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## **REGULATORY BONFIRE MORE THAN JUST “VIRGINIA’S DOGE”**

**LEXINGTON, VA** — Governor Northam started the process; Governor Youngkin continued it. According to a major new report released today (Thursday March 6<sup>th</sup>) by the Virginia Institute of Public Policy, Virginians are already enjoying \$1.2 billion in annual savings thanks to the Office of Regulatory Management (ORM).

Coming at a time when the entire field of government efficiency is under a magnifying glass with the Trump administration’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), the Virginia Model has shown how government efficiency is about more than just staffing levels.

Dr. James Broughel, the author of the report, said “Virginia has led the way in showing how leaner, smarter regulation can lead to eye-watering savings by cutting unnecessary red tape and streamlining processes. It’s not a wildfire; it’s a targeted bonfire of complex regulations.”

The entire regulatory burden in the state of Virginia has been cut by more than 21% since 2022, remaining roughly on track to achieve the pledged 25% goal by the end of Governor Youngkin’s term in office.

Caleb Taylor, Director of Policy for the Virginia Institute for Public Policy, said “This report will no doubt spark significant debate. The Virginia Model of Regulatory Reform and DOGE’s approach both aim to make government more efficient and less obtrusive. It’s a question of whether to target government funding, staffing levels or regulation, and whether to approach the issue with a scalpel or a scythe. Both approaches have merit; some people may well decide that ultimately, we need to streamline both staffing and regulations for a more efficient government.”

As processing delays for licenses and permits continue to plague the nation, the study shows how deregulation can have practical benefits for the daily lives of Virginians; the Department of Professional and Occupation Regulation (DPOR) cut average processing times from 33 days to 5 days, while the Department of Environment Quality (DEQ) reduced permit processing time by 70%.

Some of the results are eye-catching because they demonstrate how easily such savings can be made in areas the average person would rarely think about. For example, a huge \$124 million annual saving has been made from cutting the “Stormwater Management Handbook” from 11,600 pages to just 1,800 pages. Most people would be unaware that the document even existed; achieving the same level of public safety while reducing the regulatory burden is precisely what the Virginia Model is all about.

In a state like Virginia, where neither party controls the executive and legislative branches, at least the Virginia Model has shown that bipartisan progress is possible.

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