

# THE CHAMBER

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## Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce



A New Century "... dedicated to representing private enterprise, promoting business and enhancing the quality of life in our Greater Charlottesville communities."

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### Chamber Resolution (15-2): Support for Enhanced Workforce Credentialing Programs in Virginia

WHEREAS, our Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1913 and today with more than Chamber 1,200 member and affiliate member enterprises employing more than 45,000 people in our communities, representing an estimated total payroll of more than \$1.75 billion a year, is dedicated to "representing private enterprise, promoting business and enhancing the quality of life in our Greater Charlottesville communities;"

WHEREAS, our Chamber strongly supported multi-faceted educational and workforce advancement and enhancements for more than a century, including, as stated in our guiding "Code of Chamber Public Policies";

"... Businesses support the foundation of a strong educational system needed to allow people to make the most of their jobs and life opportunities. Businesses provide the jobs and economic base from which our fellow citizens in our community can and do improve their lives. The combined power of private enterprise and education can enhance the quality of life of the greatest number of our fellow citizens ...

"It is essential that governments and schools work cooperatively with employers, particularly businesses, to provide programs that support workforce development and better prepare students for career-ladder employment ....

"A strong education system and the availability of technically skilled people are vital to our region's future prosperity and quality of life. We recognize that business and industry must continue to play a critical role in ensuring that schools and workforce development programs are of the highest quality.

"We support the establishment of programs and policies that will achieve a technically skilled, trainable workforce throughout our region. Further, we ... support continued professional education, industry certification programs and technical training programs at our existing workforce training centers;"

WHEREAS, the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System has assessed the current and future state of the Commonwealth of Virginia's workforce needs and reported the significant misalignment of those needs with the current state of the Commonwealth's workforce training capacities – a large and increasing gap between the needs of enterprise and available training and certification that must be addressed;

WHEREAS, the Chancellor has presented (September 2015) a powerful report, "Workforce Credentials: The Pathway to Virginia's New Middle Class," to the Virginia General Assembly proposing an innovative approach, at reasonable levels of new investment, to building Virginia's existing workforce by establishing a determined, effective performance-based program led by Virginia's community colleges, to train and prepare an adequate, on-going and growing number of our fellow Virginia citizens with industry-recognized workforce credentials; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Community College System can provide modern workforce educational-industrial credentialing programs aligned with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century global, diverse, competitive and technically skilled workforce;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of our Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, that our Chamber fully supports innovative, reasonable investment by the Commonwealth of Virginia for enhanced industry-recognized workforce credentialing.

X/ Chad Zakai

Chairman of the Board of Directors

X/ Timothy Hulbert

President

November 24, 2015