

Del. Cherry Introduces Budget Amendment to Kickstart Emergency Operations Center at Richard Bland College

Del. Mike Cherry proposes a budget amendment that would initiate the design phase for a 2,500-square-foot public safety and emergency operations center at RBC.

RICHMOND, VA, UNITED STATES, January 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Delegate Mike Cherry (R-Colonial Heights) announced the introduction of a budget amendment that would kickstart the design phase for a new public safety and emergency operations center at Richard Bland College of William & Mary. The college has been designated a Crime Prevention Campus by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.



Thomas Travis, RBC Director of Campus Safety & Chief of Police, standing beside RBC's Crime Prevention Campus sign. This designation is certified by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

The present Department of Campus Safety & Police building is a modified hay barn from the 1930s that was converted for its present use in 2008. The current building has outdated plumbing, HVAC and electrical systems. In addition, there are challenges with ADA accessibility and fire suppression, communications technology and appropriate space for managing day-to-day operations. The college has made it a priority to focus on a permanent solution to these issues rather than a temporary band-aid.

The new 2,500-square-foot facility would address present deficiencies while elevating campus and community safety and security. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would serve as a hub to coordinate responses to emergencies like natural disasters and security threats. By streamlining communication and resources, it would potentially save lives, minimize disruptions and promote emergency preparedness.

[Item C-52.10 #5h](#) would amend the Virginia House of Delegates budget at a cost of \$2.6 million. This funding would cover the planning and design phases.

"During a visit last summer to Richard Bland College, I had the opportunity to see the campus safety building firsthand," Cherry said. "To say it is outdated is an understatement.

"Because I know just how vital Richard Bland College is to our region, I am proud to carry this key budget amendment in the House to support public safety on campus."

"Delegate Cherry cares deeply about public safety and his proactive approach to addressing a critical campus safety need at Richard Bland College is commendable," RBC President Debbie Sydow said. "This new facility will support the safety and security of our campus community and the extended community as well."

"The department's top priority is the safety of our RBC community," RBC Chief Thomas Travis said. "Support from the General Assembly for a new Emergency Operations Center will allow our team to better serve our students, faculty and campus visitors for decades to come.

"I am appreciative of Delegate Cherry for sponsoring this important budget amendment."

With the inclusion of this budget amendment, the design phase will begin later this year. The construction phase could begin by 2027 and be completed by 2028.

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