



**2024 Legislative Priorities
And Legislation of Interest**

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VOTING AND ELECTIONS

Campaign Finance Reform

Restrict personal use of campaign funds

We support the following legislation:

HB 40 (Del. Simon); SB 377 (Sen. Boysko)

HB 40/SB 377. Virginia needs legal restrictions on how campaign funds may be used, including what constitutes improper "personal use." The bills appropriately clarify that "personal use" does not include dependent care.

Strengthen campaign finance disclosure

We support the following legislation:

HB 730 (Del. Sickles); SB 78 (Sen. Favola)

HB 730/SB 78. Filing independent expenditure reports electronically increases campaign funding transparency by allowing timely access to the entire electorate, and requiring disclosure of the sponsor's three largest contributors lessens the likelihood of a candidate being beholden to deep-pocketed, unknown special interests.

Voter Access

Right to Vote

We support HB623 (Del. Price), HB1330 (Del. Ward), HJ2 (Del. Bennett-Parker), HJ18 (Del. Cherry); SB224 (Sen. Rouse), SJ2 (Sen. Locke)

HB 623 – This bill expands the list of those who are permitted to use the courts to ensure that Virginia voting rights are protected.

HB 1330 - Persons confined awaiting trial or for conviction of a misdemeanor would be allowed to vote under Virginia law and must be provided access to that right.

SB 224 – The bill improves the notice of cancellation given to a voter convicted of a felony and provides the opportunity for the voter to contest the cancellation.

HJ 2/HJ 18/SJ 2 – Constitutional amendments will be considered in 2025 and will remain a key League issue through the intervening months; no Virginia voter should have their voting rights restored based solely on the discretion of the Governor.

Safety and Accommodating Voter Needs

We support HB26 (Del. Reid), HB441 (Del. Bennett-Parker), HB939 (Del. Shin), HB940 (Del. Shin), HB1003 (Del. Anthony)

HB 26 – Voters should be able to vote using identification cards they receive from private organizations authorized by Virginia agencies.

HB 441 - Curbside voting rules need to be updated to ensure that those who have mental disabilities still have an opportunity to vote and election workers should be trained to assist them in voting.

HB 939 - To address threats and intimidation, firearms would be prohibited within 100 feet of buildings where voters are registered, elections are held, ballots are counted, and electoral boards or the State Board of Elections meet.

HB 940/HB 1003 – Together, these bills help ensure that voters receive proper notice when their polling locations are changed. HB 940 requires posting notice, while HB 1003 requires that notice be mailed to the voters.

Election Administration and Security

Voter List Maintenance

We support HB 565, HB 904, HB 1177, and SB 196:

HB 565 (Askew)/SB 315 (Sen. Salim) – This bill would help keep the voter list up-to-date and would make it easier for voters to maintain their voter registration at their current addresses.

HB 904 (Del. Price) – We support this bill because it would strengthen the accuracy and security measures of Virginia’s voter list maintenance.

HB 1177 (Del. Sickles) /SB 606 (Sen. VanValkenburg) – We strongly support Virginia rejoining ERIC, the consortium that matches securely encrypted voter data to report to member states when voters move away, die, or vote in multiple states.

SB 196 (Sen. VanValkenburg) – This bill would improve the accuracy of Virginia’s voter list and would avoid improper disenfranchisement of valid voters.

Protections for Elections Officials

We support HB 939, HB 943, and SB 364

HB 939 (Del. Shin) – We support this bill because it physically protects election officials by banning firearms (with specified exceptions) within 100 feet of polling places, registrars’ offices, local electoral boards’ meeting rooms, and the State Board of Elections’ meeting room.

HB 943 (Del. Shin) – We support this bill, which allows local election officials not to have their home addresses on the public voter list. The people who work to ensure that elections are conducted fairly, safely, and accurately should not have to worry about their personal safety and well-being in doing so.

SB 364 (Sen. Ebbin) – This bill provides current and former election officials with much-needed legal protections against threats, intimidation, harassment, trespass, and violence.

Elections Administration

We support, HB 942, HB 1408 (incorporating HB 1172), HB998, SB 131, and SB 605

HB 940 (Del. Shin) – This bill prevents voter confusion when a polling place is changed. Notice is posted at the old polling place, telling the voters where to go to vote.

HB 942 (Del. Shin)/HB 1172 (Del. Sickles)/HB1408 (Del. Srinivasan) – We support these bills, which provide for standards to broaden access to satellite voting locations. The standards include geographic distribution, minimum numbers, and a range of considerations regarding populations.

HB 998 (Del. Anthony)/HB 1238 (Del. Sickles) – We support these bills, which provide the time needed to accurately fulfill additional recent statutory obligations. Three extra days will not affect certification of an election by the State Board of Elections.

SB 131 (Sen. Mulchi) – We support this bill, which has passed the Senate, because it makes good sense not to hold a primary election when there is only one candidate.

SB 605 (Sen. Subramanyam) – We support this bill, which has passed the Senate. It expands the definition of disability for purposes of curbside voting to include any permanent or temporary disability, not solely a physical disability, while also giving election workers the training to better assist them.

Ranked Choice Voting

We support HB 841, SB 428, and SB 270

HB 841 (Del. Hope)/SB 428 (Sen. VanValkenburg) - We support these bills, which would expand current law on ranked choice voting to include all local and constitutional office elections (instead of only County Boards and City Councils in current law). The bills also provide the process and procedures for conducting such elections.

SB 270 (Sen. Subramanyam) - Virginia should allow political parties to conduct their presidential primaries in Virginia using ranked choice voting. The Department of Elections would verify whether localities across the state have the necessary equipment available to use ranked choice voting and would establish rules for ballot tabulation.

National Popular Vote

We support HB 375

HB 375 (Del. Helmer) This bill would formally allow Virginia to join the National Popular Vote Compact. Voters in the Commonwealth expect their votes to count during a Presidential Election. Short of changing the US Constitution, the Compact among states with a sufficient number of electoral votes would ensure this result.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Budget Amendments

We support

Item #'s: Item 102 #27h (Del. Bulova), Item 102 #5s (Sen. Ebbin):
Virginia Housing Trust Fund: Increase base funding from \$75 million to \$150 million per year.

Virginia has a shortage of nearly 200,000 affordable homes (2021 JLARC Study) and additional funds in the VHTF would help reduce this need.

Item 102 #1h (Del. Coyner), Item 102 #3s (Sen. Hashmi):
5000 Families Pilot Program: \$100 million appropriation for the biennium for a two-year pilot program for rental assistance to 5,800 very low-income Virginia households with families with children under 13 years old. With an estimated 347,000 Virginians who qualify for the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program unable to receive one due to limited Federal funds, this initiative would reduce this gap and stabilize families so children can learn and stay healthy.

Item 102 #19h (Bulova), Item 102 #12s (Hashmi and Deeds)
Homeownership Initiative for Lower Wage Workers: \$20 million for the Biennium in addition to the VHTF

Funds would provide up to \$50,000 in down payment assistance to help 400 families with incomes of 60% of Area Median Income (AMI) and below become homeowners. The program would be administered by Habitat for Humanity of Virginia and would have the greatest impact in rural areas.

Affordable Housing Bills

We support

HB 1397 – (Del Krizek)
Mobile Home Park Residents Opportunity to Purchase Act.
Manufactured homes are the largest source of unsubsidized affordable housing in the U.S. Since mobile home parks are inexpensive to maintain, they are being bought up by LLC's who are then raising the lot rentals or evicting the tenants to redevelop the land. This bill would provide more protections for mobile home park renters.

HB598 – (Del Price)

Pay or Quit Extension: Extend the “pay or quit” time period from five to fourteen days, returning to the longer time period that was in place for most of the COVID pandemic.

This bill will give tenants more time to catch up their rent before facing eviction. With more time, tenants are more likely to have received a paycheck or other assistance, allowing them to catch up on rent before they end up in costly eviction proceedings.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

We support
SB 719 (Sen. Bagby)

Puts limitations on solitary confinement "for inmate protection"

The bill requires that before placing an incarcerated person in "restorative housing or isolated confinement" for his own protection, the facility administrator shall place an incarcerated person in a less restrictive setting, including by transferring such person to another institution or to a special-purpose housing unit for incarcerated persons who face similar threats.

| It requires administrative review of any solitary confinement every 48 hours instead of the current 7 days. It requires notification of the regional administrator within 24 hours. It delineates requirements of formal hearings concerning such requirements, including that they be in the presence of the inmate who is allowed to speak and to receive a formal ruling within 24 hours.

The bill does NOT otherwise place any limits on durations of solitary confinements, which may be for months or years, contrary to national and international guidelines.

Benefits:

- Discourages use of solitary confinement which is known to be dangerous to mental health
- Provides some protection for inmates against arbitrary or vindictive actions by guards.
- The increased documentation better enables tracking of use of solitary confinement at various prisons.

CHILDCARE

We support:

HB 627 (Del. Bennett-Parker) Ensures children of licensed childcare providers qualify for subsidies.

HB 408 (Del Hernandez) Establishes an enrollment-based system for childcare rather than attendance-based.

HB 419 (Del Bulova) Establishes and maintains a funding formula for the provision of services to families in early childhood care and education.

SB 54 (Sen. Locke) Sets the childcare funding formula based on quality cost of care, established an educator incentive program, and ensures unspent VPI funds are credited back to the program.

HB 969 (Del. Tran) Creates a tax credit of \$500/child for the years 2024-2028 for families earning a maximum of \$100,000/year.

We oppose:

SB 76 (Sen. Durant) Exempts religious childcare centers from licensure requirements

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We support

HB 46 (Del. Bennett-Parker)

This bill limits firearms transfers to another person from a prohibited person.

When the owner of firearms is subject to protective orders and is convicted of domestic violence, clarifying where and to whom the firearms can be transferred, those who experience domestic violence, and society, as a whole are safer. That being said, we support the transfer of guns to individuals who are 21 or older, do not reside with the convicted, and are otherwise allowed to own a gun under current Virginia law.

EDUCATION

JLARC

Last summer the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (**JLARC**) published a comprehensive report on Virginia's current public education funding showing yet again that the state is not sufficiently funding our public schools and suggesting policy changes to remedy that.

We support;

The JLARC Recommendations-1-7, 8-10(with modified language); Policy Option 5; SB128(Sen. VanValkenburg)-SOQ FORMULA (replacing the Local Composite Index)

JLARC's recommendations, including updating the state funding formula to reflect the needs of our public schools more accurately, and will be advocating for those changes. This is a crucial opportunity for legislators to address research-backed, nonpartisan recommendations to ensure children across urban, rural, and suburban communities all have the opportunity to attend well-funded schools.

We are a part of and support most of the recommendations made by Fund Our Schools.

The commonwealth should pay its fair share of school costs

Budget Amendments

We support the following budget amendments [1#1h/1#9. 1#9s \(GAV\) Jt. Subcommittee Elementary and Secondary Education Funding. SB30 - Member Request \(virginia.gov\)](#)

Education Bills

We oppose:

Any bills supporting vouchers, savings account bills or tuition tax credits. We support keeping public funds in public schools.

School-based Behavioral Health

We support:

HB181 (Del. Feggans), SB127(Sen. Van Valkenburg), HB386(Del. Hernandez)

Virginia students are navigating a mental health crisis. We know that our students can't learn as well when they're struggling emotionally, so mental health support for our K-12 students is a necessity. It's time to ensure students have access to school counselors, social workers, and therapists by increasing funding and improving student-to-counselor ratios.

HB625 (Del. Rasoul), SB608 (Sen. Aird)

We support community schools.

SB586 (Sen. Pekarsky) & HB398(Del. McQuinn)

Our students must feel safe, welcomed, and valued in their schools is essential for their well-being and academic success. Our schools are safest when students and families feel welcomed, valued, and supported. An investment in creating positive school climates is an investment in the safety and well-being of our students.

This legislative session our elected representatives can support safe and restorative environments for our students by investing in positive behavioral intervention programs, increasing support for community school programs, and supporting mentorship programs to provide students with additional supportive adults from similar backgrounds who can make them feel safe, supported, and heard.

HB458(Del. Callsen) & SB14(Sen. McPike)

Without adequate revenue, we cannot provide adequate school funding. Currently Virginia law bans communities across our state from choosing whether to raise the revenue needed to support their neighborhood schools. This limits the amount that localities can raise for their schools. It's time to change this and allow localities to institute a local sales tax via referendum if they feel it's needed to support their schools.

ENVIRONMENT

RGGI/Climate change

Budget Amendments

We support the following budget amendments:

HB 30 Item 366 #1h (Del. Herring)
SB 30 Item 4-5.12 #1s (Sen Surovell)

HB 30 Item 366 #1h & SB 30 Item 4-5.12 #1s

We support these because RGGI is a state-level action that mitigates climate change. Weatherization lowers low-income energy burden. Flooding is a state-wide problem. RGGI funds are irreplaceable. The decision properly lies with the General Assembly.

We oppose the following legislation:

HB397 (Del. Griffin)

This bill would repeal all the progress Virginia has made toward clean energy and mitigating climate change.

Environmental Justice

We support the following legislation:

HB208 (Del. Simonds), (Del. Simonds), HB85 (Del. Simonds), HB1000 (Del. Anthony)

HB208 – we support this because it will ensure that the health and safety of *all* communities are factored into local Comprehensive Plans.

HB1000 – this bill requires Cabinet members to address environmental justice and report findings to the General Assembly.

HB84 & HB 85 – these bills address the community impacts of mining and that is why we support them.

Data Centers & Virginia's Energy Plan

We support the following legislation:

SB191 (Sen. Subramanyam), HB190 (Del. Cole) and SB25 (Sen. Hackworth)

SB 191 – this bill will ensure that *all* costs related to data centers’ electrical demands are considered and investigate whether other customers of electric utilities are subsidizing data centers.

HB190 – we support this because it will bar acceptance of campaign contributions from public utilities.

SB25 – allocation of state funds for renewable energy grants will not be contingent on federal funding. That’s why we support it.

Electric Vehicles

We support the following legislation:
HB107(Del. Sullivan)

HB 107 – we support this because it will set up a fund for EV infrastructure in rural areas.

Recycling

We support the following legislation:
HB316 (Del. Bulova) and HB1227(Del. Willett)

HB316 – we support this because it will establish an agency to develop markets for recycled material.

HB1227 – this bill will prevent local governments from abandoning recycling and will fund infrastructure.

GUN VIOLENCE

We support:

Assault Weapons Ban

SB2 (Sen. Deeds) HB2 (Del. Helmer)

Since 1990, The League of Women Voters has recognized that the proliferation of semi-automatic/automatic weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to the citizens of the United States. Assault weapons are exceptionally deadly firearms commonplace in mass fatality shootings and should be banned in Virginia.

Secure Storage

SB368 (Sen. Boysko) HB183 (Del. Simon) Secure Storage in homes with minors.

HB351 (Sen. Clark) Secure Storage, Lock Required upon Purchase/Minors or prohibited person in home.

SB225 (Sen. Pekarsky) HB 498 (Del. Cohen)- School board policies, parental notification; safe storage of firearms in the household

The number one cause of death for children in the United States is gun violence. Access to firearms is a risk factor for these fatalities. We need to take measures to secure firearms and keep them away from minors. Education of adults regarding the importance of secure storage is an integral part of this effort.

Ghost Guns

SB100 (Sen. Ebbin) HB173 (Del. Simon)

The League is in support of banning ghost guns as they are un-serialized, untraceable and their purchase does not require a background check. Ghost guns make it easy for prohibited and dangerous individuals to evade federal and state gun regulations and create a dangerous loophole.

Firearm Alterations

SB210 (Sen. Perry) HB 22 (Del. Jones)

Converting a firearm to shoot automatically without requiring manual reload results in a much more dangerous weapon. With this modification one pull of the trigger could shoot 16 rounds. Auto sears are inexpensive to purchase or make on a 3-D printer and should be illegal.

Prohibited Areas

HB861 (Del. Hernandez) Weapons in Mental Health Facilities

Keeping guns out of mental health facilities will keep those in these facilities safer.

Waiting Periods

HB1195 (Del. Hayes) – Purchase of firearms, 5 day waiting period.

This bill would help to prevent mass shootings such as the one last year in the Chesapeake Wal-Mart in which the shooter bought his weapon on the same day, he used it to injure four, kill six co-workers including a sixteen-year-old student, before shooting and killing himself. People in crisis should not have easy and immediate access to firearms. Laws like this one save innocent lives and keep guns out of the hands of those who intend to do irreparable harm.

Red Flag Law Update

HB362 (Del. McClure)

In the U.S. today, an average of 70 women a month are shot and killed by an intimate partner. The League of Women Voters joins other gun violence prevention organizations in supporting this bill that will close the boyfriend loophole and protect women from those intimate partners who intend to use their firearms to harm themselves or others.

GVP Study

SB338 (Del. Salim) JLARC Study-Effects of Gun Violence on Communities

The League supports this study to support funding for Gun Violence Prevention efforts in Virginia.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Reproductive Freedom

We support:

HJ 1 (Del. Herring) SJ 1 (Sen. Boysko)

The League of Women Voters believes in reproductive freedom and that the ability to receive reproductive health care is a right that needs to be protected in the Commonwealth and enshrined in our laws.

HB 519 (Del Mundon King)

Medical health professionals should not fear repercussions for performing their duty of providing health care to patients, which includes abortions.

HB 609 (Del Price) SB 237 (Sen. Hashmi)

We support the right to obtain and use contraceptives. Not only because we believe individuals have a right to their own body, and to when they are pregnant, but because contraceptives are also crucial for limiting the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and treating painful health conditions like endometriosis.

SB 15 (Sen. Favola)

Women should be free to control their bodies without fear of extradition!

HB 1493 (Del. Seibold)

We do not believe that our governor should assist in the prosecution of individuals who choose to use the health care services that are available to, and utilized by, our fellow Commonwealth residents.

HB 819 (Del. Mundon-King) SB 238 (Sen. Hashmi)

We believe that contraceptives should be accessible to all and that individuals, not insurance companies, should be able to decide if contraceptives are right for them. Contraceptives are used for a variety of purposes such as birth control, preventing the transfer and spread of disease, and addressing such painful health conditions as endometriosis.

SB 278 (Sen. Hashmi)

The decision to terminate a pregnancy should be made by the pregnant individual with guidance from medical professionals. We do not support any interference with this decision. Abortion is health care.

SB 716 (Sen. Carroll Foy)

We believe that reproductive health care is a right. This bill will enshrine the right to reproductive health care, including the privacy that surrounds making reproductive health care decisions and the protection of personal medical data.

SB 278 (Sen. Hashmi)

We believe that all individuals deserve access to reproductive health care regardless of their gender identity.

We oppose

HB 1202 (Del. P Scott)

This bill does not seek to provide legitimate protections for pregnant persons against harm done to them and their fetuses. Through the use of vague language, this bill allows for severe punishment to be given to those who experience a miscarriage, as well as to medical professionals providing healthcare to their patients.

HB 8 (Del Ware)

Medical professionals, and all those who work in medical-related fields, have a duty to provide medical services to patients regardless of their personal beliefs.

HB 1364 (Del. Griffin)

The decision to terminate a pregnancy should be made by the pregnant individual with guidance from medical professionals. We do not support any interference with this decision or any punishment as a result of the decision made.

HB 404 (Del. Griffin)

We do not support funds being taken away that help to support the accessibility and quality of reproductive health care.

HB 664 (Del Freitas)

The decision to terminate a pregnancy should be made by the pregnant individual with guidance from their medical professional. We do not support any interference with this decision.

Maternal Health

We support

HB 32 (Del. Clark)

We know that Black maternal mortality rates are roughly three times as high as rates for white individuals who are pregnant, with socioeconomic status, income, and education level making no significant difference. All patients deserve to feel heard and seen by the medical professionals they are seeing, and we believe this bill will only help in ensuring that this is the case for all Virginians.

HB 169 (Del Keys Gamarra)

We believe that all individuals have a right to quality health care, and so we support this initiative to ensure that all Virginians receive quality maternal care, no matter their race, age, socio-economic status, place of birth, disability status, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

HB 286 (Del. McQuinn)

We believe that all individuals have a right to quality health care, and so we support this initiative to ensure that all Virginians receive quality maternal care, no matter their race, age, socio-economic status, place of birth, disability status, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

HB 1130/SB 35

We know that Black maternal mortality rates are roughly three times as high as rates for White individuals who are pregnant, with socioeconomic status, income, and education level making no significant difference. All patients deserve to feel heard and seen by the medical professionals they are seeing,

and we believe this bill will only help in ensuring that this is the case for all Virginians.

Tracking Women

We support

HB 78 (Del. Watts) SB 16 (Sen. Favola)

Menstrual health data, like all health care choices, is personal, confidential information to which the government should not be privy.

HB 1359 (Del. Convirs-Fowler)

Menstrual health data, like all health care choices, is personal, confidential information to which the government should not be privy.

We oppose

HB 1184 (Del. P Scott)

This bill will add another level of unnecessary reporting to the government about a decision that must remain between a person and their doctors only. Big government does not belong in this difficult and painful decision-making process.