



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.

SB 920 Abortion; removes time for performance of ultrasound, informed consent.

Introduced By: Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-Leesburg)

Removes the specific time frame for performance of a pre-abortion ultrasound, a requirement of informed consent prior to abortion. Current law requires the ultrasound take place at least 24 hours prior to the abortion or at least two hours prior if the woman lives at least 100 miles from the facility where the abortion is to be performed. Amends § 18.2-76, 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.

SB 710 Human trafficking; new felonies created, penalties.

Introduced By: Sen. John Edwards (D-Roanoke) with support from co-patron Del. Kaye Kory (D-Falls Church)

Creates new felonies for trafficking in persons for forced labor or sexual servitude and adds the new felonies as a predicate criminal act under the criminal gang statute, as racketeering crimes, adds their investigation to the functions of a multijurisdiction grand jury, and also allows seizure and forfeiture of property used in committing such felonies. The new felonies and the existing felony of receiving money for procuring a person are added to the rape shield statute. The bill allows a petition for a child in need of services to be substituted for a delinquency petition for certain minors arrested for prostitution, disallows the release of certain victim information, specifies law-enforcement protocol for victims who may not be legally present, requires persons convicted of the new felonies to pay restitution that compensates for the victim's labor, and creates a civil action for trafficked persons. The Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security is required to convene an anti-trafficking committee and the Virginia Prevention of Human Trafficking Victim Fund is created, which will be administered by the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

SB 712 & SB 734 Higher education; reporting of sexual assault, penalty.

Introduced By: Sen. Dick Black (R-Leesburg); Introduced By: Sen. Dick Saslaw (D-Springfield) with support from co-patrons Sen. Janet Howell (D-Reston), Sen. Don McEachin (D-Richmond), Sen. Tommy Norment (R-Williamsburg), Sen. Jill Holtzman Vogel (R-Winchester), and Sen. John Watkins (R-Midlothian)

Requires any administrator or professor employed by a public institution of higher education who through the course of his employment obtains information alleging that a criminal sexual assault has occurred to report within 24 hours such information to law enforcement. The bill provides that a person in violation of the reporting requirement is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

SB 943 Firearms; possession or transportation following convictions for certain misdemeanor crimes.

Introduced By: Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington) with support from co-patron Del. Vivian Watts (D-Annandale)

Prohibits a person who has been convicted of stalking, assault and battery of a family or household member, or sexual battery from possessing or transporting a firearm. A person who violates this provision is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The bill provides for a process by which a person convicted of such crimes may petition the circuit court for a reinstatement of his rights to possess or transport a firearm.

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.