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## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission King in Virginia Subcommittee

*Senator Jennifer L. McClellan, Chair*

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Senate Subcommittee Room 1, Pocahontas Building  
Richmond, Virginia

Wednesday, November 29, 2017  
12:00 p.m.

### SUMMARY

The King in Virginia Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission (the Commission) met to discuss upcoming 2018 activities of the King in Virginia Project, which will involve programming in each of the Virginia localities that Dr. King visited, ongoing research and collection of materials related to those visits to be archived on the Commission's website, and an oral history project to preserve the stories of those who remember Dr. King's time in Virginia.

Staff provided updates on research into Dr. King's visits to Virginia. Known and documented visits to Virginia occurred from 1953 to 1967 and took place in 12 localities in the Commonwealth, primarily in Tidewater and Central Virginia. Research into Dr. King's visits will guide the planning of the 2018 community conversation events to be undertaken by the Subcommittee. Dr. King made documented visits to locations in Charlottesville, Danville, Farmville, Hampton, Hopewell, Lynchburg, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Suffolk, and Williamsburg.

Subcommittee member Brian Grogan provided further details of Dr. King's 1963 visit to Farmville, which took place during the course of King's three-day People to People Tour. Mr. Grogan shared photos of the visit, an article written by Chuck Moran, who met Dr. King in Virginia a boy, and an article written by Dr. King describing his time in "Virginia's Black Belt." Mr. Grogan suggested that the Commission, through local or government contacts, might uncover additional documents and recordings concerning the visit that are currently unavailable to the public. Chairwoman McClellan noted that the Subcommittee is in the process of contacting universities and churches to request that they share information related to Dr. King's time in Virginia.

Members briefly discussed the oral history aspect of the King in Virginia Project, which will begin in 2018 and will be ongoing as connections to Dr. King's visits to Virginia are uncovered. The Subcommittee intends to identify and work with a state agency to record and produce the oral histories, which will be made available on the Commission's website.

Members of the Subcommittee discussed the scheduling of its 2018 community conversations, which will be focused around the theme of Dr. King's fourth and final book, "Where Do We Go from Here," and will serve as a means to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. Members agreed that the majority of events would take place after the end of legislative session, tentatively scheduling only the Richmond and Charlottesville events for early in the year. An event at Virginia Union University in Richmond, one of the locations of Dr. King's visits, was proposed for late February or early March of 2018. A Charlottesville event at the University of Virginia's Old Cabell Hall was tentatively scheduled for mid-March. Subcommittee member Dr. Larissa Ferguson agreed to work with First Baptist Church in Farmville to schedule a date at the church in the spring, aiming for April 24, 2018, the day after the observance of the first Barbara Johns Day in Virginia.

The Subcommittee voted to delegate the scheduling of remaining locations and dates for each event to staff and to the Chair. The Chair additionally assigned individual Subcommittee members to each locality to assist in the planning of specific events. The Chair and staff will notify members of the Subcommittee when additional dates are scheduled and will make the dates available to the public.

At 1:00 p.m., the Subcommittee meeting was adjourned, and a meeting of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission commenced.