acclimation to the U.S. and drive to innovate. For research and applied sciences programs, this problem is particularly acute. Intellectual property created in such programs remains the property of the relevant university or college. But the know-how of a foreign student from Asia flows back to Asia when visa extension issues remain unresolved. And to address the argument against solving for this foreign brainpower drain, these individuals are highly skilled and trained and are not displacing opportunities for Virginians or other U.S. citizens. Rather, their unique talents – forging new and innovative technologies – are more likely to expand economic growth and attendant job creation for Virginians as opposed to supplanting opportunities for Virginians.

Public/private partnerships that create job paths to sponsor such students may provide one work-around until political solutions to revise federal immigration legislation arise. Alternative approaches may also provide temporary fixes. The issue merits further examination and proactive support from State Government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Leverage the Virginia International Trade Alliance (VITAL) and other resources to identify and better coordinate international research and economic development across Virginia's colleges and universities.
- Highlight and promote Virginia's college and university international economic outreach with private sector through targeted business forums, collaboration with state and regional economic development organizations and chambers of commerce and Department of Commerce-sponsored roundtables.
- Stem drain of foreign student intellectual talent through innovative support for transitioning students to longer-term job opportunities.

C. VOTER ENGAGEMENT – EVERY VOTE MATTERS

Voting is our voice as American citizens, to be heard, hold elected officials accountable for their decisions and to have a say in important issues that affect the communities in which we live and work.

A robust voter turnout is fundamental to a healthy democracy. In the United States however, voter turnout is much lower than established democracies. In recent elections, about 60% of the voting eligible population votes during the presidential election years and about 40% vote during midterm elections. Turnout is lower for odd year, primary and local elections.⁵

The 2016 presidential election confronts the U.S electorate with political choices more fundamental than any since 1964 and possibly since 1932. The policy differences between the two major parties and the positions of candidates vying for their presidential nominations support this claim. According to the Brookings Institute, the key issues that are subject to policy differences include, but are not limited to; Healthcare (Affordable Health Care Act), Social Security, Environment and The Courts.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders remain the fastest growing populations in the United States, at a rate of 46% and 40%, respectively, between the year of 2000 and 2010. This stands in comparison to a 10% population growth rate nationally. AAPI population growth partially stems from growing numbers of Asian immigrants, with more immigration coming from Asia since 2008 than any other part of the world.

In the last three presidential cycles, approximately 620,000 new AAPI voters entered the electorate, with eligible AAPI voters in various states making up more than 5% of the state's electorate, including Nevada, **Virginia**, and California. It is increasingly clear that candidates and elected officials must understand our growing political power and address issues important to our communities.

Representation Impact

Nationally, Asian Americans make up only about 4% of eligible voters. But in some key battleground states their impacts will be significantly larger. In addition to Virginia, Asian Americans make up 9% of the electorate in Nevada, 7% in New Jersey, 3.1% in Minnesota and 15% in California. While the AAPI population makes up just 5 percent of Virginia's electorate, based on recent electoral results, that segment could prove decisive in a close race.

Like Hispanics, Asian Americans' political activism hasn't always matched our numbers, but that may be changing. The number of Asian Americans running for Congress rose to 40 this year from eight just eight years ago. In one of the most prominent Senate races, Democratic Rep. Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, an Asian American is challenging Republican Sen. Mark Kirk.

AAPI voters are important because our voices in the political and policy discourse must reflect our priorities and needs, which may also be accomplished by electing more AAPIs to office.

Economic Impact

The growth of AAPI influence and power extends beyond the political sphere, into all aspects of American society. For example, AAPIs are integral to the success of the American economy. Census data shows that the AAPI community contributes nearly \$1.1 trillion to the economy every year, and AAPI owned businesses employ 3.6 million Americans across the country.

AAPIs as business owners, consumers, and active members of America's economy have an important role in shaping the future of our collective communities. The decisions made by today's leaders must reflect the growing needs and roles of AAPIs in American society, beginning with appreciating the power of our votes.

Language

Limited English Proficiency continues to be a challenge for the AAPI population in matters of understanding the electoral and voting process. More provisions are now made for LEP individuals such as no-English proficiency standards, ability to bring a translator and in some instances, bilingual voting materials. However, voter education and engagement still continue to be issues due to disenfranchisement and cultural disconnects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness & Education AAPIs can no longer be passive participants in politics and policy discourse. We are becoming more actively engaged in the process and are making our presence and voices heard. Several organizations have done significant work within the Commonwealth of Virginia in this space – Asian American Justice Center held naturalization seminars; OCA Asian Pacific Advocates held voter registration and phone banking campaigns; Asian Pacific Islander American Vote has coordinated, voter registration and phone banking initiatives as well as developed resources for election day support systems; and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund plans and coordinates poll monitoring, just to name a few. However, the AAPI electorate needs assistance in areas that we do not control.

Continued involvement from the Administration should include:

- Supporting additional in language support through the Board of Elections for AAPI voters to ensure access and engagement.
- Review recent election data from the Board of Elections to address longstanding issues as noted in the Presidential Commission on Election Administration report in 2014.⁶ In addition, allow access to this data to prominent political scientists and educators, to review best practices and increase efficiencies. The VAAB highly recommends support of Dr. Wesley Joe of Georgetown University and Dr. Mark Rozzell of George Mason University who are currently engaged in study of the best practices outlined in the Commission report and how they would apply to the Commonwealth. (Strengthening Evidence-Based Election Administration in Virginia)

These actions by the Administration will also underscore the Commonwealth's commitment and support to the AAPI population in advancing progress in this journey.

D. ACCESS TO THE COMMONWEALTH - CONNECTING TO A CONSTITUENCY

The AAPI community provides a stable and value adding component to the Commonwealth. As noted in previous sections, AAPI entrepreneurship and corporate contributions are significant. In the Commonwealth, AAPI-owned small businesses generate more revenue and payroll than all other minority-owned small businesses combined. In addition, the same AAPI businesses employ more than 55% of the total number of employees from all minority-owned small businesses.⁷

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board can and has impact on the various issues effecting the AAPI community, however due to the nature and tenure of appointed Boards, the impacts may not be

sustained. In the work by this Board in the last 12 months, we have successfully engaged not only the AAPI community, but also the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Department of Education, the Department of Rehabilitative Services, the Virginia Center for Health Innovation, the Virginia Department of Health, The Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity, and the Department of Public Safety as well as those organizations and individuals noted earlier in this report.

Through the research and interviews conducted by the Virginia Asian Advisory Board, it became obvious that there were some common areas of need that each of the various agencies have encountered in interactions with the AAPI communities.

Interaction and outreach to the AAPI communities encounter the following barriers:

- Cultural barriers – Often, AAPI community members are not aware of public services and how to gain access. In addition, cultural reluctance towards seeking government help prevents the communities' individuals and businesses to reach their potential as value-added citizens of the Commonwealth. Navigating the various, cultures, value systems and faith/philosophical beliefs in the various communities is daunting for those not cognizant of these nuances.
- Linguistic barriers – AAPI communities are not homogenous, and this applies to the avenues of communication as well. In each community, there is the potential for many dialects. Even the methods of non-verbal communication are different.
- Outreach effectiveness – The Commonwealth's efforts in outreach are varied and often ineffective. Outreach in the past has been dependent on specific agencies developing relationships with community partners. While that may be a successful relationship, it is limited by scope and reach of the community partners and resources available to the agencies and their partner. The partner that the agency engages with may not be the most effective partner to foster the outreach and partnerships needed for maximum efficiency. Also, the changing leadership/staff in various agencies and community partners is constantly in flux and also effects the effectiveness of the relationships.

Specific examples:

- Virginia Department of Health: The Department of Health must allocate resources necessary to translate basic forms and provide language resources for those community members who have limited English proficiency. Also, recent efforts to identify best practices in mental health services delivery have no AAPI community outreach component, an oversight highlighted in our last report. The VDH also must seek out partners who can serve as potential interpreters and community health workers.
- Department of Rehabilitative Services: Similarly, the Department of Rehabilitative Services, through the Area Agencies on Aging is searching for resources to serve the aging Asian seniors and avenues to outreach to these communities. Some AAPI community groups already have limited resources in place that are incredibly innovative and have been recognized as best practices models.
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership: The VEDP, as the economic development resource connecting with foreign businesses would benefit greatly from having access to local and international foreign resources to more effectively perform its mandated tasks.

Having the language and cultural resources necessary to help create successful relationships would be a distinct advantage for the Commonwealth in these endeavors.

- Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity: Effective outreach and engagement of Asian small businesses had been successful due to the fortunate placement of an Asian American as the Director of Operations at the DSBSD. It has become apparent that with Angela Chiang's retirement, the one person with the experience and knowledge that the various AAPI small business owners, AAPI Chambers of Commerce and business associations have come to depend upon, will no longer be an access point and there are no other options with her level of experience, cultural competency and effectiveness.
- Department of Juvenile Justice: The ability to understand the cultural and social issues affecting AAPI youth will help immensely in the prevention of juvenile crimes, safe incarceration, and successful reform and reintroduction into supportive environments.

The benefits of having a dedicated director will prove useful and efficient for the fastest growing segment of the Commonwealth's population. The ultimate goal of having a permanent office/agency with its own dedicated budget is desired. In the interim, having a designated higher level position in Constituent Services, or other suitable department would be an interim step towards this goal.

Its mission would be to serve as the access point for the AAPI community and cultural, linguistic resource for the Commonwealth. It will do so by developing the language resources for the State; serve as its chief cultural competency resource and foster relationships with the Commonwealth's AAPI international businesses, community groups and informal support network leaders. This Office would also serve as Ex-Officio staff to the VAAB; serve as an archive for VAAB documentation; and advise the VAAB of potential actions by the Commonwealth that would effect the AAPI population.

The State of Maryland has created a similar position in the Office of Minority Affairs with former Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Trade Jimmy Rhee. Ostensibly, the purpose of that office is to ensure supplier diversity, however recently, that Office in the person of Jimmy Rhee was instrumental in Governor Hogan's recent trade mission to Asia. His work and personal connections were helpful in establishing relationships for Maryland.

RECOMMENDATION

Create a higher-level staff position within Constituent Services, or other appropriate department/agency, with the mission of serving as a permanent access point for the AAPI community and cultural and linguistic resource for the Commonwealth and continuity of focus on the AAPI communities' value and issues.

V. LOOKING FORWARD

The Commonwealth, and Nation, are entering a time where the vibrant minority populations are bringing a wealth of talent, culture and global awareness never experienced in our history. The Commonwealth has thrived and will continue to benefit from this cultural and racial diversity as well as the associated connection to international opportunities. The AAPI community is eager to contribute to the continued growth and well-being of our wonderful State, while at the same time establishing long term roots for our future generations. With the incredible growth of the AAPI

community and the accompanying cultural enrichment and revenue generation, the understanding of the needs and issues unique to this multifaceted community will be a challenge.

The VAAB is honored to serve as ambassadors on behalf of the Commonwealth, providing a much-needed voice for the growing AAPI community. Through its outreach, the VAAB presence has increased among State and local government and within the communities we serve. More issues are being brought to our attention as awareness of the Board grows. And as our sphere of work has increased, it has become clear that we need additional resources to further our effectiveness and assist the Governor's and Administration.

As we mentioned previously, the Board has identified a clear need for full-time conduit to advocate for the AAPI community and to guide that community to the State's vast existing and underutilized resources. In addition, there is a dearth of clear data regarding the AAPI community in the Commonwealth. It is telling that much of the data gathered in the creation of this report was not available through State resources, but rather through Federal and other national resources.

It is also extremely important to note that disaggregated data shows the disparities between AAPI subgroups in ways that aggregated cannot. Disparities in education, health, and workforce development are just some areas that need a deeper dive into the data to begin to understand the challenges that certain subgroups face. The Federal government has recognized the importance of this issue and is working on minimal standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting data on race and ethnicity for all Federal reporting purposes. We think it is appropriate for the Commonwealth to consider doing the same.

We look forward to continuing our service to the Office of the Governor, the Commonwealth and the AAPI community.

VI. REFERENCES

¹[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special ed/tech asst prof dev/self assessment/disproportionality/cultural competence manual.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special%20ed/tech%20asst%20prof%20dev/self%20assessment/disproportionality/cultural%20competence%20manual.pdf)

²[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/scope sequence/historysocialscience scope sequence/2008/scopeseq histsoc worldgeoto1500.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/scope%20sequence/historysocialscience%20scope%20sequence/2008/scopeseq%20histsoc%20worldgeoto1500.pdf). (specifically p. 119-134).

³[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/bullying/model policy to address bullying in va schools.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/bullying/model%20policy%20to%20address%20bullying%20in%20va%20schools.pdf).

Pages 19-20 addresses bullying behavior on the basis of religion. This model policy is available to local school divisions to use in developing their own anti-bullying policies. Local school divisions are required to leverage character education programs that address bullying (22.1-208.01)

⁴ <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/student/>

Safety conditions: Most students (80%) reported that they feel safe in their school, but this appears to be an area for improvement. One reason why some students might not feel safe is that 46% of all students reported that bullying is a problem at their school and 35% reported being bullied once or more per week at school this year. Many students reported that students are teased or put down about their clothing or physical appearance (68%), sexual topics (51%), sexual orientation (35%), **and race or ethnicity (35%)**. A substantial number of students reported that another student stole something from them (40%), physically attacked, pushed, or hit them (30%), or threatened to hurt them (29%) at school this year. Students were asked how they reacted to the worst time that they were bullied or harmed at school this year. Students reported that this experience made them feel angry (63%), sad (55%), or as if they didn't want to come to school (37%). Of these instances, only 29% of students told a teacher or another adult at school what happened.

⁵[http://www.fairvote.org/voter turnout#voter turnout 101](http://www.fairvote.org/voter%20turnout#voter%20turnout%20101)

⁶<https://www.supportthevoter.gov/files/2014/01/Amer-Voting-Exper-final-draft-01-09-14-508.pdf>

⁷ 2012 Survey of Business Owners, Statistics for All U.S. Firms With Paid Employees by Industry, Race, and Employment Size of Firm for the U.S. and States & Statistics for All U.S. Firms With Paid Employees by Industry, Ethnicity, and Employment Size of Firm for the U.S. and States