

VA NOW General Assembly Strategy: How can YOU get involved?

To sign up or for questions: email Vicki Yeroian, the VA NOW Director of Lobbying at lobbyingdirector@vanow.org for more info.



- **Goal 1: We break up into committee action teams, based on your availability & interest**
 - Activists in Richmond will be asked to engage in *local* action
 - Activists throughout VA will be asked to engage in *state-wide* action
- **Goal 2: look out for email (state-wide) communications for VA NOW actions**
 - *Everyone* will get a weekly or biweekly email, updating you with where the legislation in your committee has moved to

What happens to legislation??

- Bills get assigned to a Committee → it may get assigned to a subcommittee → it goes back to Committee for a vote → it moves to the floor for a full vote → it goes to the other chamber (House or Senate) for the same process
 - At any step, the bill may be *killed*, *passed by indefinitely*, or *left on the table*. All of those phrases mean the bill is no longer active & we don't have to advocate for/against it anymore.
- **Goal 3: each committee team member (that means YOU) commits to----**
 - **At least 2 committee email actions—1 in January (pre-crossover) | 1 in Feb (post-crossover)**
 - What is crossover?? – Crossover is a day, usually in early Feb, where all legislation in the House and Senate switch into the other chamber for review and vote
 - **Timeline for emails: (recommended)**
 - 1st email: Jan 15 - 22th
 - 2nd email: Feb 2 -8th
 - **Show support by attending Committee meetings (local) or emailing members (state-wide) when legislation is being voted on**
 - How will I know when to come to a committee meeting (local) or send a committee action email (statewide)? –you will either get a text message (local) or an email (state-wide) to let you know!

Where is the General Assembly Building? –915 E Broad St. Richmond, VA 23219

- **What is a Committee & how do I pick which one I join an action team for?**
 - Committees are groups of legislators that edit, approve, or dismiss legislation before it goes to the floor for a full body vote. The committees that VA NOW are concerned with are:
 - HOUSE Education (Mon, 9:00 a.m., House Room C and Wed, 8:30 a.m., 9th Floor Appropriations)
 - HOUSE Appropriations (Mon, Wed, and Fri, 1/2 hour after adjournment, 9th Floor Appropriations)
 - HOUSE Courts of Justice (Mon, Wed and Fri, 1/2 hour after adjournment, House Room C)
 - HOUSE Health, Welfare, and Institutions (Tues and Thurs, 8:30 a.m., House Room D)
 - HOUSE General Laws (Tues, 8:30 a.m., and Thurs, Immediately after adjournment, House Room C)
 - HOUSE Commerce and Labor (Tues and Thurs, 1/2 hour after adjournment, House Room D)
 - HOUSE Rules (Tues, 4:00 p.m., 6th Floor Speaker's Conference Room)
 - HOUSE Privileges and Elections (Fri, 9:30 a.m., 9th Floor Appropriation Room)
 - SENATE Courts of Justice (Mon, 8:00 a.m. and Wed, 1/2 hour after adjournment, Senate Room B)

- SENATE Commerce and Labor (Mon, 1/2 hour after adjournment, Senate Room B)
- SENATE General Laws and Technology (Mon, 45 minutes after adjournment, Senate Room A)
- SENATE Education and Health (Thurs, 8:30 a.m. Senate Room B)
- SENATE Privileges and Elections (Tues, 4:00 p.m, Senate Room A)
- SENATE Rehabilitation and Social Services (Fri, 8:30 a.m., Senate Room B)

When we send out our weekly or biweekly emails, take note of which legislation you feel passionately about. The legislation that is important to you will determine what committees you will be contacting.

• **How do I know what bills are going to be in each committee?**

- Remember, you will be getting a weekly email updating you with the location of the legislation in your committees. If you want to see what bills are in committees to help you decide which one to pick, you can view bill committee assignments by:

- 1) Going to: lis.virginia.gov
- 2) Click on Standing Committees

Browse around! **Legislation is currently being assigned to a committee, and all legislation will be assigned once the filing date has ended. The last day to file a bill is this Friday, the 17th!**

If you want to track legislation in your committee(s), check out: www.richmondsunlight.com

- This website is a user-friendly way to see what legislation is in the General Assembly, where it is in the legislative process, & will help you connect with other groups or people tracking bills you are interested in.

• **How do I find email addresses for the committee members I am going to reach out to??**

- 1) Go to: lis.virginia.gov
- 2) Click on Standing Committees
- 3) Click on the Committees you committed to contacting
- 4) Each Delegate or Senator name will be in blue at the top. Click on their names for their email addresses.

• **What should I say in my email or at a committee meeting?**

- Talk about an issue you truly care about. Your message will be infinitely more convincing!
- Use a combination of facts, emotional appeal, and cost-benefit rationality. The most important thing is that the email is your own writing, and not just a pre-scripted message. Legislators typically do not take scripted messages into consideration.
- Keep it short, professional, and ask for a response. A response request may help you develop a future relationship with some of the legislators and their aides.
- Cite specific legislation to support or oppose. Otherwise, there will be no action for the legislator to take
- **If you are at a committee meeting & do not have facts or a prepared statement, you can always say: “My name is _____, I am a member of VA NOW, and I support/oppose this legislation.” Just stating your stance is taking action!!**



Key Dates and Advocacy Days

Wed Jan 8th: Start of the 2014 VA General Assembly (GA) Session

Let the politics, Days of Action, and rallies begin!

Thurs Jan 9th: Housing Advocacy Day

Housing Opportunities Made Equal & the VA Housing Coalition
10am @ Suntrust Building 24th Floor, 919 E Main St Rva 23219

To register: http://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50638/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=75245



Fri Jan 17th: GA Session, Last Day to introduce bills & certain resolutions

Sat Jan 18th: Women's Health Grassroots Training

Planned Parenthood Advocates of VA & NARAL

9am @ University of Richmond Downtown Building, 626 E Broad St Richmond, VA

For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/714257991926144>



Mon Jan 20th: Mental Health Advocacy Day

NAMI & Coalition for Virginians with Mental Disabilities

8am Welcome in front of the General Assembly Building, 915 E Broad St (Grace St Entrance)

To register: <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07e8ga172r823c2067&oseq=&c=&ch=>

Mon Jan 20th: 21st Annual VA Center for Public Safety Vigil & Advocacy Day

Virginians for Responsible Gun Laws

2-5pm @ The VA State Capitol Bell Tower (Franklin St & 9th St Richmond, VA 23219)

For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1406179519621453>

Tues Jan 21st: VA Immigrant Advocacy Day

VA Coalition of Latino Organizations & VA Interfaith for Public Policy

8:30am Welcome @ the Greater Richmond Convention Center, 403 N 3rd St Richmond, VA 23219

For more info & to register: <http://vacolao.org/events/virginia-immigrant-advocacy-day/>



Tues Jan 21st: VA Interfaith Center for Public Policy Day for All People

8-2:30pm @ Convention Center 403 N 3rd St Richmond, VA 23219

For more info & to register: https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/7352/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=68897

Tues Jan 28th: Equality VA's Day of Action

8:30am Registration & Welcome @ Library of VA, 800 E Broad St

For more info & to register: <http://www.equalityvirginia.org/dayofaction/>

Wed Feb 5th: League of Women Voters & VA NOW Lobby Day

8:30am League of Women Voters Roundtable, GA Building 3rd Floor West Conference Room; 9:30am Lobby Day begins

For more info: <http://lwv-va.org/actionadvocacy.html>

Tues Feb 11th: GA Session, Crossover

Sat March 8th: GA Session adjourns