

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Robert L. Tavenner Named Director of Division of Legislative Services

RICHMOND, VA – Virginia General Assembly leaders today unanimously voted on and announced the appointment of Robert L. Tavenner as the new Director of the [Division of Legislative Services](#) (DLS), effective July 18, 2011. Mr. Tavenner, a senior executive with the Virginia State Police, has served Virginia for over 30 years, beginning with the State Police as a Trooper in 1977, taking time out to attend law school and serve as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney, and then returning to rise to the rank of major in the Bureau of Administrative and Support Services. The DLS Director leads the legislative branch agency in providing clear, concise and objective legal and research support to all 140 members of the Virginia General Assembly, as well as assistance with various boards and commissions serving the public. Tavenner was selected from an extremely talented pool of well-qualified applicants. The Committee on Joint Rules, chaired by House of Delegates Speaker William J. Howell (R-Stafford) and with Senator Mary Margaret Whipple (D-Arlington) as Vice Chair, made the selection and today's announcement.

"Bob Tavenner is a strong, sensible and respected leader in state government," said Speaker Howell. "His extensive budget, management and training experiences are impressive and, combined with his proven ability to work collaboratively and effectively with people of varying backgrounds, made him stand out among so many qualified candidates. I am confident that as the next Director, Bob will ensure that the very capable DLS staff continues to provide high-quality, value-added services to help state lawmakers perform the essential job we're elected to do for the citizens we represent."

"The Division of Legislative Services plays a very critical supporting role in the legislative process," noted Senator Whipple. "Bob impressed me not only as a knowledgeable individual but an approachable leader, one who values listening and building trust among staff and with those he works for and serves. These traits certainly will help ensure continued high performance by DLS staff under Bob's results-oriented leadership."

Mr. Tavenner succeeds E. M. Miller, Jr., who is retiring after 24 years of service as DLS director. With an annual budget totaling \$6 million, Tavenner will manage and coordinate an acclaimed and award-winning staff of 60 non-partisan professionals who perform legal services, research support and other statutory duties for the Virginia General Assembly.

In his current position with the Virginia State Police since 2008, Major Tavenner oversees more than 200 employees in four divisions and the legal unit and manages the execution of a budget of over \$200 million. Throughout his career, Tavenner has held positions of increasing responsibility, including directing the legislative liaison work of one of state government's larger agencies. Mr. Tavenner has successfully completed a number of management courses, including the prestigious FBI National Academy, an executive management program conducted jointly by the FBI and University of Virginia. An attorney, he received a Juris Doctor from the University of Richmond and completed his undergraduate degree at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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"I am excited by the opportunity to continue the excellent work consistently done by the dedicated employees at Legislative Services," Tavenner stated. "Over my 30 years serving in state government, I have had the pleasure to work with so many of the respected professionals at DLS. As Director, I now look forward to continuing the agency's reputation for good service to all 140 members of the Virginia General Assembly and the citizens of the Commonwealth."

The Division of Legislative Services has a long and exemplary history of service to the Commonwealth, dating back to the creation of the Legislative Reference Bureau in 1914. Established in its current form in 1973, DLS staff assists legislators in fulfilling their duties and obligations as members of the General Assembly by providing clear, concise, and objective information to all 140 members. The agency conducts research assigned by the Committees on Rules and prepares the Virginia Register of Regulations, the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Administrative Code. DLS and its staff have been recognized for their quality work by peer institutions and other state government leaders, receiving the 2010 Notable Documents Award for *A Legislator's Guide to Taxation in Virginia* from the Legislative Research Librarians' section of the National Conference of State Legislators as well as the 2009 Robert J. Colborn, Jr., Innovation Award for creating the Regulation Information System from the Administrative Codes and Registers Section of the National Association of Secretaries of State.

The DLS Director is the chief operating official of the Division of Legislative Services. An experienced attorney with substantial knowledge of the legislative institution and its processes, the Director interacts daily with professionals, government officials, legislative staff and the public. The Director is responsible for the organization, supervision and administration of the legislative branch agency's daily operations, which also includes drafting legislation, advising members as to the effects of considered legislation, conducting studies and preparing explanations of proposed constitutional amendments. In addition to his management duties, the Director serves on the Virginia Code Commission, the FOIA Commission, the Legislative Support Commission and provides support, expertise and research to other various commissions throughout the Commonwealth.

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