

# NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – November 9, 2005



CONTACT: Lisa M. Guthrie  
(804) 225-1902  
VirLCV@aol.com

## **CONSERVATION, GROWTH AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES MATTERED TO VOTERS AND CANDIDATES**

Candidates who managed to tap into voter concerns about water and air quality, family recreational opportunities with preservation of open space, and better-managed local growth as a solution to transportation woes had winning results at the polls yesterday. Weary of the repetitive negative attack ads, voters clearly connected with candidates who recognized these as voter concerns and offered possible solutions. As evidence of the increasing relevance of conservation and decisions about how we grow next, voters chose 19 of the 25 candidates endorsed by the Virginia League of Conservation Voters (VALCV). VALCV is the nonpartisan political arm of Virginia's conservation community.

Tim Kaine, VALCV's endorsed candidate for Governor, found solid traction with voters on the growth and transportation issue and says those points contributed to his wins in traditionally Republican outer suburbs of Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads. Citizens realize that throwing more tax money at highway construction without a comprehensive land use plan may actually contribute to more congestion and higher real estate taxes to pay for new infrastructure costs.<sup>1</sup> In today's press conference, Kaine reiterated the importance of finding solutions by connecting land use and transportation, referring to an earlier statement that we need to "grow right and get there faster." Kaine's suggested solutions include more options for transit and more accountability for proposed transportation projects.

Successful VALCV endorsed House candidates David Bulova (HD 37 – Fairfax) and Chuck Caputo (HD 67 – Fairfax/Loudoun) confronted similar growth and transportation concerns in their races. The voters in the Republican domains of south Hampton Roads overwhelmingly responded to Kaine's message as they have been outspoken in their appeals for transportation alternatives. The costs of uncontrolled growth are evident to residents of Virginia Beach given a scare by BRAC on the Oceana jet base because of growth encroachment. Local partner organizations in Orange, Albemarle, and Stafford counties declared victories in Board of Supervisors races on this same message of connecting land use and transportation.

"Successful candidates dared to listen to the citizens in their communities instead of following a partisan agenda," said Lisa Guthrie, VALCV Executive Director. "I believe that the 2005 elections may prove to be the turning point for local and state decision-making. Voters crossed party lines to elect a Governor who pledged to give localities the power to better manage growth to deal with traffic problems. This shows elected officials now can feel confident in responding to citizens' concerns over traffic, skyrocketing taxes, new school needs, and other problems resulting from out-of-control development."

VALCV seeks to protect the quality of life of Virginians as well as our scenic, historic, and natural resources. Virginia can best accomplish these goals by making conservation a top priority with elected officials, candidates, and voters.

---

<sup>1</sup> The results of a 2003 VALCV co-commissioned Mason-Dixon poll support these voter attitudes.  
(<http://pecva.org/landuse/2003vapoll/2003vapoll.asp>)