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## **Governor launches August listening tour; county officials urged to participate**

Gov. Bob McDonnell announced that he will hold eight town halls around the state beginning on Aug. 4. The meetings will be in Roanoke, Norfolk, Chester, Fredericksburg, Fairfax, Harrisonburg, Danville and Bristol.

The main purpose of the town halls is to discuss the privatization of the ABC system, but input from the public is also solicited for governor's two commissions: [Economic Development and Jobs Creation](#) and [Government Reform and Restructuring](#). Gov. McDonnell indicated that at each stop he would be available to meet with local officials to discuss the ABC plan and other concerns.

In addition to the governor, members of his cabinet and the Jobs and Reform Commissions are to be present at each meeting.

The schedule of the meetings is as follows:

- **Roanoke:** Wednesday, Aug. 4, 7 p.m., Roanoke County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Board Room, 5204 Bernard Dr.
- **Norfolk:** Monday, Aug. 9, 7 p.m., Old Dominion University, Webb University Center - Hampton/Newport News Room, 4201 Hampton Blvd.
- **Chesterfield County:** Thursday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m., Cultural Center of India, 6641 Ironbridge Parkway, Chester
- **Fredericksburg:** Tuesday, Aug. 24, 7 p.m., University of Mary Washington, Lee Hall - Room 412, 1301 College Avenue
- **Northern Virginia:** Wednesday, Aug. 25, 7 p.m., Northern Virginia Technology Council Auditorium, 2214 Rock Hill Road, Suite 300, Herndon
- **Harrisonburg:** Thursday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m., James Madison University, East Campus Dining Hall - Montpelier Room, 800 S. Main Street
- **Danville:** Monday, Aug. 30, 7 p.m., Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Great Hall, 150 Slayton Avenue
- **Bristol:** Tuesday, Aug. 31, 7 p.m., Bristol Public Library, J. Henry Kegley Meeting Room, 701 Goode Street

The governor's staff has unveiled the preferred plan to sell the state's alcohol assets – the one-time sale of liquor licenses to increase the number of retail outlets from the current 332 ABC stores to approximately 800+ locations. That plan anticipates that stores currently sell wine and beer will also seek liquor licenses.

VACo staff has been advised that in the plan under consideration, it is the governor's intent to regard the retail sale of alcohol in the same manner as wine and beer licenses are

treated currently in the statutes and regulation. Thus, the authority local governments have under the current system of ABC laws would be unchanged. Further, it is also his intent that local land use authority be preserved with respect to the location of liquor stores.

Any ABC privatization proposal will be reviewed by the Reform Commission's Government Simplification and Operations Committee before consideration by the full commission. If the plan is sanctioned by the commission, it is anticipated that the governor will call a special session in the late fall. Implementation of any ABC privatization legislation will take approximately one year.

Please let VACo staff know if officials from your county are planning to attend any of the town halls.

**VACo contacts:** [Dean Lynch](#), [Mike Edwards](#) or [Ted McCormack](#).

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The Virginia Association of Counties exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.