



## **Virginia Executives Join Forces to Launch *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force**

Richmond, Va. (July 12, 2024) – Top executives across economic development, business and education sectors of the Commonwealth have joined forces to create the *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force in a collective effort to build the supply of high-quality early childhood care and education services supporting the current and future workforce.

With the recent announcement of Virginia’s #1 ranking as the “Top State for Business” by CNBC, Virginia has an opportunity to continue to build an innovative, best-in-class early childhood care and education system that can be a differentiator in economic development, site selection and talent attraction and retention.

Established under the banner of the [Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education](#) (VBREE), the *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force was officially launched at the annual meeting of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF), held on July 11 at the offices of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP).

During the second half of 2024, the influential executives on the *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force will advise and support VBREE representatives as they oversee the incubation of innovations that address the unique early education and child care supply challenges in each of the state’s nine [Ready Regions](#). The Task Force will explore strategies and solutions to help strengthen the early educator workforce, build supply, and increase families’ access to quality affordable child care in every region, resulting in a paradigm shift in how Virginians view, value, prioritize, and invest in child care.

“Working collaboratively with VBREE leaders, the Task Force members share a bold vision to make Virginia the best state to live, learn, work, and raise a family, along with making the Commonwealth ‘shovel-ready’ to attract new and retain existing businesses,” said Mike Chinn, Partner with Endicott Capital, Chair of VBREE and Co-Chair of the *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force. Chinn shared that the Task Force will start meeting in August and will provide a report of initial findings and recommendations by December 2024.

Jason El Koubi, President and CEO of VEDP and Co-Chair of the *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force added: “VBREE unites the power of employers, economic developers, local/regional partners, workforce/higher education institutions, and philanthropy. These leaders are enthusiastic about advocating for a strong childcare system because of the significant impact the current childcare crisis has on Virginia’s businesses, labor force, and prosperity. In short, the new *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force means business with child care.”

The *Shovel Ready Virginia* Task Force members include:

- Richard Bynum, Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer, PNC Bank and Board Chair, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
- Mike Chinn, Partner, Endicott Capital and Chair, Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education
- Deborah DiCroce, President and CEO, Hampton Roads Community Foundation
- David Doré, Chancellor, Virginia Community College System
- Barry DuVal, President & CEO, Virginia Chamber of Commerce
- Jason El Koubi, President and CEO, Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Leah Fremouw, Board Member, GO Virginia State Board; President and CEO, Bridging Virginia; and Founder and Board President, VA CDFI Coalition
- Linda Green, President, Virginia Economic Developers Association and Executive Director, Southern Virginia Regional Alliance
- Carrie Roth, Director, Virginia Works
- Sonya Ravindranath Waddell, Vice President and Economist, Regional and Community Analysis, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

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**About the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation:** VECF is the non-partisan steward of Virginia's promise for early childhood success, working in tandem with diverse stakeholders to ensure equitable opportunities for all families with young children to thrive. To learn more about VECF, visit [www.vecf.org](http://www.vecf.org).

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