

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2004 SESSION

## CHAPTER 616

*An Act to require the Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission (VRTAC) to continue its examination of establishing integrated research and academic campuses in the Commonwealth.*

[H 545]

Approved April 12, 2004

Whereas, according to a 2002 study by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), approximately 90 percent of research and development (R&D) expenditures in Virginia are attributable to private sector activities, federal agencies, and federal labs; and

Whereas, more than half of R&D expenditures in Virginia are attributable to the private sector, with a significant portion of that activity occurring in northern Virginia; and

Whereas, only two of the seven public research universities are located in northern Virginia and Hampton Roads while nine of the 12 federal labs, agencies and centers identified in the SCHEV report are located in the two regions; and

Whereas, Virginia's research universities must be located near its technology businesses if the Commonwealth is going to be on the world stage with an intertwined and vibrant academic research environment and entrepreneurship culture; and

Whereas, across the Commonwealth, several universities have gained eminence in critical fields of science and technology and attracted top students from the Commonwealth, the nation, and internationally; and

Whereas, most of the graduates of these leading-edge programs are unable to find jobs in their fields near where they studied causing many of them to move; and

Whereas, these graduates are as likely to move out of Virginia as they are to relocate within Virginia; and

Whereas, this situation stymies collaboration between Virginia's research universities, the private sector and the federal customers that drive much of Virginia's technology-based business activity; and

Whereas, co-location of research space and equipment for shared use and partnership between universities, federal labs and the private sector can produce enhanced access to cutting-edge equipment, decreased expense associated with capital costs and equipment, and more professional collaboration and shared objectives between Virginia's various research actors; and

Whereas, enhancing the capabilities of Virginia's universities to conduct sustained and significant research programs in close proximity to leading-edge companies and institutions would contribute enormously to improving leverage of existing private sector assets and expenditures while the private sector would gain better access to faculty and graduate student expertise; and

Whereas, a November 2003 study by the VRTAC Subcommittee on The Creation of New High-Technology Industries in Virginia recommended that Virginia look seriously at establishing an integrated research and academic campus in northern Virginia; and

Whereas, such an institution would enable a student to pursue a degree in nanotechnology from one institution, while taking courses from another institution at the same campus, and working on cutting-edge research projects in the private sector; now, therefore,

### **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. § 1.** *The Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission (VRTAC) shall continue its examination of the establishment of integrated research and academic campuses in the Commonwealth. The examination shall include (i) the feasibility of building or utilizing existing facilities for an academic research and advanced education enterprise in northern Virginia and in Hampton Roads; (ii) the requirements and policies necessary to establish a graduate school component that features participation from all universities in the Commonwealth; and (iii) a review of other options for enhancing the research capabilities of the Commonwealth's public institutions and leveraging the Commonwealth's proximity to the research activities of the private sector and federal government. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Secretary of Technology, the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Secretary of Education, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and the Joint Commission on Technology and Science as may be permitted by each participant's time and resource availability. The Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission (VRTAC) shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than November 30, 2004. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.*