

**PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM
VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
JOHN W. JONES**



On behalf of all of us at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family are eager to say farewell to one of the harshest and challenging winters we've seen in decades and welcome the return of spring to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Of course many Virginia residents and their families will be taking to the roadways, enjoying the change of season, and exploring all of the wonderful family-oriented events, parks, and scenery Virginia has to

offer. So I encourage drivers to be extra vigilant, especially as this time of year brings many out-of-state visitors to our area.

Please remember: COURTESY, CAUTION and COMMON SENSE are the most important rules of the road!

Of course our goal is to provide the highest level of service to our community, to promote public safety, especially during this festive prom and graduation season. For those of you with children or grandchildren attending prom or graduating, please take this opportunity to discuss with them the dangers of alcohol consumption and the consequences of drinking and driving. Your Sheriff's office will be working with school officials to ensure a safe and joyous prom and graduation season.

As always I urge you to help your local law enforcement efforts by reporting crimes and suspicious activity when you see them so that we can do our very best to keep this community a safe place to work, play, live, and raise our families.

As Executive Director of VSI, I want to know what you consider important and necessary to keep ours a safe community. Our organization has always strived to attain the highest professional standards while remaining accessible and helpful to everyone in our community.

I deeply appreciate your support as a loyal supporter of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute.

Sincerely,

John W. Jones, Executive Director
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute
701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706
Richmond, VA 23219

**VSI Supporters Can Now
Donate Online!**

VSI just made it easier to donate! So if you'd like to support the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute's important initiatives on behalf of the Sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and residents of Virginia by making an **online**, tax-deductible contribution, please go to www.vasherriffsinstitute.org and click "Donate Now."



Here are several reasons to Donate Online:

- It's fast and easy
- It's secure
- It saves paper
- You can take advantage of your credit card miles/rewards programs
- You'll receive an automatic receipt for tax purposes

Your donation will help ensure we have the critical resources we need to continue such vital programs as providing an immediate \$5,000 in-the-line-of-duty death benefit to the family of Sheriffs or deputies killed in the line of duty, offering scholarships to Virginia students to pursue Criminal Justice degrees, providing training programs for law enforcement officers, and promoting public safety and crime prevention in your community and throughout Virginia.


The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute solicits articles and comments from associate members of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute for inclusion in this newsletter. Articles or comments should be directed to: John W. Jones, Executive Director, Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, 701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706, Richmond, VA 23219-2512, or phone (804) 225-7152.

We Want to Hear from You ...

Drop us a note, give us a call, or send us an email.

 701 East Franklin Street - Suite 706
Richmond, Virginia 23219

 (804) 225-7152 phone

 (804) 225-7162 fax

 vsavsi@virginiasheriffs.org

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute does not solicit donations by telephone.



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, No. 2
SPRING 2010



John W. Jones,
Executive Director
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute
701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706
Richmond, VA 23219

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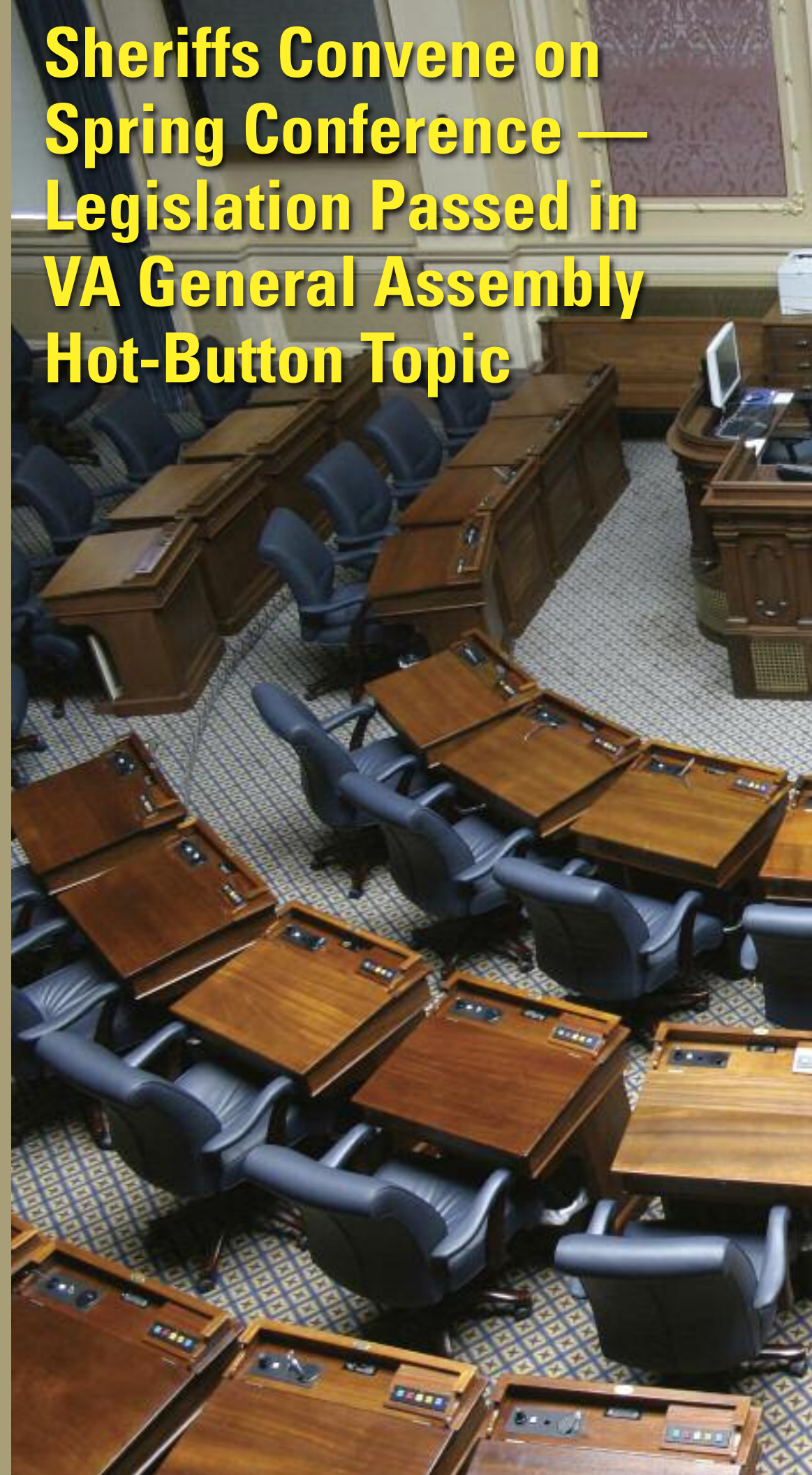
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**Sheriffs Convene on
Spring Conference —
Legislation Passed in
VA General Assembly
Hot-Button Topic**





2010

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Annual Spring Conference Promotes Training and Updates Law Enforcement Officers on Legislation Passed in the General Assembly

Over 250 Virginia Sheriffs, management level deputies, and guests took part in the 2010 Virginia Sheriffs' Institute's Spring Conference and Virginia Sheriffs' Association Exhibition. In 2009, 102 of the 123 Sheriffs' offices in Virginia attended this important conference.

Several important pieces of legislation, including how to deal with Virginia's serious budget shortfall and bills relating to gun ownership in Virginia were considered by Members of the Virginia General Assembly this year. Therefore it's vital that Sheriffs are informed directly by our elected officials about what these decisions mean to our ability as Sheriffs to keep our communities safe. The VSI Spring Conference is always an important forum for Sheriffs, deputies, and Virginia legislators to discuss how legislation could impact the duties of law enforcement officers in the state of Virginia. Therefore, VSI sponsors Sheriffs/staff to attend the spring conference by paying their registration fee and hotel room through donations made by associate members to VSI.

Given the nation's current recession, it's clear that state budgets will continue to be a target as governments are forced to tighten their belts and shore up budget shortfalls. At the conference, speakers promoted the importance of ensuring adequate funding for critical law enforcement efforts and that crime prevention initiatives continue to be a top priority of the citizens of the Commonwealth. In addition, important training sessions to enhance crime prevention efforts by law enforcement officers were featured as part of the conference.



Political Corner

Collective Bargaining Update

With your help, we delivered thousands of petitions to Members of Congress throughout Virginia urging them to vote "NO" on H.R. 413 — a bill that would mandate the unionization of law enforcement officials severely limiting the ability of Virginia Sheriffs and others to perform our jobs and uphold the safety of our communities.



Thanks to the pressure we put on Virginia's lawmakers, only 2 of 11 Virginia House members co-sponsored the bill. Yet, despite our tremendous effort, this bill continues to gain momentum in the U.S. House of Representatives — and a comparable bill, S. 1611, has been introduced in the Senate.

Once again, our supporters came through by signing and submitting letters to Senators Mark Warner and Jim Webb. The Association will keep you posted on any development in Congress on the Collective Bargaining bill.

State Budget Woes

As the Virginia General Assembly considered significant cuts that would dramatically impact my ability as Sheriff to provide adequate public safety services throughout Virginia, VSI supporters got involved! VSI supporters submitted ballots to their Members of the Virginia General Assembly, pressing upon them the importance of sustaining adequate funding for critical law enforcement efforts and reminding them that public safety services — a core responsibility of government — must be protected despite difficult economic times.

Did You Know . . .

The Sheriff is the only locally elected constitutional law enforcement officer of the Commonwealth of Virginia, as provided in the Constitution of Virginia, and is elected by the citizens of Virginia every four years. Accordingly, the duties of the Sheriff are not spelled out in any one document, law or regulation.

Law Enforcement – Sheriffs are responsible for primary local law enforcement in all counties without a police force but also have responsibility for law enforcement in all localities in which they serve. In eighty-six of Virginia's counties, the Sheriff is the primary local law enforcement agency, responding to all of the crime calls and calls for service from citizens.

Jail Administration – The Code of Virginia provides that Sheriffs are responsible for all locally operated jails. Sheriffs also sit on all regional jail boards, and in some cases operate regional jails in Virginia. As such, Sheriffs are responsible for transporting inmates to and from state institutions and maintaining security in local jails. Today, local jails range in size in Virginia from a few dozen inmates to over a thousand inmates, and the operation thereof can be, and is, a very complex system of services to the jail community.

Service to the Courts – Court services are the responsibility of all Virginia's Sheriffs. In each locality, the Sheriff is responsible for the security of the courthouse, the courtrooms and the trials while they are underway. Sheriffs are responsible for the security and sequestering of the jurors and notification of jurors for court service. Additionally, Sheriffs' offices are responsible for the service of hundreds of thousands of court papers per year, ranging from divorce proceedings and child custody cases to simple civil suits among citizens.

In addition to these services, Sheriffs are called upon to promote DARE programs and services for victims and witnesses of crime as well as participate in civil commitments to the citizens of their locality to protect the basic health and welfare of those citizens.



Staying Safe This Prom and Graduation Season

Leading up to the busy prom and graduation season, Virginia Sheriffs will be sending a message to students throughout the Commonwealth: underage drinking is not legal and will not be tolerated.



That's why law enforcement officers throughout Virginia will be stepping up enforcement efforts to make sure everyone's safe during this time of celebration for students and their families. In addition, we will be working closely with school officials to stress the importance of promoting responsible decisions that will prevent alcohol-related crashes and ensure our teens stay safe and alcohol-free on the roads.