



**WILLIAM J. HOWELL**  
SPEAKER

TWENTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

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RULES (CHAIRMAN)

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## **Statement of Speaker Howell on Governor Kaine's Proposed Budget & Tax Increases**

**RICHMOND, VA** – Pledging that House Republicans are eager to work with Governor-Elect Robert McDonnell to balance Virginia's budget without tax increases, Virginia House of Delegates Speaker William J. Howell (R-Stafford) today issued the following statement after Governor Kaine's address to the Joint Money Committees of the Virginia General Assembly:

“As Virginia taxpayers, families and businesses are struggling with the difficult decisions brought about by the national economic recession, it is terrible that Governor Kaine would propose increasing their financial burden even more through higher taxes. Despite failing to heed the recent warning issued by legislative leaders, including myself, that embedding tax increases in the state budget would hinder the positive progress we've made together in the Commonwealth, House Republicans remain committed to governing in a more prudent and fiscally responsible manner. While Governor Kaine's latest tax increases once again have no chance of receiving General Assembly approval, House Republicans will fulfill our constitutional obligation to produce a structurally balanced budget by the scheduled adjournment of the 60-day Session on March 13, 2010. While difficult decisions must and will be made, the public would benefit from seeing their elected representatives complete their business within the constitutionally prescribed timeline and that's doable if we all work together.

“Virginians rightly expect their state government to make the same tough choices being made around family kitchen tables and business offices throughout the Commonwealth. The Governor is to be credited for making a number of solid spending reductions that will assist in balancing the upcoming biennial state budget. The crafting of recent budgets certainly has not been an easy or enjoyable process and this year is no exception. Going forward, the General Assembly will closely examine the spending proposals now in front of us and make the targeted reductions that will result in a simpler, more efficient and more responsive state government.

“While Governor Kaine's announcement today serves as an unfortunate obstacle to a final budget resolution, members of the House of Delegates and its strengthened Republican majority are prepared to work creatively and cooperatively with incoming Governor-Elect McDonnell during the 2010 General Assembly Session. Our shared commitment to job creation, economic development and fiscal restraint will remain our key focus in the upcoming session as we do what needs to be done to bring state spending in line with taxpayer revenues. Together with Governor-Elect McDonnell, House Republicans will continue offering practical solutions that balance the budget and delivering the real results on issues of importance to the quality of life of all Virginians.”

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