



Virginia NOW (the Virginia Chapter of the National Organization for Women) is a statewide feminist advocacy organization advancing women's rights and social justice for all. Chapter locations: Alexandria, Arlington, Vienna Area, Charlottesville, Rockbridge County, Fredericksburg, Montgomery County, Richmond, & Williamsburg, with individual members all across Virginia.

Senate Bill Sheet: Family Health & Community Safety

Access to Healthcare, Community, & Mental Health Services—SUPPORT

SB 733 Abortion; requirement for ultrasound.

Introduced By: Sen. Mamie Locke (D-Hampton)

Removes the requirement that a woman undergo a fetal transabdominal ultrasound prior to an abortion. Amends § 18.2-76, of the Code of Virginia.

SB 769 Health insurance; essential health benefits, abortion coverage.

Introduced By: Sen. Don McEachin (D-Richmond)

Removes the prohibition on the provision of coverage for abortions in any qualified health insurance plan that is sold or offered for sale through a health benefits exchange established or operating in Virginia.

SB 801 Financing of clean energy programs; development of underwriting guidelines.

Introduced By: Sen. John Watkins (R-Midlothian)

Expands the requirements of a local ordinance authorizing contracts to provide loans for clean energy improvements. The bill adds water efficiency improvements to the list of improvements for which loans may be offered; allows a locality to contract with a third party to administer the loan program; and requires a locality to identify any administrative fee it intends to impose on participants and sets parameters for the imposition of that fee. The bill also details the priority, enforceability, and other characteristics of the lien, now called a voluntary special assessment lien, that a locality is permitted to place against the property where the clean energy systems are installed. Finally, the bill directs the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) to develop underwriting guidelines for local loans made to finance clean energy improvements. The bill requires DMME to finalize the guidelines by December 1, 2015, incorporating input from certain groups representing real estate, energy efficiency, banking, and other interests or industries and evaluating certain specific criteria. This bill is a recommendation of the Virginia Housing Commission. Amends § 15.2-958.3, of the Code of Virginia.

Interpersonal Violence and Stalking—SUPPORT

SB 694 Firearms; criminal history record information check, penalties.

Introduced By: Sen. Dave Marsden (D-Burke)

Requires that a criminal history record information check be performed on a prospective transferee before a firearms show vendor may transfer firearms at a gun show. The bill defines a "firearms show vendor" as a person who (i) is not a licensed dealer in Virginia; (ii) exhibits, sells, offers for sale, transfers, or exchanges any firearm at a firearms show; and (iii) has paid or given some other thing of value to the promoter for the opportunity to sell guns at the gun show. The bill also requires the promoter of a firearms show to provide firearms show vendors access to licensed dealers who will conduct the criminal history record information check. Amends § 54.1-4200, § 54.1-4201.1, of the Code of Virginia.

Interpersonal Violence and Stalking—OPPOSE

SB 689 Concealed handgun permits; lifetime permits.

Introduced By: Sen. Dick Black (R-Leesburg)

Provides for the issuance of concealed handgun permits for Virginia residents that do not expire. Currently, such permits must be renewed every five years.



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Senate Bill Sheet: Voting Rights

Election Ethics and Voting Rights—SUPPORT

SB 677 Absentee voting; persons eligible to vote absentee in person.

Introduced By: Sen. Janet Howell (D-Reston)

Allows qualified voters to vote absentee in person without providing an excuse for not voting in person on Election Day. The bill retains the statutory list of specific reasons allowing a voter to cast an absentee ballot by mail.

SB 688; SB 820 Voter identification; accepted forms of identification.

Introduced By: Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria); Sen. George Barker (D-Alexandria)

Adds to the list of accepted forms of identification for purposes of voting valid student photo identification cards issued by any private school located in the Commonwealth or by any public or private school or institution of higher education located in any other state or territory of the United States. Amends § 24.2-643, of the Code of Virginia.

SB 691 Vote centers; pilot program.

Introduced By: Sen. Creigh Deeds (D-Bath)

Authorizes the State Board of Elections to conduct a pilot program under which one or more localities unanimously approved by the State Board would establish vote centers for use in primary elections instead of operating a polling place for every precinct in the locality. The bill requires the governing body of a locality applying to participate in the pilot program to have the unanimous consent of its local electoral board. The bill also requires the State Board to publish a report on the program by August 15 of any year in which a vote center is used. The provisions of the bill would expire on December 31, 2019

SB 708; SB 719; SB 758; SB 822 Elections; absentee voting by persons age 65 or older.

Introduced By: Sen. John Edwards (D-Roanoke); Sen Jeff McWaters (R-Virginia Beach); Sen George Barker (D-Alexandria); Sen John Miller (D-Newport News)

Entitles persons age 65 or older on the day of an election for which an absentee ballot is requested to vote absentee.

SB 746 Absentee ballots; extends deadline for mailing to voters.

Introduced By: Sen. John Watkins (R-Midlothian)

Extends the deadline by which the electoral boards are required to make available printed ballots to be used for absentee voting from 45 days to 60 days prior to the election. By reference, this measure extends the deadline by which the general registrars are required to send out absentee ballots. Amends § 24.2-612, of the Code of Virginia.

SB 747 Absentee voting; application for ballot.

Introduced By: Sen. John Watkins (R-Midlothian)

Requires that an absentee ballot application made by mail, electronic or telephonic transmission to a facsimile device, or other means be made no later than 5:00 p.m. on the fourteenth day prior to the election in which the applicant is applying to vote absentee. Current law requires the application be made no later than the seventh day prior to the election.

SB 853 Elections; assistance for certain voters.

Introduced By: Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington)

Allows any qualified voter who is 75 years of age or older or a person with a disability to go to the front of the line and to vote at the next available voting booth or voting system. The bill requires the chief officer of election or other designated election official to grant requests made between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. This provision applies also to central absentee voting precincts and locations in the county or city approved by the electoral board. Amends § 24.2-638, § 24.2-649, § 24.2-707, of the Code of VA.

SB 907 Absentee ballots; name and address of voter.

Introduced By: Sen. Janet Howell (D-Reston)

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Provides that a voter's failure to include, in the Statement of Voter for returning a voted absentee ballot, his full name and the full address of his legal residence in VA is not a material omission and does not render his ballot void.



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Senate Bill Sheet: Civil & Human Rights

Gender Equity—SUPPORT

SJ 216 United States Constitution; Equal Rights Amendment.

Introduced By: Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria); Del. Patrick Hope (D-Arlington)

Ratifies the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution that was proposed by Congress in 1972. The joint resolution advocates the position that the 1972 Equal Rights Amendment remains viable and may be ratified notwithstanding the expiration of the 10-year ratification period set out in the resolving clause, as amended, in the proposal adopted by Congress

Ending LGBTQIA Discrimination—SUPPORT

SB 679 Adoption; person other than spouse of birth or adoptive parent may adopt child.

Introduced By: Sen. Janet Howell (D-Reston)

Provides that a person other than the spouse of a parent may adopt a child if the child has only one parent, the adoption would not terminate the parental rights of the parent, and the parent joins in the petition for the purpose of indicating his consent.

SB 785 Public employment; prohibits discrimination based on basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Introduced By: Sen. Don McEachin (D-Richmond)

Prohibits discrimination in public employment based on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, as defined in the bill. The bill also codifies for state and local government employment the current prohibitions on discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, or status as a special disabled veteran or other veteran.

Ending Race & Class Discrimination—SUPPORT

SB 819 TANF eligibility; drug-related felonies.

Introduced By: Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington)

Provides that a person who is otherwise eligible to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits shall not be denied such benefits solely because he has been convicted of a felony offense of possession of a controlled substance, provided he is not using illegal drugs, complies with all obligations imposed by the criminal court and the Department of Social Services, is actively engaged in or has completed substance abuse treatment, and participates in drug screenings. The provisions of the bill are contingent on funding in a general appropriation act.

SB 681 Minimum wage; increases from its current federally mandated level to \$8.00 per hour.

Introduced By: Sen. Dave Marsden (D-Burke)

Increases the minimum wage from its current federally mandated level of \$7.25 per hour to \$8.00 per hour effective July 1, 2015, to \$9.00 per hour effective July 1, 2016, and to \$10.10 per hour effective July 1, 2017, unless a higher minimum wage is required by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Amends § 40.1-28.10, § 40.1-28.9, of the Code of VA.

SB 704 Alternative local minimum wage; establishes procedure which wage may be imposed in any locality.

Introduced By: Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington); Del. Patrick Hope (D-Arlington)

Establishes a procedure by which an alternative local minimum wage may be imposed in any locality. Adoption of an alternative minimum wage requirement requires majority approval by the voters in a local referendum. If approved at a referendum and imposed by ordinance of the local governing body, the alternative minimum wage requirement shall become effective on the July 1 that follows delivery to the Commissioner of Labor and Industry of certified copies of certain documents. An alternative local minimum wage requires every employer to pay to each of his employees, for work performed by them within the locality, wages at a

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rate not less than (i) \$8.25 per hour during the first 12 months the requirement is in effect; (ii) \$9.25 per hour during the following 12 months; and (iii) \$10.50 per hour thereafter.

Ending Race & Class Discrimination—OPPOSE

SB 722 In-state tuition; students granted Temporary Protected Status, etc.

Introduced By: Sen. Dick Black (R-Leesburg)

Declares that absent congressional intent to the contrary, any person granted Temporary Protected Status, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or Deferred Action for Parental Accountability by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services does not have the capacity to intend to remain in Virginia indefinitely and, therefore, is ineligible for Virginia domicile and for in-state tuition charges at public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth.