



City of Alexandria, Virginia
301 King Street, Suite 2300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314



Alyia Gaskins
Mayor

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Chair Bulova and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to hear how new federal policies are impacting our community. We appreciate the Committee's leadership and commitment to better understanding the first-hand impacts being felt by our residents. As you know, the City of Alexandria is experiencing significant challenges due to recent federal policies. The ongoing reductions in the federal workforce and the uncertainty surrounding federal funding commitments are profoundly affecting our residents. As policies continue that lead to widespread reductions in force for the federal government, and long-standing commitments to federal funding are no longer able to be relied upon, these impacts are growing.

- Nearly 16,000 Alexandrians are employed by federal agencies and contractors, and more than 9,000 federal jobs are located within the City. Increasing job losses are straining the ability of Alexandria households to afford essential needs, such as housing, groceries, medical care and more.
- Prolonged unemployment is expected to significantly increase the demand for social and community support programs in Alexandria. These services, offered both by the City of Alexandria and various non-profit organizations, are crucial to our community's well-being and are likely to face significant strain.
- The situation is further exacerbated by reductions in federal funding – both funding directly to the City, and funding that is passed through from the Commonwealth. In FY 2024, the City had expenditures from federal awards totaling \$67 million. The abrupt revocation of anticipated ARPA funding from Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), which funded community health workers and more, will cause reductions in service, and directly impact staffing for the City and its partner agencies.
- Support provided directly to residents, not passed through the City, is also at risk. Nearly 18,000 residents directly received SNAP benefits, totaling more than \$26 million. Over 42,000 residents received almost \$120 million in benefits from Medicaid, and TANF support amounted to nearly \$500,000 to support 2,797 residents.
- Additionally, the City anticipates the potential for a significant decline in local business revenue as a result of federal job losses. This will serve to exacerbate the job losses in Alexandria and surrounding areas and reduce tax revenues on which the City relies to provide community support services.

In response, the City is taking proactive steps to mitigate these impacts. For several months, the City has been coordinating across all departments and with partners throughout the region. This work has included the following:

- Providing direct outreach to federal employees and contractors to better understand the resources provided by the City. [Resources for Federal Government Employees | City of Alexandria, VA](#)



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- Hosting job fairs throughout Alexandria and in partnership with jurisdictions in the region to make finding new employment opportunities easier.
- Coordinating with partner non-profit service agencies to identify and, when possible, fill gaps in services to the community.

Despite these efforts, the City's actions are constrained by budgetary and legal limitations. It is imperative that the Commonwealth take decisive action to alleviate the impact on Virginians. We urge the Commonwealth to:

- Fully restore the recently revoked ARPA funding from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Service and commit to fully funding and maintaining other similar pass-through funding currently allocated, even if federal funding is withdrawn.
- Expedite and increase the unemployment benefits, beyond what is included in the recently signed Senate Bill 1056, to account for the higher cost of living in northern Virginia. The current rate of less than \$500 per week is not sufficient to cover housing, groceries, and medical needs with the higher cost of living in the region.
- Provide short-term funding to cover the partial or full loss of pass-through federal grants specific to housing, education, and social service support for our most vulnerable populations.

The City of Alexandria appreciates the Committee's interest in developing solutions for the significant impacts felt by residents of the Commonwealth. All of the City's departments are regularly reviewing federal policy decisions, Executive Orders, and grant announcements to better understand the immediate impact to our residents. We look forward to a continued partnership with members of the General Assembly to better understand these significant impacts and to develop immediate solutions that can protect our residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alyia Gaskins".

Alyia Gaskins
Mayor
City of Alexandria