

**Minutes
Advisory Committee on International Trade
Virginia Economic Development Partnership
June 11, 2024**

**9th Floor, Board Room
901 E. Cary Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m. by Mike Ligon, Chairman of the VEDP Advisory Committee on International Trade.

Members Present: Hobey Bauhan
 Michael Coleman
 Bob Feeser
 Anne Marie Lacourse (Virtual)
 Mike Ligon, Chair
 David White
 James Xu

Members Absent: Tag Greason
 Secretary Lohr
 Will Sessoms

Staff Present: Stephanie Agee
 Lindsey Bertozzi
 Jamie Canup
 Jason El Koubi
 Mason Martin
 Anne Phillips
 Jasmin Portillo
 Julie Richmond
 Georgia Slattery
 Evan Statile
 Adam Watkins
 Mary Wood

Guests Present: David Olave, Associate & Trade Policy Advisor,
 Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A

Welcome and Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Mike Ligon welcomed committee members, VEDP staff, and special guests to the meeting at 10:09 a.m.

Stephanie Agee noted that VEDP International Trade had been recently recognized with the E Star award for export service by the U.S. Department of Commerce for the second time. The

Department of Commerce noted in granting the award that VEDP demonstrated significant contributions to expand U.S. business in international markets, including \$1.5 billion in export revenue reported by VEDP clients in 2023.

Public Comments

Chairman Ligon solicited for public comments. There were none.

Review and Approval of February 5, 2024, Meeting Minutes

After a review of the February 5, 2024, minutes, Chairman Ligon asked for a motion to approve. Mike Coleman made a motion. The motion was seconded by Bob Feeser and was unanimously approved by all Committee members present.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Ligon presented the idea of the committee developing and issuing some general messaging about the importance of trade to the public via social media, op-eds in state and local news publications, and with assistance from VEDP's communications team. He asked the committee to listen to the urgings Senator Kaine and U.S. Representative Abigail Spanberger made in their recent visits with the committee and focus on communicating trade's importance. The advisory committee focused on the congressional suggestions to assist with messaging benefits of trade in Washington D.C. and locally.

Trade Policy Update

David Olave, Associate and Trade Policy Advisor with Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A. provided an update on trade policy actions taking place at the federal government level and internationally. First, he reiterated the importance of improving the reputation of trade by educating the public and the legislators on the positive impact trade has, including on national security. Mr. Olave discussed how the consensus around trade and its impacts has shifted since about 2005 and has taken on a more protectionist leaning.

Mr. Olave said that several trade policies are being considered by Congress currently, including the Generalized System of Preferences, which expired in 2020, the Section 321 tariff exemptions for imports valued under \$800, and anti-forced labor rules. Mr. Olave said that U.S. law puts the onus on manufacturers to ensure that they do not have products in their supply chain that are produced using forced labor. He emphasized the need for suppliers to know and understand their suppliers. He also said that while major agreements between the U.S. and trading partners to open market access between countries are not currently being considered, there are some trade negotiations still happening. No progress is likely to be made on any of those until after elections in November.

Chairman Ligon commented on the national security implications of trade and the importance of negotiating trade agreements with other countries in order to help grow their economies, lessen the potential for conflict, and thereby make the U.S. more secure.

David White brought up the Australia-UK-US (AUKUS) agreement, mentioning that it had come up in the committee's meetings with Senator Kaine and Representative Spanberger. He said AUKUS is partly about trade and it has the potential to impact Virginia given the focus on ship and submarine building. He mentioned that 40 Australian companies have visited Virginia in the last two months.

Closed Session

Chairman Ligon requested that the Committee move into a closed meeting at 11:09 a.m. A motion was made by Mike Coleman and seconded by Bob Feeser. Jamie Canup, Assistant General Counsel, voiced the following motion for adoption by the Committee to enter into a closed meeting. The following motion was unanimously adopted by all Committee members present.

I MOVE THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF THE VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AUTHORITY CONVENE A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC STRATEGIES PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION A 50 OF §2.2-3711 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA, WHICH ALLOWS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN THAT WOULD REVEAL TO COMMONWEALTH'S COMPETITORS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THE STRATEGIES INTENDED TO BE DEPLOYED BY THE COMMONWEALTH.

Upon the return to the open meeting, the Committee members considered the following certification:

DO YOU CERTIFY, THAT TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE, (i) ONLY PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS LAWFULLY EXEMPTED FROM THE OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS OF FOIA WERE DISCUSSED IN THE CLOSED MEETING, AND (ii) ONLY SUCH MATTERS AS WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE MOTION TO GO INTO THE CLOSED MEETING WERE HEARD, DISCUSSED, OR CONSIDERED DURING THE CLOSED MEETING?

The Committee approved the foregoing certification by roll call vote, bringing the Committee out of the closed meeting at 11:52 a.m.

Yeas: Mike Ligon, Hobey Bauhan, Michael Coleman, Bob Feeser, Anne Marie Lacourse, David White, James Xu

Nays: None

Virginia's Export Growth Since 2016

Evan Statile and Jasmin Portillo, VEDP's International Research Analysts, provided a summary of Virginia's export growth since 2016. Goods exported from Virginia experienced a 15% growth from 2016 to 2022. The top three goods – coal, soybeans, and integrated circuits – accounted for a large share of the total value of Virginia's exports.

Evan Statile stated China remains an important trade partner. Exports to China accounted for 14% of Virginia's overall growth in goods exports over the time period of 2016-2022. While China is Virginia's 2nd largest export destination, soybeans account for a substantial percentage of Virginia's export to China. He noted a substantial increase in coal exports as well.

Chairman's Update

Due to time constraints, in closing, Chairman Ligon thanked everyone for their efforts and encouraged messaging the importance of trade.

Stephanie Agee reminded the committee of the next meeting, September 10, 2024.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:19 p.m.