

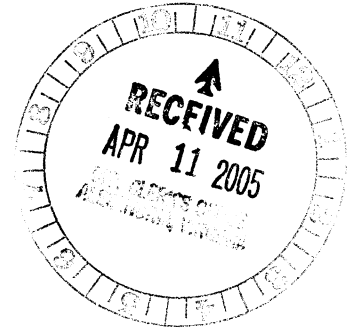


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April 5, 2005

The Honorable William D. Euille &  
Members of the Alexandria City Council  
City of Alexandria  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314



Dear Mayor Euille and Members of the Alexandria City Council:

As a long-time Alexandria resident and business owner, I am writing to urge your continued support and funding of the Alexandria Convention and Visitor's Association. Their efforts contribute significantly to the quality of life in our community through the marketing of our city. The staff at ACVA works tirelessly to showcase Alexandria, its services, amenities and people. In doing so, they help generate civic pride as visitors numbering in the millions flock to the city to seek what we as residents enjoy everyday.

Tourism is an economic stimulus. It is responsible for \$487.8 million in revenue and generates \$11.7 million in taxes. Most importantly, tourists come to our city and leave behind their dollars and do not create social service demands on our government infrastructure. Thus, we likely get the better end of the deal. No doubt, many cities envy our vibrant tourism and would happily trade places with us. We should never take for granted our blessings and jeopardize this balance of commercial activity.

I know each of you are faced with difficult budget demands. Every department and organization wants more money, yet our residents – me included – want lower tax rates. Nonetheless, I hope you share with me the view that some areas are simply too important to ignore. I believe the Alexandria Convention and Visitor's Association falls into that category. I believe "we get what we pay for." ACVA pays for itself and deserves full funding.

Sincerely,

Shawn P. McLaughlin  
President