

Virginia state local government



WHAT LEGISLATORS CAN DO ABOUT THE VIRGINIA DIVIDE Current news events over the Internet show that there is a widening rift among the residents of both the northern and southernmost counties of the state of Virginia. For one, Virginians on both sides of the so-called Virginia Divide, saw the people on the other part of the state as almost like foreigners with a very different culture. Also, neither side really understands the other. Sadly, statistics show that, speaking in terms of demography, Northern Virginia is more diverse ethnically than the other side of the state.

Based on all that has been said, one can infer that the division between the northern and southern counties of Virginia transcends territorial issues, instead what's happening is a cultural division. The division, however, does not end with the cultural aspect. Statistics also show that those living in the northernmost part of the state earn more and have a higher level of education than those at southern and southwestern counties.

The Commonwealth Institute, a liberal thinking organization focused on Virginia, reached more or less the same conclusions, focusing more, however, on the income inequalities in the state. Without saying explicitly that the people up north are better off than their southern and southwestern counterparts, the institute found that there is a higher wage gap between whites and African-Americans in the state and this has not changed significantly since the late 1970's. This claim is supported by findings of experts that wages and salaries in the north are indeed higher than the rest of Virginia, where incidentally more African-Americans can be found.

Given the existence of inequity between northern and southern counties, an obvious solution to the problem would actually be for the government to strive to make state of things equal, given the injustices and unfairness

<https://assignbuster.com/virginia-state-local-government/>

present in Virginia nowadays. However, the question is: how do legislators go about doing this

For one, legislators can push for the use of other guidelines other than the Dillon rule. The Dillon Rule, a guideline used by Virginia judges for interpretation of laws in the state, was shown as something that limits local governments to a few if any powers except those given by the state legislature. In effect, a county or municipality can pursue activities only allowed by the state. In fact, many legislators complain bitterly that this rule prevents them from using the correct and apt remedies to problems specific to their locality.

Some comment that legislators can adopt an alternative guideline and this is the Home Rule. The Home Rule is a ruling that allows localities to create decisions that match their situations. If this is the case, then, under this rule, legislators would be able to move on their own based on what they see as the best and most appropriate for their localities. In the case of inequity between northern and southern states, legislators would have a free hand to actually improve existing laws on tax, real estate, wages, transportation, communication, education, and so many other things that would eventually lead to equity in all localities wherever a Virginian thinks or feels he/she belongs. And maybe, just maybe, legislators would be able to think of projects later on that would help strengthen ties between residents in both sides of the so-called Virginia Divide.