



Governing Virginia

Anne Marie Morgan, A.R. Pete Giesen

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Governing Virginia is the winner of the 2012 Virginia Press Women's First Place Award for "Book Edited by Entrant."

Governing Virginia is a unique, reader-friendly compendium written not by academicians but by "practitioners" who have worked within the realms of the Commonwealth's state and local governments. It was compiled for use as a textbook or reader for stand-alone courses in Virginia government, as a supplementary text for general courses in American or state and local government, or as an informational book to learn more about the Commonwealth. The contributors to *Governing Virginia* include five former governors, five current and former legislators, and other prominent state leaders, from whom readers can learn about how laws are made, the lengthy process of budget-making, the policy priorities of Virginia's chief executives, the distinctive way that the General Assembly selects judges, plus many more topics.

While invaluable for political science instruction, *Governing Virginia* is also rich with the Commonwealth's history, and foundational information about how the state and localities are governed is recounted against this backdrop. The chapters trace the legacy of Virginia's contributions to governing principles in the U.S. and the world, while also describing its political transformation throughout the centuries and the contemporary workings of its executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Additionally, the compilation includes features that do not always appear in Virginia government textbooks, including the evolution of women's participation in the General Assembly, the transformation of the state's political structure into a vigorous two-party system, the expanding role of the attorney general, and the importance of economic development to the Commonwealth's prosperity.

Beautifully illustrated in color with photos by an award-winning *Richmond Times-Dispatch* photographer, *Governing Virginia* is ideal for teachers, professors, college and advanced high school students, business and civic leaders, and anyone who wants to learn about the state that *Governing Magazine* has described as the "best-managed" in the U.S.

Book Sections:

Part 1 discusses Virginia's metamorphosis as the Commonwealth underwent profound political and constitutional changes since the founding of the oldest representative legislature in the New World.

Part 2 describes the legislative branch, including the process and vocabulary of passing laws, how the state budget is made, the election of women to the General Assembly, the pivotal role of lobbyists, and reflections from the longest-serving member of the House of Delegates.

Part 3 addresses the executive branch, including the fundamentals of serving as governor, the workings of the chief executive's cabinet, narratives by former governors on their policy priorities, and the strategic roles of the attorney general and economic development.

Part 4 discusses the judicial branch, the unique way that Virginia selects its judges, and a concise explanation of the state's court system.

Part 5 introduces the news media as an integral component of the political and governmental landscape in Virginia and their essential role in informing the public, written from both the newspaper and broadcast perspectives.

Part 6 features Virginia's local governments, including the critical functions and challenges of cities and counties as they govern close to home.

Part 7 explores the dynamics of Virginia's electoral system, how elections are conducted, the use of money in campaigns, and the role of political parties in waging electoral contests.

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