

**REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY
ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**Examination of Establishing
Integrated Research and Academic
Campuses in the Commonwealth**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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**VIRGINIA RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND REPORT**

Chapter 616 of the Acts of Assembly and HB 545 asked the Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission (VRTAC) to continue its investigation of the merits and practicalities of new academic research enterprises in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads. Such regional research initiatives could provide vehicles for new multi-university collaboration and boost university research and commercialization partnerships with Virginia technology companies.

VRTAC discussed these matters in its Research Subcommittee from June to November 2004 with a particular focus on the economic center in Northern Virginia, where the best opportunities exist to further Virginia's strength in R&D related to the federal government and to remedy Virginia's relative weakness in industry R&D. The Commonwealth currently is underinvesting in the higher education and research enterprises in its Northern Virginia technology and economic center.

The Research Subcommittee, however, was unable to resolve differences on key questions, such as whether geographic links between research universities and commercial centers elsewhere (Silicon Valley, Research Triangle, etc.) are required in Virginia. Virginia's research universities, for example, expressed a preference to investigate specific opportunities for collaboration and research partnerships, rather than commit to broad regional initiatives that could compete for otherwise scarce resources.

VRTAC discussions did validate the need to investigate further how market demand could help focus regional, multi-institutional and other R&D initiatives, just as a better understanding of federal government demand has helped focus R&D initiatives. VRTAC concluded, however, that it is not the body best equipped to conduct the type of research necessary to document needs, demands, opportunities and transitional issues from the critical point-of-view of the private sector, particularly the technology sector centered in Northern Virginia.

VRTAC recommends that the private technology sector be approached as the best investigator, perhaps through an existing business group such as the Northern Virginia Technology Council, and in concert with the Commonwealth of Virginia.