



2018

HB 69 Grocery Investment Program and Fund

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ASSESSING THE RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT OF LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A VIRGINIA GROCERY INVESTMENT PROGRAM AND FUND - HOUSE BILL (HB) 69 AND SENATE BILL (SB) 37

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In the 2018 session of the Virginia General Assembly, several similar pieces of legislation (HB69, HB85 and SB37) directed at the issue of “food deserts”¹ proposed the creation of the Virginia Grocery Investment Program and Fund, hereafter called, the Fund. The proposed initial funding of \$3.75 million per year to catalyze public-private partnerships that would support the construction, rehabilitation, upgrading or expansion of grocery stores or other food retailers in “underserved communities.” All three were left in the House Appropriations committee, though in the case of SB37, after passing the Senate on a 36-4 vote.² Future implementation of the Fund holds significant value in communities across the Commonwealth. It has the potential to create a broader funding stream for leveraging public/private partnerships and establish a central source for technical assistance, education, and program implementation.

LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW

Stakeholders in the 2018 General Assembly Session

In 2018, Delegate Delores McQuinn (D-70) was the chief patron for HB 69, the most popular version in the House, while Senator William M. Stanley, Jr. (R-20) acted as chief patron of the Senate version, with Senator Rosalyn Dance (D-16) serving as chief co-patron. The table in Appendix F summarizes the co-patrons who signed on to each respective bill.

In addition to individual legislators, many organized groups publicly supported a greater focus on the issue of food deserts and the establishment of the Fund. Key interest groups included representation of the following sectors: associations of localities, healthcare advocacy and service providers, food access advocates, children’s advocacy organizations, and community business and finance organizations.

Several federal agencies continue to provide research, data, and grants in support of the elimination of food deserts, including the US Department of Agriculture (USDA); US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (BOC); US Department of Treasury, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

While support for the Fund appears broad and bi-partisan, the bills nevertheless failed in the 2018 session. Only four senators voted against SB37 as it passed out of the Senate, but the bill failed to receive a hearing in the House Appropriations Committee. An explanation suggested by a Republican legislative associate was that the bill required significant funding, and so it ran afoul of a broader commitment from Delegate Jones, chair of Appropriations, to hold the line against new spending in the budget being negotiated. Senator Stanley stated, “the bill did not pass by Republicans because it was [seen as] big government and \$2 million dollars was taken from the House appropriations.”

Despite the failure in 2018, there are plans to reintroduce the bill in the 2019 session.³ In a January 11, 2018 press conference with other supporters of the bill, Senator Stanley stated, "Some of my conservative friends have asked, is this a conservative bill? And I say, yes. Because if we are creating healthy choices for children, we're allowing those children to grow up, safe, happy and healthy, then they are going to be great taxpayers to the Commonwealth, not tax burdens."⁴

Legislative Context

During the 2018 General Assembly session, a bipartisan group of 33 members acted as patrons or co-patrons across three bills, for the idea of a grocery investment fund in Virginia to address the lack of grocery stores and food retailers in underserved communities around the Commonwealth. This level of support developed over a period of years.

Attention to the issue of "food deserts" first emerged in the General Assembly in 2012 when Delegate Delores McQuinn (D-70) introduced House Joint Resolution (HJR) 88 which called for a study of food deserts in the Commonwealth. Although the study bill failed, the study was re-introduced the following year under HJR 646 and resulted in a letter from Speaker of the House, William Howell, requesting a study of the issue of food deserts in Virginia. USDA defines "food deserts" as areas where people cannot access affordable and nutritious food due to some combination of distance to a grocery store, low income and no access to a vehicle. That request, in turn, resulted in the 2014 Virginia Food Desert Task Force chaired by Virginia Tech and Virginia State University faculty. The task force focused on eight lower-income localities (Fredericksburg, Hampton, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Petersburg, Richmond, and Wise County) and four localities with higher incomes (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Manassas) to assess the disparities and extent of food insecurity within urban, rural, and affluent neighborhoods. The study showed evidence of food deserts in urban and rural areas with some evidence of food insecurities in Northern Virginia.⁵

Goals and Implementation of Legislation

In public comments and interviews with legislators and their staff, the following were reasons given to support this legislation:

- Economic development and community revitalization
- Employment opportunities for people directly in their communities
- Opportunities for healthier lifestyle choices to increase long term health benefits
- Additional tax revenue opportunities
- Establishment of public/private partnerships

The Fund, as proposed, would be administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), who would select and collaborate with a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) provided by the US Department of Treasury. Additionally, DHCD is charged with developing guidelines for the program with input from an advisory committee that would include representatives from the selected CDFI, the Department of Agriculture and Community Services, and "other relevant stakeholders."⁶

The bill itself only requires that funded projects be located in an "underserved community," which it defines as "a census tract determined to be an area with low supermarket access either by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), as identified in the USDA Food Access Research Atlas, or through a methodology that has been adopted for use by another governmental or philanthropic healthy food initiative."⁷ This definition for underserved is quite broad for two reasons. First, the USDA atlas provides three alternative definitions of low access based on varying distance

combinations for urban and rural areas (see glossary for more detail.) Second, the USDA notes that most definitions of a food desert combine a distance access measure with either individual or neighborhood indicators for income or vehicle access.⁸

According to a fact sheet prepared by the American Heart Association (AHA), there are 18 localities interested in being an early site for funding: Abingdon, Clifton Forge, Farmville, Harrisonburg, Highland, Kenbridge, Lexington, Luray, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Nelson County, Parksley, Petersburg, Pound, Richmond, Roanoke, South Boston and Suffolk.¹⁰ The fact sheet identifies eligibility criteria for the Fund as: median income, market test, community readiness, local community buy in, and inclusion of Virginia grown products (see Appendix D). However, these criteria do not appear in the legislation as written, nor is it clear whether DHCD would adopt all of these criteria in developing guidelines if the legislation passed.

Efforts to expand public awareness

*“More than 1.7 million Virginians, including 480,000 children live in low income areas with limited supermarket access.”*¹¹ In 2011, The *No Kid Hungry* Virginia campaign was launched, partnering with the Department of Education.¹² Following the announcement of the findings from the 2014 Virginia Food Desert Task Force, a series of public awareness campaigns unfolded. In 2015, with the continued support of then First Lady of Virginia, Dorothy McAuliffe, the Virginia Cooperative Extension launched a statewide campaign. The *Eat Smart, Move More* campaign¹³ was followed by the *Voices for Healthy Kids*, an initiative from the Commonwealth Council on Bridging the Nutritional Divide, and chaired by McAuliffe. Each of these statewide campaigns used various communication tools, such as billboards, Facebook posts, hashtags and Twitter. The primary focus of these initiatives was to expose children to healthy foods, including the Governor’s council, which worked to eliminate childhood hunger in Virginia.¹⁴

After those three campaigns, The Food Trust released its special report in July 2015 entitled, *Food for Every Child: The Need for Healthy Food Financing in Virginia*. This report recommended that Virginia pursue a statewide healthy food financing program to increase healthy food access throughout the Commonwealth.¹⁵ The local American Heart Association affiliate collaborated with The Food Trust to start an advocacy campaign for state investment in a healthy food financing initiative. This was a new strategy/direction aimed at the food desert challenge.

In 2016, following the success of a food financing initiative program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the local metropolitan Richmond chapter of the American Heart Association (AHA) promoted the Fund under a well-financed campaign called, *Closer to My Grocer*. The campaign still operates under a diverse coalition of national and local non-profit organizations, such as The March of Dimes, the Virginia Municipal League (VML), and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce. Some of their outreach strategies include lobbying for support through elected officials, conducting a public opinion poll, promoting a public fact sheet on program impact, creating a *Closer to My Grocer* hashtag for social media, and a *Closer to My Grocer* video.¹⁶

The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) also publicly endorsed the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund (VGIF), lobbying for support through County elected officials and promoting benefits of the Fund.¹⁷ Localities like Roanoke¹⁸ and Richmond¹⁹ also launched community efforts to reduce food deserts, often with vocal support of former First Lady of Virginia, Dorothy McAuliffe. Her work with the Virginia Food Access Network (VFAN) to mark September 29, 2017 as the Feed VA Day of Action, produced over 1,160 opportunities to get involved in broad hunger relief efforts.²⁰ Prior to leaving office, former Governor Terry McAuliffe proposed over 7 million in his last two-year budget to finance the Fund. Additional effort to broaden public awareness

included op-eds in local newspapers from champions like Delegate Delores McQuinn (D-70)²¹ and Senator Jennifer McClellan (D-9).²²

Some segments of the state's population are aware that food insecurity and food deserts exist through personal experiences, but a 2018 VCU poll of public opinion found that 70 percent of Virginians reported not having a problem obtaining healthy food.²⁵ Despite this, a 2016 survey by Public Opinion Strategies found 82 percent of respondents supported a state program like the Fund when the concept was described to them.²⁶ However, one General Assembly staffer interviewed noted that in the 2018 session, few constituents called to support or oppose any one of the Fund's bills.²⁷

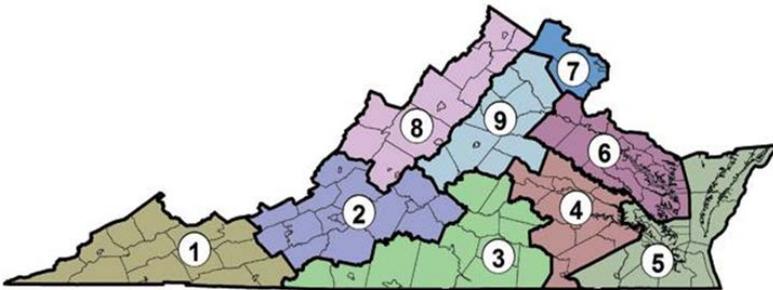
Overall, such broad level outreach had limited impact in inviting advocacy from local grassroots organizations, such as the BusFarm, Inc./Farm to Family,²⁸ for the Fund. It remains a challenge to identify or assess the level of outreach to citizens directly impacted by the lack of a local grocery store in low income, low access communities. These critical voices tend to be left out of the broader conversation and, therefore, fail to validate the most practical or useful need(s) of the impacted communities.

RACIAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

To assess the racial impact of this legislation, it was vital to combine data on grocery store access (a key part of the definition of a food desert) with data on racial demographics, both statewide and for particular localities listed as interested in partnering with the proposed fund. This analysis draws data from two primary sources - the USDA Economic Research Service, Food Environment Atlas,²⁹ which provided data at the county level on estimates of the population who have low access to grocery stores, and the general population demographic information from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.³⁰ In both cases, the analysis draws on 2015 data. The specific indicators used from the USDA are the following:

Indicator	Geographic Level	Definition
Population, low access to grocery store (LA)	County	The number of people in a county living more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in an urban area, or more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store in a rural area.
Low income and low access to grocery store (LA/LI)	County	The number of people in a county with low income and living more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in an urban area, or more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store in a rural area.

While the data on low access population estimates from the USDA provides demographic breakdowns by race, the same is not provided for the joint low income and low access population figures. This analysis argues elsewhere that low access and low income should both be part of

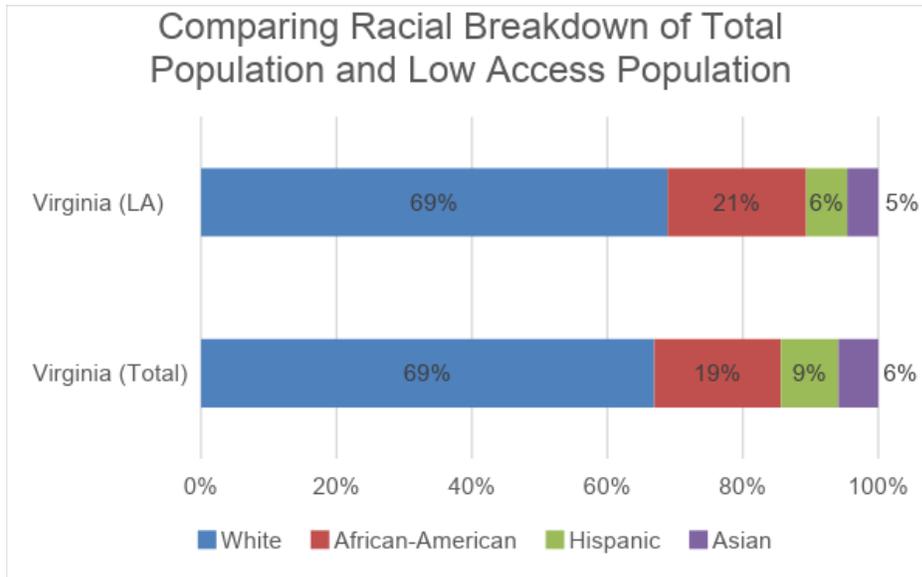


meeting eligibility criteria for participating in the Fund. However, due to the lack of demographic data on that population, we present breakdowns only for low access populations. While acknowledging additional racial/ethnic classifications exist in the census data, this analysis reports only those with significant representation in Virginia: White; African American; Hispanic; and Asian. Additionally, data is

based on a sample and subject to sampling variability.

Due to the complexity of representing 130+ Virginia localities and recognizing the role of the proposed fund as an economic development initiative, the following analysis is simplified by aggregating the data up to the nine regions used in the Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia initiative. GO Virginia is a collaborative economic development legislative package created in 2016. The Virginia DHCD is the state agency responsible for administering the GO Virginia Program, strengthening a case for aggregating at this level.

The first step in assessing the racial equity impact of the Fund is to examine the demographic makeup of the total population in Virginia and comparing it to the makeup of the low access



population. The chart below shows the overall racial demographics of the Commonwealth. If the challenges of low access were equitably distributed among Virginia's diverse populations, the percentages for low access would be very similar. The chart makes it possible to see that Whites and African-Americans are over-represented in the low access

population (their portion is greater among low access than in the total population) while Hispanics and Asians are underrepresented.

Table 1: Summary of Low Access Population (including Racial Ethnic breakdown), Low Access/Low Income population and Low Access/No Car households - by Go VA Region

Go Virginia Region	Low Access		Portion of Low Access Population that is . . . [Portion of Total Population that is . . .]				Low Access & Low Income	
	Pop.	Pct.	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pop.	Pct.
Region 1	38287	9.8%	92% [95.1%]	4.9% [2.7%]	1.5% [1.7%]	0.6% [0.4%]	16704	4.3%
Region 2	129937	16.8%	81.6% [82.4%]	13.4% [12.4%]	2.4% [2.9%]	1.9% [2.1%]	41790	5.4%
Region 3	71849	19.2%	62.5% [64.2%]	33.9% [31.9%]	2.9% [3.0%]	0.5% [0.6%]	31941	8.5%
Region 4	303161	24.8%	61.3% [60.9%]	31.1% [30.7%]	5.1% [5.7%]	2.7% [3.7%]	74986	6.1%
Region 5	350312	20.6%	62.2% [58.8%]	29.6% [31.8%]	4.7% [6.4%]	3.2% [3.7%]	91929	5.4%
Region 6	77168	15.7%	71.8% [72.1%]	19.0% [18.9%]	8.1% [7.2%]	2.4% [2.0%]	14079	2.9%
Region 7	345770	14.3%	70.5% [64.3%]	9.8% [11.9%]	11.0% [17.1%]	11.6% [14.4%]	37213	1.5%
Region 8	74998	14.4%	90.7% [90.3%]	4.1% [4.7%]	4.5% [6.8%]	0.9% [1.4%]	21715	4.2%

Region 9	51874	12.5 %	84.3% [81.3%]	7.8% [11.6%]	5.1% [5.5%]	3.4% [2.6%]	11998	2.9%
Virginia	1443355	17.4 %	69.4% [68.7%]	20.6% [19.2%]	6.1% [8.7%]	4.6% [6.1%]	342355	4.1%

The second chart shows the portion of the low access population of each major racial ethnic group with the corresponding portion in the total population. If the portion in the low access population is higher than in the general population, that group is overrepresented in the low access population. These instances are bolded.

Similar to the statewide breakdown, the White population is the majority in every region, both in the general population and the low access population, with a peak of 92% low access and 95% of the general population in Region 1. Regions 3, 4, and 5 contain 30% or more African Americans. Region 7 has the highest Hispanic and Asian population at 17% and 14%, respectively. In general, more rural regions have more than 80% of the White population. Likewise, those areas that are more urban have the highest percentages of African American, Hispanic, and Asian populations.

Several takeaways are apparent from this analysis. First, whites are overrepresented in the low access population in five regions, African-Americans in five regions, Hispanics in one region, and Asians in three regions. Additionally, inequity can be assessed by comparing the portion of each racial group that are faced with low access. Hypothetically, if 10% of whites and 20% of African-Americans in a region faced the challenge of low access to grocery stores, then African-Americans are disproportionately among the low access population. The results by region are as follows:

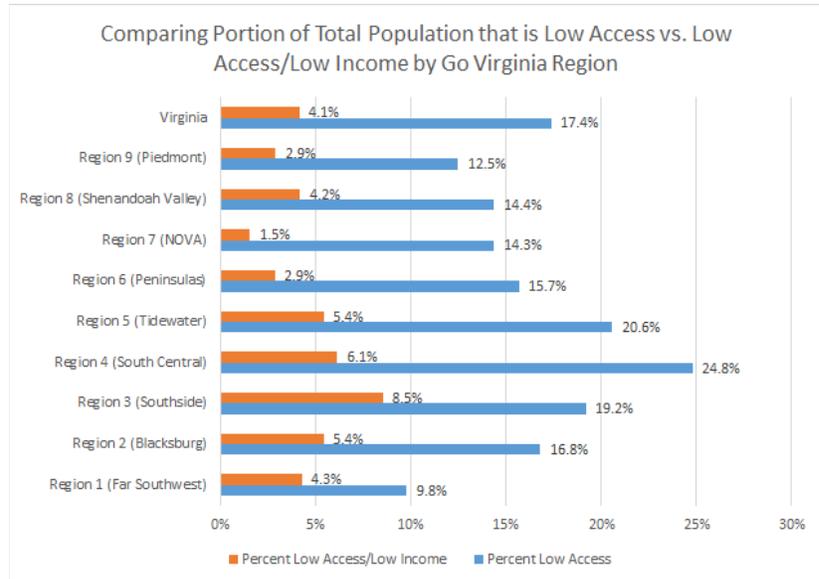
Portion of each racial group that are low access:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
White	9%	17%	17%	25%	22%	16%	16%	14%	13%
African American	17%	18%	20%	25%	19%	16%	12%	13%	8%
Hispanic	8%	14%	19%	22%	15%	17%	9%	10%	12%
Asian	17%	15%	15%	18%	17%	19%	12%	9%	16%

The data reveals some interesting results. For instance in Region 1, more than 9 in 10 people are White, however, less than 1 in 10 Whites are low access (compared to 1 in 6 African Americans). Similarly, 1 in 6 Asians are low access. This data shows in better detail the racial disparities depending on the region. Regions 3,4, and 5 which have the highest amounts of African Americans also are the areas with the highest amounts of low access and low access within African Americans. By breaking the data down to the regional level, it enables the picture to show the true racial disparities. Regional geographical location plays a substantial role in low access and clearly identifies which racial groups are impacted the most. In this instance, the data shows the existence of racial inequity, sometimes for African-Americans (Regions 1, 2 and 3), sometimes for Whites (Regions 5, 7, and 9), for Asians (Regions 1, 6, and 9).

It is important to note that this picture of mixed racial inequity at the level of low access (based

purely on distance) may be different than what would emerge if income were considered. Included in the low access population would be persons who may live at a distance from a major grocery store, but also be wealthy enough to afford a vehicle and gas to drive that distance. Without the racial demographics of LA/LI, it is not possible to assess definitively if any racial inequities exist. However, given known gaps between white and non-white median wages³¹ and the difference in estimates of the LA versus the LA/LI population in each region suggest that including a low-income measure would significantly change the picture. For instance, while both Region 7 (Northern Virginia) and Region 8 (Shenandoah Valley) have just over 14% of their population classified as low access, the LA/LI portion of the population in region 7 (1.5%) is almost one-third the portion of the LA/LI population in Region 8 (4.2%).



This conclusion is strengthened by comparing data at the local level. In the graphics included in Appendix G, from the size of each locality based on the number of residents who are either low access (top graphic) or low access/low income, it is possible to see how the prominence of a county like Fairfax changes when the population analyzed moves from Low Access to LA/LI. Specifically, Fairfax has four times the number of low access residents as Norfolk but approximately the same number of LA/LI residents.

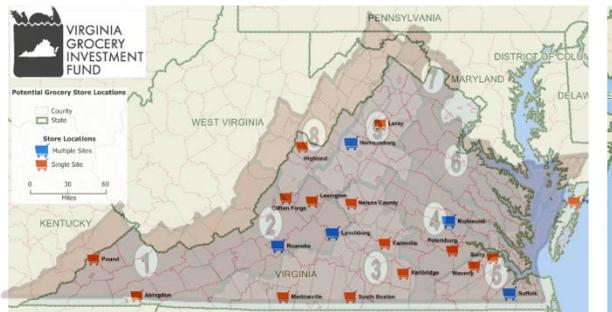
This graphic also is shaded based on the proportion of the population that is white, with blue indicating a lower white proportion than the state average and green a higher proportion. This demonstrates the sizable portion of low access/low income (LA/LI) population that live in regions 4 (Richmond metro) and 5 (Hampton Roads area). Close to half of the Commonwealth's LA/LI population live in these two regions, which are more racially/ethnically diverse.

Findings

Noting the *Closer to My Grocer* Coalition already preselected 18 localities for future store developments, the maps are shown side by side to provide a better idea of who is served should this bill pass. Within these localities below, new and existing businesses would be eligible for low-interest loans and grants to expand and create new health food retail through the legislation.

To assess the impact of the legislation, the following localities must be examined:
 Abingdon • Clifton Forge • Farmville • Harrisonburg • Highland • Kenbridge • Lexington • Luray • Lynchburg • Martinsville • Nelson County • Parksley • Petersburg • Pound • Richmond • Roanoke
 • South Boston • Suffolk.

Region 1 has two (2) locations with potential projects: 97% and 91% of the population is white and less than 10,000 will be impacted. Region 2 has three (3) locations with potential projects.



Two of the three projects will impact more of the population as far as racial equity. In Lynchburg and Roanoke City, the sites impacted are roughly 65% White; 30% African American; 5% Hispanic; and 2% Asian. This is significant because for the region: 82% of the population is White, 12% is African American, 3% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. This shows these businesses are strategic in impacting more racial demographics. If the legislation passed, it would be invaluable for those individuals in Region 2. This sentiment is echoed by Regions 3,4, and 5 with the placement of the potential projects. Regions

6 and 7 have no potential projects. This is more concerning for Region 6 because the region ranks 5 in 9 as far as regions with the highest low access rates. The potential project locations in Regions 8 and 9 will impact more of the White population. However, low access for the other racial populations is not as high as in the majority of the regions.

In conclusion, the racial equity impact analysis shows the following:

- Analysis of low access data by region and race shows a mixed picture: In some regions, whites are overrepresented, in others African-Americans or Asians are overrepresented.
- Low access shows a very different picture than low access/low income. Once income is considered, heavily urban areas such as Norfolk, Hampton Roads, and Richmond make up a larger portion of the focus population and these areas tend to be more diverse in general, but more heavily African-American in particular.
- Researchers were unable to analyze specific racial breakdowns for the LA/LI population because this data is not available, which in and of itself is a systemic equity issue. Since the research revealed African-Americans and Hispanics are disproportionately overrepresented among Virginians facing poverty, it is inferred that the low access findings would shift towards a heavier over-representation of those groups in the LA/LI population.
- Using LA/LI as the definition of underserved would more accurately reflect the meaning of that term and result in the inclusion of a greater portion of minority residents; while not excluding Whites who also face the combined challenges of low access and low income. This would be a more targeted and efficient use of state resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fund seeks to build strong self-sustaining healthy communities in all areas of our state - rural, urban, and suburban through investing in food accessibility. Following the direction of Pennsylvania's Healthy Food Financing Initiative, this too can be achieved in Virginia. The following recommendations would ensure that outcomes of this investment reflect the needs of all persons based off the resources currently in that area and those in its fight for acquiring and maintaining healthy foods.

- Increase both internal and external **education** to clearly define and understand: (1) underserved communities, (2) cost related to transportation for healthy foods, and (3) public outreach/education around healthy foods.
- Strategically create **alliances** that target access for all races with pre-existing organizations doing pertinent work would support quicker implementation such as: (1) DHCD/GO Virginia to administer/implement the grant funding process as an economic revitalization/workforce development effort, (2) Feed VA to continue to study, assess,

monitor, and evaluate the elimination of food deserts alongside being an outlet to increase public engagement, and (3) Virginia Cooperative Extension to identify local farmers, farmers markets, and healthy food curriculum and food demonstrations.

- Increase **transportation** to fresh foods by allocating funds for transportation: (1) to persons deemed low access/low income/SNAP eligible using USDA low access/low income metrics; and (2) to businesses specifically deemed small-business, women, and minority (SWaM) owned or serving highly populated minority, low income, and low access communities.

The creation of a universal definition for underserved communities provides clear indicators of where true needs exist. This measurable definition should include not only “low access” populations but also low income and population density data where current stores exist to indicate store placement for areas marked high with low access.

When addressing the need for access to healthy food, consideration of transportation cost becomes a factor. Conducting a cost benefit analysis could provide another solution that allocates funds specifically for transportation access: (1) to persons desiring fresh food options but in areas deemed low income and low access; and (2) to Virginia based farms/factories desiring to get fresh food options to local convenience stores/markets.

Noting that access means different things in rural, urban, and suburban areas. Access to transportation needs to be added to the funding opportunity pool especially for persons deemed low access/low income and SNAP eligible. This is an opportunity to seek technical guidance and collaboration from the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity. The dialogue should focus on the allocation of a portion of the Fund to be allocated for businesses deemed minority owned or serving minorities in low income and low access communities, such as but not limited to: farmers, store owners, and health focused organizations.

Awareness of these possible solutions would be key in gaining public support. While there were previous efforts to rally support, there is still a need for education on what designates food as healthy and where they can be found. The VCU 2018 Poll of Public Opinion indicated that 70% of Virginians did not have a problem obtaining healthy food, but of those who did, minority respondents were more likely to name transportation as the key barrier to access. A portion of the fund should be used for outreach and education with a defined curriculum to benefit the surrounding (low income/low access) communities in partnership with existing efforts directed at health and wellness. Education should include interactive demonstrations and tools related to the evaluation of impact through the Fund.

CONCLUSION

Food exposure (access to grocery stores) is inversely associated with neighborhood income. The unsuccessful passage of this legislation demonstrates that there is no universal solution to solve the issue of food deserts in Virginia. While the research shows that barriers to healthy food access exist in rural and urban areas, the data did not clearly acknowledge who would be most negatively impacted. Though years of racial injustice may also play a factor through other basic needs such as lack of affordable housing and healthcare, it was determined that the Fund is an opportunity to build collaborations. In absence of the Fund, there is current and real evidence of local governments and grassroot organizations working with limited budgets to establish alternatives for getting healthier food options into their communities.³² The Fund would create opportunities to build a stronger economy, build strong communities, and healthier people.

Future implementation of the Fund still holds significant value in communities across the Commonwealth. It has the potential to create a broader funding stream for leveraging public/private partnerships and to establish a central source for technical assistance, education, and program implementation. Ultimately, the Fund could create opportunities for additional localities to develop capacity for introducing grocery stores or other intervention strategies for providing access to healthier food options.

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

- ¹According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), over 23 million people in the U.S. live in food deserts – areas where a significant number of low-income residents need to travel more than 1 mile in urban areas and 10 in rural areas to access healthy, affordable food options.
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APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Equity

Dictionary: The quality of being fair and impartial.

Food Desert

USDA: Areas where a significant number of low-income residents need to travel more than 1 mile in urban areas and 10 in rural areas to access healthy, affordable food options.

CDC: Food deserts are areas that lack access to affordable fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk, and other foods that make up the full range of a healthy diet.

Food Insecurity

The limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

Food swamp:

JHSPH: A place where unhealthy foods are more readily available than healthy foods.

GO Virginia

A bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative that is changing the way Virginia's diverse regions collaborate on economic and workforce development activities.

Low Access:

USDA: Low access to healthy food is defined as being far from a supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store. The USDA provides three distinct options, all of which can be termed low access:

- needing to travel more than **½ mile in urban settings and more than 10 miles in rural settings** to access a large grocery store
- needing to travel more than **1 mile in urban settings and more than 10 miles in rural settings** to access a large grocery store
- needing to travel more than **1 mile in urban settings and more than 20 miles in rural settings** to access a large grocery store

Low Income (tract):

USDA: A tract with either a poverty rate of 20% or more, or a median family income less than 80% of the state-wide median family income; or a tract in a metropolitan area with a median family income less than 80 percent of the surrounding metropolitan area median family income.

Rural:

Miriam Webster: Of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture

US Census: Encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area

Suburban:

Definition online: Of or characteristic of a suburb; a person or thing located just outside of a city

Urban:

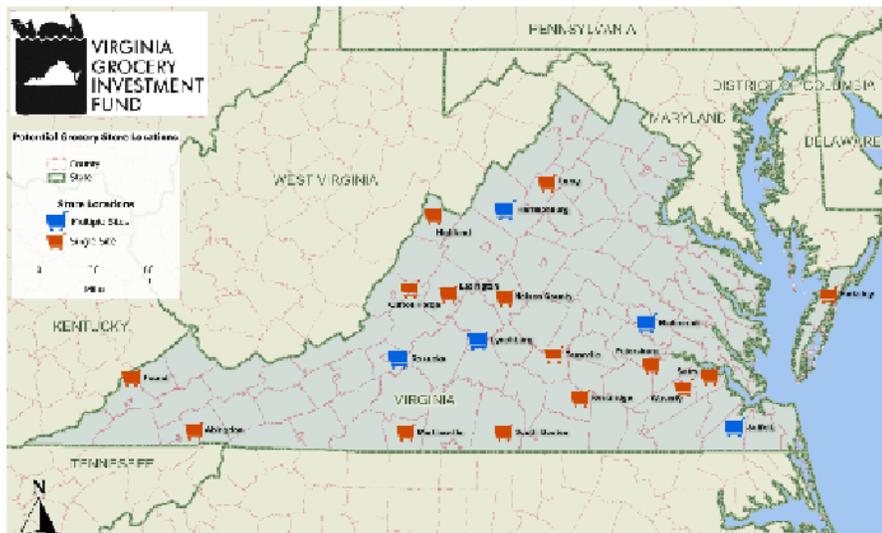
US Census: An urbanized area consists of densely developed territory that contains 50,000 or more people.

Underserved communities

HB69: Any census tract designated as having "low supermarket access" by USDA's Food Access Research Atlas or other governmental or philanthropic healthy food initiative.

APPENDIX C: VIRGINIA GROCERY INVESTMENT FUND (VGIF) FACT SHEET

The following are potential pipeline projects that could be eligible for the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund that include new store development as well as existing store renovations:



Members of the Closer to My Grocer Coalition:



Demand for financing through the Grocery Investment Fund

There is confirmed interest for projects in at least **18** localities from both new and existing businesses in accessing low-interest loans and grants to expand and create new healthy food retail through the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund.

- Abingdon
- Clifton Forge
- Farmville
- Harrisonburg
- Highland
- Kenbridge
- Lexington
- Luray
- Lynchburg
- Martinsville
- Nelson County
- Parksley
- Petersburg
- Pound
- Richmond
- Roanoke
- South Boston
- Suffolk

Project Eligibility Criteria:

All projects applying for loans and/or grants will be individually subjected to a rigorous financial underwriting process and **must** demonstrate the following:



Median Income: Located in or serving residents of a low to moderate income census tract.



Market Test: Requires a professionally conducted market study, a store must be located in a community underserved by grocery stores and The data must show that the market can support the store format, product mix size.



Community Readiness: The local partners are critical to a store's success. The community must be engaged in the planning.



Local Community Buy-In: To insure success of the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund, an eligible store must demonstrate engagement of community stakeholders and use of existing resources such as:

- Coordination with local government incentives like economic and workforce development
- Healthcare providers, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agents, and/or other existing resources to provide nutrition education or other health related services



Virginia Grown: Projects that source locally from Virginia will be given priority

Updated January 2018

APPENDIX F: LEGISLATIVE PATRONS

Bill	HB 69 (22 Democrats and 2 Republicans)	HB 85 (2 Democrats and 2 Republicans)	SB 37 (8 Democrats and 2 Republicans)
Chief Patron	Delegate Delores McQuinn (D-70)	Delegate Richard Bell (R-20)	Senator William M. Stanley, Jr. (R-20)
Co-Patrons Senate	Mamie Locke (D-2); Louise Lucas (D-18); Glen Sturtevant (R-10)	Jennifer McClellan (D-9)	Rosalyn Dance (D-16) [chief co-patron] Creigh Deeds (D-25) Adam Ebbin (D-30) Mamie Locke (D-2) Montgomery Mason (D-1) Jennifer McClellan (D-9) Glen Sturtevant (R-10)
Co-Patrons House	Dawn Adams (D-68); Lashrecse Aird (D-63); Lamont Bagby (D-74); Richard Bell (R-20); Jennifer Boysko (D-86); Betsy Carr (D-69); Charniele Herring (D-46); Patrick Hope (D-47); Chris Hurst (D-12); Mark Levine (D-45); Joseph Lindsey (D-90); Alfonso Lopez (D-49) Kenneth Plum (D-36); Marcia Price (D-95); David Reid (D-32); Debra Rodman (D-73); Danica Roem (D-13); Marcus Simon (D-53); Roslyn Tyler (D-75); Schuyler VanValkenburg (D-72)	Delores McQuinn (D-70) [chief co-patron] Robert Thomas (R-28)	Kaye Kory (D-38) Sam Rasoul (D-11)

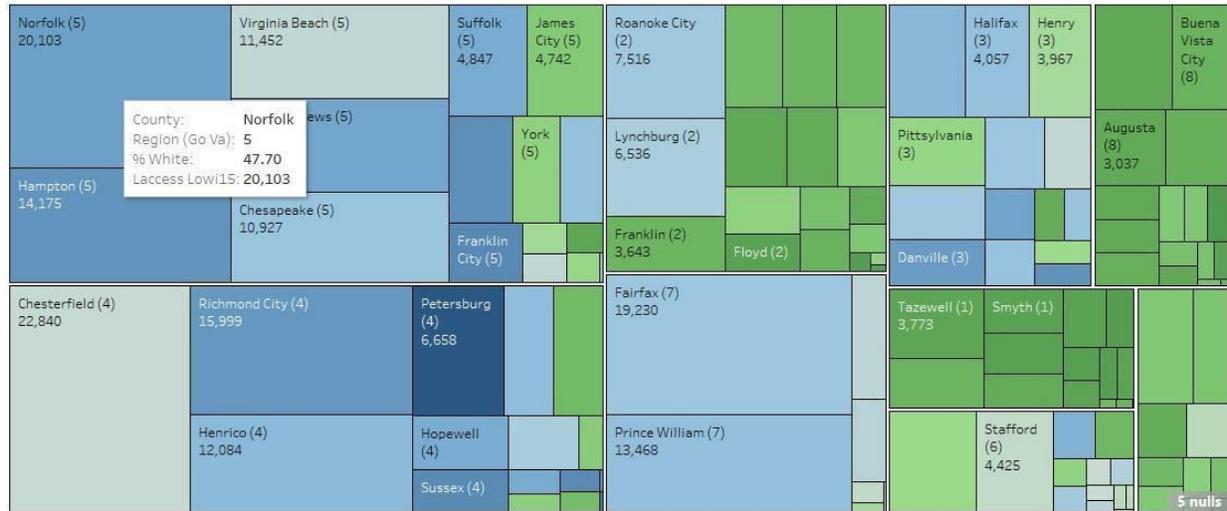
APPENDIX G: ANALYSIS BY LOCALITY



Low Access (1/10 mile) Population Grouped by Go Virginia Region
 (Shaded by percent white; green above state average of 68.7%, blue below.)



Low Access (1/10 mile) & Low Income Population Grouped by Go Virginia Region
 (Shaded by percent white; green above state average of 68.7%, blue below.)





A Racial Impact Analysis: HB 69 / SB 37

Virginia Grocery Investment Program and Fund



VCU
The Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute

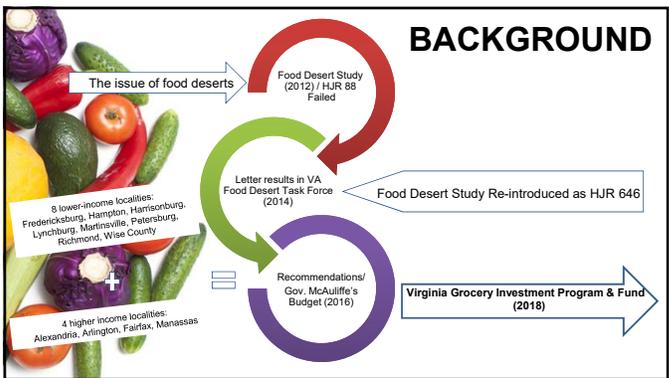
Progressive Consortium:

Taryn Anthony
Tracey Dunn
Stephen Miller-Pitts
Grant Rissler
Barbara Williams-Lewis



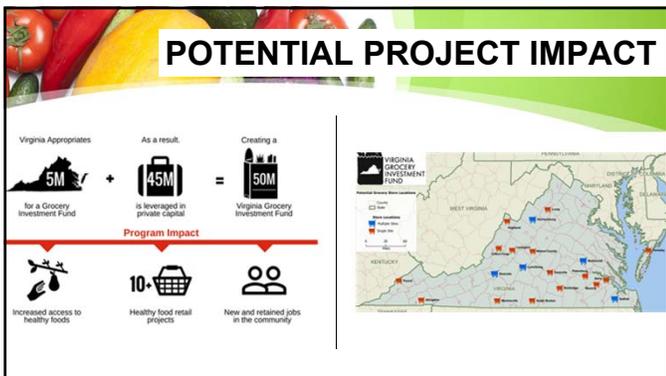
KEYWORDS

- Food Deserts
- Food Insecurity
- Low Access
- Low Income



LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT - "The Fund"

- Create Public-Private Partnerships
- Generate up to \$30 Million in Private Investment
- Affects 1.7 Million Virginians who currently live in lower income communities with low supermarket access
- Independent Grocery Stores contribute \$107.56 Million in state and local tax revenues
- Average Grocery Store hires 40 people from the neighborhood where it operates



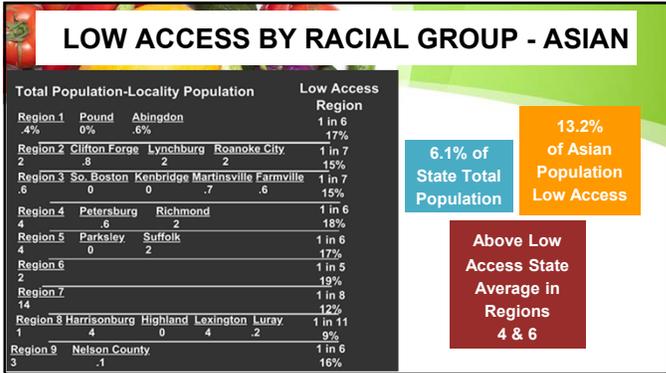
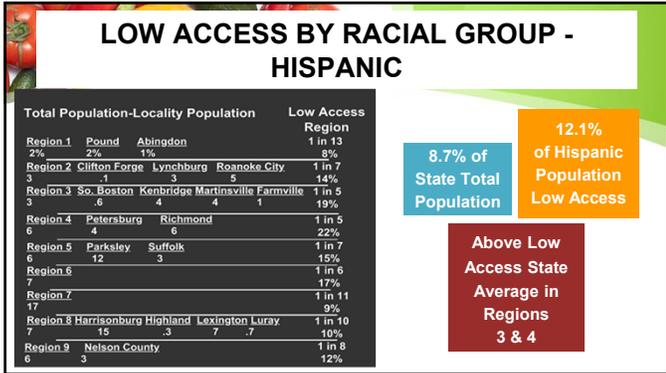
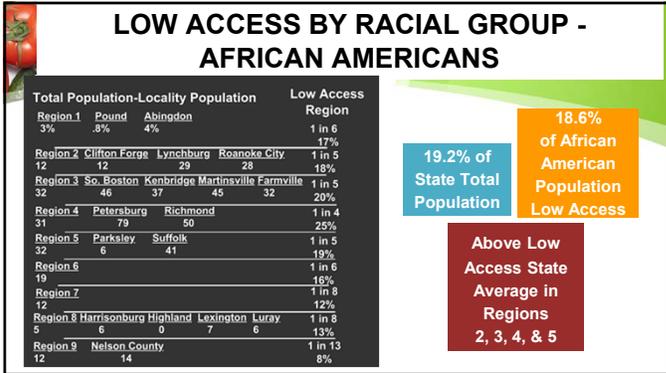
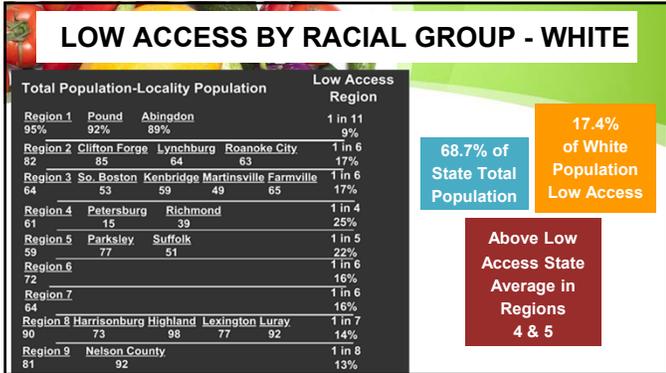
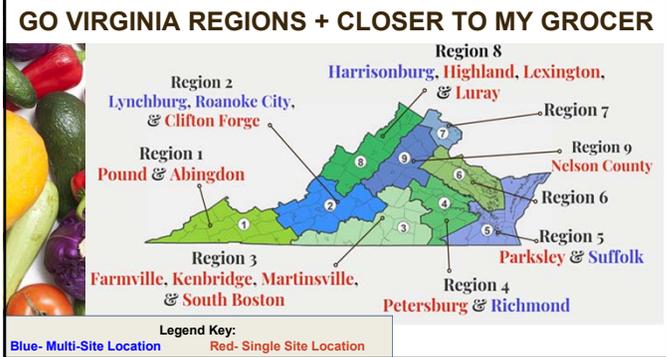
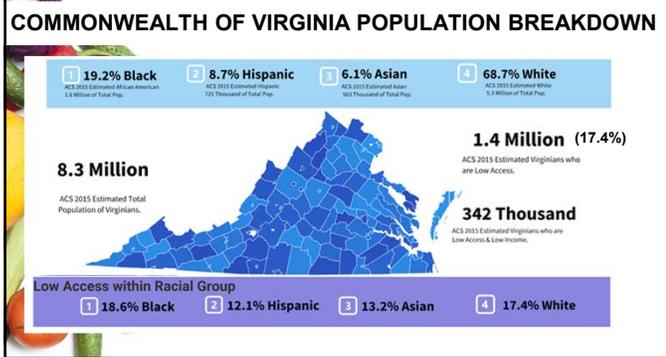
RAISING AWARENESS

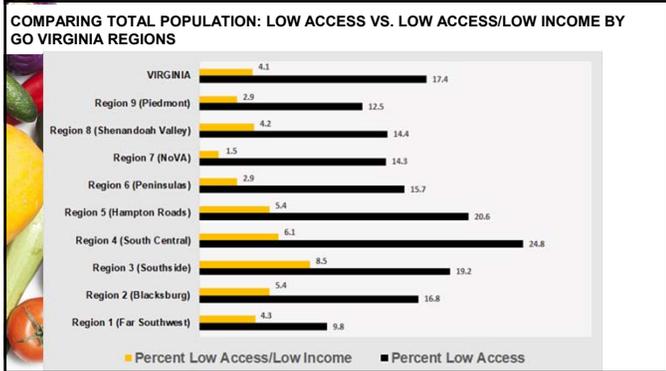
More than **1.7 MILLION** Virginians, including **480,000** children, live in lower income communities with limited supermarket access.

CLOSER TO MY GROCER COALITION

DATA SOURCES

- USDA Food Environment Atlas [Low Access, including by race; Low Access/Low Income]
- US Census - American Community Survey 5-year estimates [Demographics]
- Aggregate to GO Virginia Regions





RECOMMENDATIONS

Kssh

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- s{ rih@fyw@riw@w@



COMMENTS & QUESTIONS?

Virginia Grocery Investment Program and Fund



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