

# Integrity Commission Principles

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Principles matter in all aspects of life, from work to family to worship. They are fundamental to public service because they embody a promise to act in the best interest of the commonwealth rather than to act in furtherance of individual ambitions.

As the members of the Governor's Commission on Integrity and Public Confidence in State Government, it is important that we begin our task on a firm footing by declaring the principles that will guide us over the coming months. A strong set of principles will serve as a compass to guide our deliberations and provide benchmarks by which our recommendations can be judged.

It is our pledge that the principles laid out here will determine not only our decision-making process but also the final product of this endeavor. We make this pledge because we have been charged with bringing forward specific proposals to elevate the ethical code that will underpin the quality of governance in the commonwealth.

That ethical code determines how our government is perceived by individual and corporate citizens. An honorable reputation sustains Virginians' confidence in their leaders and enables the state to flourish in today's competitive economy.

Given the importance of our work, we commit ourselves to the following principles:

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

We believe in meaningful enforcement of the rules and laws that govern ethical conduct, campaign finance and lobbying. We favor the creation of an independent commission with the authority and resources to serve as an effective watchdog for the public.

## **TRANSPARENCY**

We believe in disclosure of information about public officials' economic interests in a manner that promotes public access, clarity and consistency.

## **INTEGRITY**

We believe in clear and realistic rules governing gifts and loans offered to public officials and their immediate family members, including restrictions on high-value items and comparable policies covering both tangible and intangible gifts.

## **TRUST**

We believe in broad-based, consistent policies to ensure that financial decisions made by public boards and commissions are not colored by personal, familial or business interests of individual members.

## **LOYALTY**

We place a high value on post-governmental employment policies that ensure public servants during their time in office are motivated solely by the desire to advance and protect the public's interest in all matters.

## **FAIRNESS, EQUITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING**

We believe that to the greatest extent possible the state's congressional and state legislative districts should be drawn without regard to partisan considerations.