



Finance and Economic Development Committee  
Richmond City Council  
900 E. Broad Street, Suite 305  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

May 19, 2020

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council (VAEEC), to ask you to amend the City's current Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) ordinance instead of repealing it.

The VAEEC is a broad coalition of more than 100 members including Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits, startups, local governments and state agencies. Founded in 2012, our goal is to ensure that energy efficiency is an integral part of Virginia's economy and clean energy future. The VAEEC is a neutral, trusted resource who is committed to accelerating the implementation and utilization of C-PACE throughout Virginia. We firmly believe that C-PACE is an innovative and efficient way for developers and business owners to create jobs and finance clean energy and resiliency projects.

In relation to the City Council's discussion on C-PACE, it appears the Council is looking to repeal the existing C-PACE ordinance in order to join Virginia's impending statewide C-PACE program. The VAEEC is supportive of Richmond joining the statewide program, if that is the will of the City. However, we fear that repealing the current C-PACE ordinance will send the wrong message. There are a number of Richmond area developers who are eager to utilize C-PACE once a program is launched. Repealing the current ordinance gives the perception that the City is no longer interested in providing the business community with C-PACE, which could cause prospective developers to look elsewhere. Therefore, we believe there is a more effective option than repealing the existing C-PACE ordinance.

As it stands, the City's current C-PACE ordinance states that a program will be effective by July 1, 2020. The statewide program is not expected to be operational until early 2021. Instead of repealing the current ordinance, we recommend amending it to remove the July 1, 2020. This will allow the City to opt into the statewide program once it launches without holding another public hearing to adopt a new C-PACE ordinance, thus saving the City time and money.

The VAEEC believes that a C-PACE program is in the best interest of the Richmond community. Not only will a program benefit Richmond businesses and developers, but it will help the City achieve its ambitious emission reduction goals laid out in the RVAgreen 2050 initiative. Removing the date from the current ordinance provides the City with the most efficient and flexible path towards making a C-PACE program a reality and assisting the City in meeting its climate goals.

Thank you for your continued support of C-PACE.

Sincerely,



Chelsea Harnish

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Chelsea Harnish  
Executive Director, Virginia Energy Efficiency Council