



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **VIRGINIA DELEGATE KIRK COX NAMED DISTINGUISHED FRIEND OF VIRGINIA AGRIBUSINESS**

#### *House Majority Leader Honored for His Support of State's Agribusiness Industry*

**(Richmond, Va.)** Virginia Delegate M. Kirkland “Kirk” Cox (R-Colonial Heights) has been named the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness for 2017 by the Virginia Agribusiness Council.

The award was presented to Delegate Cox on January 12 at the Agribusiness Council's 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Appreciation Banquet held in the historic Old Dominion Building at the Richmond Raceway Complex in Henrico County.

In presenting the award, Bette Brand, Chief External Affairs Officer of Farm Credit of the Virginias and Chair of the Virginia Agribusiness Council's Board of Directors, spoke of Delegate Cox's history of support of the Commonwealth's farming and forestry industries and his understanding of the importance of agriculture to the state's economy.

Delegate Cox, who taught high school government for 30 years was first elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1989 and represents the 66<sup>th</sup> District which includes part of Chesterfield County and the City of Colonial Heights. In December 2010, his fellow Republican Caucus members elected Delegate Cox to serve as House Majority Leader, the second highest leadership position in the House.

Mrs. Brand noted that Delegate Cox served as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee from 2002 until 2007 during which time he took a lead role in developing important Nutrient Plan Legislation and advocating for resources for water quality programs. She also said that as a member of the House and Senate Conference Committee, Delegate Cox was instrumental in establishing the Agriculture and Forestry Secretariat as part of the Governor's cabinet and was also a member of the Conference Committee that developed the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

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“This evening, it is with sincere appreciation that we honor a legislator who has exhibited his talent for leadership in the classroom and in the halls of the State Capitol...a legislator who has shown he understands the vital importance of agriculture to the economic well-being of all the citizens of the Commonwealth...and a true public servant who is admired by his colleagues on both sides of the aisle for his ability to tackle issues and find solutions that benefit all Virginians,” Mrs. Brand said.

Since its inception in 1978, the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness Award has been presented by the Virginia Agribusiness Council to a Virginian who is a Member of the United States Congress, a State Legislator, Governor or other influential government official who has shown “exceptional support of Virginia’s agribusiness industry.”

In addition to the award presentation, Virginia Lt. Governor Ralph Northam addressed the nearly 900 persons in attendance highlighting the progress made in promoting agribusiness – the Commonwealth’s largest industry segment – and expanding markets both domestically and overseas.

Also in attendance at the Legislative Appreciation Banquet were Virginia Congressional Representatives, Members of the Virginia General Assembly and Governor’s cabinet, Agribusiness Council members and representatives of industry and educational institutions from throughout the State. Attendees dined on a buffet of “Virginia’s Finest” food and beverages.

### **About The Virginia Agribusiness Council**

The Virginia Agribusiness Council is a non-profit organization committed to representing the interests of the agriculture and forestry industries in the Commonwealth through effective governmental relations and initiatives. Its membership includes farmers, foresters, and other agricultural producers; industry suppliers; marketing and processors; and commodity and other industry associations. It is headquartered in Richmond. For more information, please visit [www.va-agribusiness.org](http://www.va-agribusiness.org) .

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*Photo Attached: Del. Kirk Cox and Virginia Agribusiness Council Chair Bette Brand.*