THE "MONEY COMMITTEES" – APPROPRIATIONS/FINANCE

1677-1788	Public Claims
1684-1764	Apportioning the Public Levy (special, recurring committee)
1802-1969	Committee on Executive Expenditures
1806	Finance
1823-1824	Disbursement of Public Money
1870-2001	Claims
1914	Appropriations

It can be argued that the cry of "No taxation without representation" launched the American Revolution, ultimately giving birth to the great American experiment in representative democracy. While such a claim might be a gross simplification of the multitude of issues that ignited revolution in the colonies, it must be conceded that tax policy was at the forefront of these issues. But the struggle between the legislative and executive branches of government over the power to tax and spend public money, the so-called "power of the purse," predates the American Revolution by many centuries.

There were from the outset two central issues. The first concerned the nature of the relationship between the legislature and the executive branches of government with regard to taxation and spending, and the other concerned the division of responsibilities for fiscal policy within a bicameral legislature.

The British House of Commons won the exclusive right to create taxes and spend that revenue long before the settlement of Virginia. And the Virginia House of Burgesses sought to lay claim to a like role from its earliest days in existence, 150 years before the Revolution. Indeed, the Virginia General Assembly first laid claim to the powers of the purse in 1624, just five years after its formation, when it sought to deny the first royal governor of Virginia, Sir Francis Wyatt, the authority to impose taxes on the colonists without the consent of the Assembly. In that session, the Assembly enacted legislation demanding, "That the Governor shall not lay any taxes or impositions upon the colony their lands or commodities other way than by the authority of the General Assembly, to be levied and employed as the said Assembly shall appoint." [1]

Five years later, in 1629, the Burgesses would lay claim to oversight of the expenditure of public funds as well. During the period between 1629 and 1666, the Assembly began to draft budgets; fix salaries of public officials, including the Governor; and require the county courts to collect taxes imposed by the Assembly.

In 1666 when Governor Berkeley suggested that several members of the Council of State be appointed to assist the House of Burgesses in setting tax policy, the notion was

[1] Act of Assembly 1623/4; Hening, ed. *Statutes at Large*, I, 224; Billings, 82.

flatly rejected. The Burgesses replied to His Excellency, "The Humble Answer of the House is that they conceive it their privilege to lay the Levy in the House and that the House will admit nothing without reference from the Honorable Governor and Council unless it be before adjudged or Confirmed by Act or Order and after passing in the house."[2]

Matters of fiscal policy made their way into the committee structure of the House during the tenure of Thomas Culpeper (1677-1683) with the establishment of a Committee on Public Claims in 1677. The Committee for Public Claims dealt with the accounts local officials, such as the clerk, sheriff and prosecutor of each county courts and was charged with determining the amount due for summoning witnesses and transporting prisoners, as well as with the claims of individuals, whom the state might owe money for any of a variety of reasons.

By the mid- to late- 18th Century, by standing order (rule) of the House, certain categories of claims were automatically referred to the committee. For example, the Journal for the Session of 1766 records, that the House "Ordered that all the claims for taking up runaways, sworn before a magistrate, be referred to the consideration of the committee of claims."

In some cases, especially larger projects, such as the building of the governor's house, or the raising of troops, money was appropriated in advance but in small matters project would be directed without an accompanying appropriation and only after the completion of the work would the house consider a petition asking for payment. The amounts payable were entered in a book of public claims by the committee, presented to the house in the closing days of the session, passed by the house and by the council. It was in this manner that early appropriation of public money was handled.

Once the legislature certified the colony's financial obligations, a special, recurring committee for apportioning the public levy would be appointed. Unlike today, where revenues dictate spending, initially government worked just the opposite. The legislature approved expenditures and then it charged the committee for apportioning the public revenue to raise the necessary money to fund the spending plan.

The Committee on Public Claims[3] and the special, recurring committee for apportioning the public levy continued to perform their respective functions through the Revolution.[4]

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[2] H.R. McIlwaine, ed. Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1659/60-1693 (Richmond, Va., 1914), 43; Billings 82-83.

[3] In 1783, the word "public" was dropped from the title and the committee continued to function as simply the Committee on Claims for another five years.

[4] The standing Committee on Public Claims existed from (1677-1778) and special, recurring committee on Apportioning the Public Levy from 1684 to 1764.

Although the Burgesses had stubbornly refused to share responsibility for fiscal policy with the Governor and members of the Council during the 1666 dispute with Governor Berkeley, the issue raised its head again during the 1754 Session of the General Assembly. A special session of the legislature was called for February 14, 1754 to receive the report of then Major George Washington on his mission to disputed territory on the Ohio River. In his opening address Governor Dinwiddie encouraged the Assembly to support the provision of supplies to support England's claim to the lands in dispute. The House responded by approving an "act for the encouragement and protection of the settlers upon the Waters of the Mississippi" which provided that the treasurer should be empowered to borrow £10,000 at six percent interest, which was to be spent in giving protection to western settlers, and which provided for the payment of this borrowed money and the interest thereon by placing an additional duty of five percent on slaves imported and by taxes on vehicles, on licenses on ordinaries, and on various legal documents. To supervise the expenditure of money a committee was named who, "shall from time to time, with the consent and approbation of the governor or commander in chief, for the time being, direct and appoint how the said money shall be applied towards the protecting and defending of his Majesty's subjects, who are now settled, or hereafter shall settle, on the river Mississippi, and that the said directors shall, as often as there shall be occasion of money for the use of the aforesaid, apply themselves to the governor or commander in chief for the time being, to issue out his warrants to the said treasurer to pay so much money as shall be wanting for the purpose aforesaid, who is hereby required to pay the same accordingly." This was to be a joint committee from the two legislative branches, which would meet during the interim, when the whole of the Assembly was not in session, but with the authority to speak for the legislature and ensure the money raised was expended for the intended purposes. Governor Dinwiddie objected to the appointment of this committee as an encroachment on the prerogative, but the House reminded the Governor that a precedent had been established in 1746, when a similar committee was named to oversee the raising of £4000 to be used in an expedition against Canada. The House of Burgesses was determined that to uphold the principle that the legislature should have oversight over the expenditure of money and it is significant that both the committee appointed pursuant to the act of 1746 and the act of 1754 were controlled by the House of Burgesses.

Following the Revolution, the Constitutional Conventions charged with framing the first constitutions for Virginia as well as the United States continued to strive to guarantee the power of the purse remained with the legislature.

Virginia's first Constitution (1776) did not provide for the equality of the two house of the Legislature in the introduction of legislation. It provided that all bills, not just fiscal measures, were to originate in the House of Delegates. The Senate, could with the assent of the House, amended measures approved in the House when then came before the

Senate for their concurrence but they could not originate measures on their own. Money bills could not be altered at all in the Senate; they had to be approved in whole by that body or rejected in whole.

At the federal level, the framers struggled to determine the role of the Senate in consideration of budget bills. Like many other issues before the convention, it was a dispute between smaller, less populous states, which would be overrepresented in the Senate, and states with larger populations which would dominate the proceedings in the House of Representatives. Massachusetts' Elbridge Gerry argued that the House "was more immediately the representatives of the people, and it was a maxim that the people ought to hold the purse-strings." It was a sentiment echoed by Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania who said, "It was a maxim that those who feel, can best judge. This end would . . . be best attained, if money affairs were to be confined to the immediate representatives of the people." Only after much debate did the Convention adopt, by a vote of five to three, with three states abstaining, the retention of the power of the purse with the House.[5]

While the Committee for Public Claims ceased to exist in the earliest days of statehood, by the turn of the century the need for accountability led state legislatures, including Virginia, to a renewed emphasis on the expenditure of public funds. In 1802, the House of Burgesses established a standing committee on Executive Expenditures. Like the Committee on Public Claims, the committee was charged with scrutinizing all claims against the state treasury whether it be for the purchase of supplies, printing, caring for the poor, or the provision of military supplies.

While legislative oversight of spending dates back to the earliest sessions of the General Assembly and the House had long safeguarded its role in apportioning taxes, it was not until late in the 18th Century that state legislatures developed a standing committee with broad jurisdiction over state fiscal policy. Given their experiences with royal governors the founding fathers had carefully avoided vesting much authority in the executive branch. The problems with a weak chief executive and decentralized monetary system were, in fact, two of the many weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation, which precipitated the adoption of the first U.S. Constitution in 1781. Likewise, the absence of strong executives at the state level and states' entirely unsatisfactory experiences with printing their own money compelled state legislature to take a closer look at their fiscal policies through the standing committee system. "Committees were appointed to gather the information and make the estimates needed for fiscal planning. Initially, financial matters tended to be divided among several committees with no coordination or even personnel overlap between them, as had also been the general practice in colonial

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[5] The Convention reconsidered the matter over the course of two months, but the provision was finally adopted, nine to two, in September 1787.

legislatures. One committee might be charged with preparing a tax bill, another with coming up with any means possible to raise money, and a third with restoring public credit."

Massachusetts was the first state to develop a coherent committee in response to fiscal matters. In 1780, Massachusetts formed a Ways and Means Committee to oversee all aspects of finances, from monetary reform and taxation to preparing a budget and making appropriations. "The committee developed a complete and coherent package that was not only presented to the legislature but to the people. As effective as this committee was, Massachusetts did not keep it from year to year but returned to several select committees with divided duties until late in the decade when a permanent finance committee was established."

Virginia did not add a Finance Committee to its system of standing committees until 1802. This collection is under construction. James Semple, who is best known as a Judge in the General Court of Virginia from 1809-1834, and law professor at the College of William & Mary from 1819 until his death in 1834, was appointed the first chairman.[6] As subsequently defined in the Rules of the House of Delegates, the Committee of Finance was charged with examining the state debts, the revenue and expenditures of the preceding year, and preparation of an estimate of the expenses for the coming year.[7]

When Virginia's first Constitution was replaced by the Constitution of 1830, the language requiring the Senate of Virginia to accept or reject, but not amend, money bills originating in the House was omitted.

While the distinction between money bills and other legislation was gone, it would still be another 20 years later before the Senate would gain legislative equality with regard to the introduction of legislation. Finally, it was not until the 1851 Constitution, that language was approved providing for the introduction of bills and resolutions in either house, with the ability of the second house to approve, reject, or amend upon the consent of the house of origination.

The Constitution of 1851 is also noteworthy for conferring upon the General Assembly the ability to levy a state income tax and for a provision, similar but not identical to the one in the current Constitution[8], requiring that bills imposing, continuing or reviving a tax be passed by a majority vote of each house. In 1870 this requirement was dropped and language added requiring tax bills to state the tax, its object, and forbidding the imposition of taxes by reference, similar to language in the next to last paragraph of Section 11 of Article IV today.

[6] Semple served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1797-1798; from 1801-1809, and again during the Assembly of 1822-1823.
[7] Journal of the House of Delegates, 1864, pg. 33.
[8] Article IV, Section 11

In 1914, the House Appropriations Committee was formed.

Historically the budget bill has always originated in the House. The first state constitution required it and despite the fact that the state constitution had been changed during the mid-19th Century to provide that legislation could originate in either house the Senate of Virginia did not begin introducing their own budget bill(s) until 1983. Even then, the General Assembly continued to treat the House Budget Bill would be the vehicle for conference and final passage, via the adoption of the annual procedural resolution - has agreed that

The language from the 1984 procedural resolution stated that "[a]ny conference on the general appropriation bill shall consider only House Bill 30 with Senate amendments." This language has been slightly modified over the past thirty years to now include the following text, "... and any conference on the Budget Bill(S) shall consider, as the basis of its deliberation, the Budget Bill(S) as recommended by the Governor and introduced in the House and the amendments thereto proposed by each house."

For the 2014 Special Session I, the House continued the tradition of having the House Budget Bill(S) be the vehicle for budget conference deliberations with the adoption of House Resolution 502.

While the size of the state budget has grown substantially over the last hundred years, the fundamental budget process in the General Assembly has changed very little. In 1942, the then Clerk of the House of Delegates, E. Griffith Dodson, wrote, "Attention might also be called to the great service and saving of time that are accomplished by the Governor's Budget. This budget is based upon financial statements of the State Comptroller, estimates by officers and institutions, and estimates for the legislature and judiciary prepared by the Comptroller, all of which are submitted to the Governor prior to the meeting of the General Assembly in regular session. Public hearings are held on the budget in November before it is made up. When the General Assembly convenes the budget is then submitted by the Governor to the presiding officers of each body, together with a tentative budget bill, which is offered by a member, usually the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, as the general appropriations act for the ensuing biennium." While today public hearings on the budget are not typically held until early January, after the Governor has drawn up a budget and submitted it to the General Assembly, the process described by Dodson in 1942 is not unlike that found in the General Assembly of 2014.

The modern House Appropriations Committee is not been a single, monolithic committee. Rather it has been a group of 10-12 subcommittees each specializing in a broad area of government.[9] These subcommittees, numbering as few as five members

[9] The number of subcommittees was reduced to eight at the beginning of the 2014 Regular Session.

and sometimes as large as 8-10 members, conduct a detailed examinations of spending requests for money each year. Each subcommittee obstensively makes its own decisions on how much money should be voted for the cited purpose; and these subcommittee recommendations are almost always ratified by the full committee. With such backing these subcommittee recommendations normally have swept to swift passage by the House itself, proving these subcommittees and their chairmen great power in the House and in the whole of state government.

Past Chairman - Appropriations

Past Chairman - Finance

1806 - 1807	James Semple (Williamsburg)
1807 - 1809	James Barbour (Orange)
1809 - 1811	Thomas L. Preston (Rockbridge)
1811 - 1812	Peter Randolph Jr (Nottoway)
1812 - 1813	Benjamin W Leigh (Dinwiddie)
1813 - 1814	Phillip P Barbour (Orange)
1814 - 1817	Charles Fenton Mercer (Loudoun)
1817 - 1819	John Robertson (Richmond City)
1819 - 1821	Thomas Miller (Powhatan)
1821 - 1822	Geo. Wilson Crump (Cumberland)
1822 - 1826	David S. Garland (Amherst)
1826 - 1827	George Loyall (Norfolk Borough)
1827 - 1832	Archibald Bryce, Jr (Goochland)
1832 - 1836	John T. Brown (Petersburg)
1836 - 1838	Alexander Rives (Albemarle)
1839	William Kinney (Augusta)
1839 - 1842	Charles P. Dorman (Rockbridge)
1842 - 1843	Thomas J. Randolph (Albemarle)
1843 - 1844	John R. Edmunds (Halifax)

1844 - 1845	Edmund Broadus (Culpeper)
1845 - 1846	John R. Edmunds (Halifax)
1846 - 1847	John W. Jones (Chesterfield)
1847 - 1848	Charles P. Dorman (Rockbridge)
1848 - 1851	Jonathan B. Stovall (Halifax)
1852 - 1853	William O. Goode (Mecklenburg)
1853 - 1854	Hiram Martz (Rockingham)
1855 - 1856	Muscoe R.H. Garnett (Essex/King & Queen)
1857 - 1858	Robert Johnston (Harrison)
1859 - 1863	James Barbour (Culpeper)
1863 - 1865	Wood Bouldin (Charlotte)
1864 - 1865 @ ALEXANDRIA	Reuben Johnston (Alexandria)
1865 - 1866	P.R. Grattan (Richmond City)
1866 - 1867	W.W. Crump (Richmond City)
1869 - 1870	William McLaughlin (Rockbridge)[10]
1870 - 1871	A.B. Cochrane (Augusta)
1871 - 1873	R.T. Daniel (Richmond City)
1874 - 1875	Alexander H.H. Stuart (Augusta)
1875 - 1876	W.W. Crump (Richmond City)
1876 - 1877	Alexander H.H. Stuart (Augusta)
1877 - 1879	James Barbour (Culpeper)
1879 - 1880	Samuel H. Moffett (Rockingham)
1881 - 1882	Richard R. Farr (Fairfax)
1883 - 1887	Henry R. Pollard (King & Queen)
1887 - 1888	A.S. Buford (Richmond City)
1889 - 1890	Walter D. Dabney (Albemarle)
1891 - 1892	B.B. Munford (Richmond City)
1893 - 1894	John B. Moon (Albemarle/Charlottesville)

[10] William McLaughlin resigned in 1870.

1895 - 1898	Merritt T. Cooke (Norfolk City)
1899 - 1905	W.H. Boaz (Albemarle/Charlottesville)
1906 - 1913	A.M. Bowman (Roanoke County)
1914 - 1915	Aubrey G. Weaver (Clakre/Warren)
1916 - 1917	W.W. Baker (Chesterfield)
1918 - 1919	D.H. Pitts (Albemarle/Charlottesville)
1920 - 1927	Edward R. Fuller (Richmond)
1928 - 1935	Wilbur C. Hall (Loudoun)
1936 - 1949	Samuel D Rodgers (Petersburg)
1950 - 1967	Charles K. Hutchens (Newport News)
1968 - 1971	C. William Cleaton (Mecklenburg)
1972 - 1973	Stanley A. Owens (Loudoun/Prince William)
1974 - 1982	Archibald A. Campbell (Wythe/Grayson/Bland/ Galax)
1983 - 1987	Theodore V. Morrison Jr (Newport News)
1988 - 1997	C. Richard Cranwell (Vinton)
1998 - 2001	Harry J. Parrish (Manassas) C. Richard Cranwell (Vinton)
2002 - 2006	Harry J. Parrish (Manassas)
2007 -2013	Harry R. Purkey (Virginia Beach)
2014 – Present	R. Lee Ware (Powhatan)

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