



2021 GENERAL ASSEMBLY CROSSOVER REPORT LEGISLATIVE & BUDGET PRIORITIES

RESTORE CRUCIAL INVESTMENTS IN PREVENTION

Currently, the Commonwealth invests \$0 toward the important goal of preventing sexual and domestic violence. [In 2020, policy leaders recognized the critical need to prevent violence](#) before it happens and established the first-ever state fund to support and expand these efforts. Unfortunately, this was one of the funding initiatives put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the enormous fiscal impact it had on our state budget.

What are we asking for?

Support budget items [301 #2s](#) (Favola) and [301 #3h](#) (Herring), restoring the original \$1.5 million per biennium, or \$750k annually to the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Prevention Fund.

Status: *Mid-late February, House and Senate Finance Committee members will be making final decisions on what's included in the budget. NOW is the time to ask and even re-ask your legislators to support prevention funding in the budget!*

Participate in and share [this action alert!](#) You can also find email scripts, phone scripts, prevention infographics, and contact info for reps [by clicking here.](#)

ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

The existence of the death penalty for any crime perpetuates the use of violence to exert control over individuals and groups and creates a society that tolerates abuse. Recognizing that the death penalty is disproportionately and unjustly applied to survivors, people of color, low-income people, and people with serious mental health needs, it is not consistent with the Action Alliance's mission this practice. See our [policy position on the death penalty](#).

What are we asking for?

Pass [SB 1165](#) (Surovell) and [HB 2263](#) (Mullin) abolishing the death penalty, including for those persons currently under a death sentence.

Status: *These bills have PASSED the Senate (21-17) and House (57-41) and are on their way to committees in opposite chambers. Next stop: SB 1165 will be presented in House Courts of Justice and HB 2263 will be presented in Senate Judiciary.*

REPEAL VIRGINIA'S DISCRIMINATORY PROHIBITION ON LGBTQ MARRIAGE

Advancing equality and respect for LGBTQ Virginians is integral to creating a Virginia free from sexual and domestic violence. See our [policy position here](#).

What are we asking for?

Pass [HJ 582](#) (Sickles) repealing the constitutional provision defining marriage as only a union between one man and one woman as well as the related provisions that are no longer valid as a result of the US Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015).

Status: *This resolution PASSED the House (60-33) and has been referred to the Senate Privileges & Elections Committee for its next hearing.*

ELIMINATE MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES

Mandatory minimums are a costly and simplistic tool that serve to remove judicial discretion, disproportionately impact historically marginalized and oppressed communities, and provide little real safety for victims or accountability for offenders. See our policy [position here](#).

What are we asking for?

Pass [SB 1443](#) (Edwards) eliminating all mandatory minimum sentences of confinement from the Code of Virginia and providing a petition process for a person who was previously convicted.

Status: *This bill PASSED the Senate (21-17) and has been referred to the House Courts of Justice Criminal Subcommittee for its next hearing.*

EXPUNGE CRIMINAL RECORDS FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

Many of those who have been trafficked were forced to commit crimes against their will. A vacatur statute would serve to clear wrongful convictions and expunge criminal records, making survivor access to resources like trauma counseling, housing, education, and employment easier.

What are we asking for?

Pass [HB 2133](#) (Delaney), allowing victims of trafficking to vacate and expunge criminal convictions.

Status: *This bill PASSED the House (99-0) and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for its next hearing.*

PASS THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EQUITY ACT (RHEA)

Access to reproductive health care is critical for the health and economic security of survivors. See our full [policy position here](#).

What are we asking for?

Pass [HB 1922](#) (Price) revising health benefit plans and the state plan for medical assistance to include specific reproductive health services.

Status: *This bill DID NOT PASS in the House and is no longer active. However, other reproductive justice bills, like [HB 1896](#) and [SB 1276](#), did pass the House and Senate.*

REDUCE OFFENDER ACCESS TO FIREARMS

The presence of a firearm in abusive relationships makes it five times more likely that homicide will occur. Expanding firearm prohibitions to include DV/SA crimes has tangible results in reducing IPV homicide and community violence. For more, see the Action Alliance's [DV & Firearms infographic](#).

What are we asking for?

Pass [HB 1992](#) (Murphy) prohibiting a person who has been convicted of assault and battery of a family or household member from purchasing, possessing, or transporting a firearm.

Status: This bill **PASSED** the House (54-46) and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for its next hearing.

A similar, companion bill in the Senate, [SB 1382](#) carried by Senator Favola, was defeated by a last minute 16-22 vote on the Senate floor.

We suggest reaching out to your Senate reps to let them know that you support this bill! You can find an email script, phone script, and contact info for Senate reps [by clicking here](#).

CREATE A PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE PROGRAM

Without the option for paid leave, 55% of Virginia families face impossible choices when children are born and when serious personal or family health needs arise. Proposals to [create a family friendly economy](#), like this one, are directly linked to reducing risk factors for violence and supporting an environment in which every family can fully thrive.

What are we asking for?

Pass [SB 1330](#) (Boysko) and [HB 2016](#) (Ayala) requiring the VA Employment Commission to administer a state paid family and medical leave program.

Status: These bills **DID NOT PASS** in the House and Senate and are therefore no longer active. However, other economic justice bills, like [HB 2137](#) carried by Delegate Guzman which establishes paid sick days for essential workers, did pass the House and are on to the Senate.