

**For immediate release**

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**Inaugural Virginia Women's Equality Legislative Summit  
Kicks Off 2020 General Assembly**

*Hosted by VAratifyERA and the newly launched National Women's Political Caucus of Virginia*

**RICHMOND, Va. (Jan. 6, 2020)** – Ahead of the 2020 Virginia General Assembly session, VAratifyERA and the newly launched National Women's Political Caucus of Virginia (NWPCV) are hosting the inaugural Virginia Women's Equality Legislative Summit on Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2020. The summit will be held at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens from 9:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The Women's Skydiving Network (WSN) will make a jump into the summit and a brief press conference will kick off the event.

Press conference speakers include First Lady Pamela Northam, as well as WSN Pro Team Co-Founder Melanie Curtis, VAratifyERA Campaign Coordinator Kati Hornung and NWPCV Interim President Andrea Miller.

The goal of the summit is to carry the energy and effort that has been focused on the Equal Rights Amendment forward to a larger slate of women's equality issues.

"Launching this summit ahead of the General Assembly is a show of force for women's equality advocates and organizations around Virginia," says Hornung. "The Equal Rights Amendment will pass this session, and there are several other bills on the table that impact women and equality in major ways. By linking arms and uniting behind a cohort of equality legislation, we're advocating as a singular roar to our elected officials."

During the summit, legislators will provide overviews for eight pieces of legislation related to women and equality. The discussion of each bill or resolution will include a brief overview, key talking points, and requested action(s) from summit participants to build public support for and awareness of the issue or legislation.

Legislation that will be discussed includes:

- HB 8 Disorderly conduct in public places; school activities.
- HB 286 Grand larceny; increases threshold amount.
- HB 338 Virginia Minimum Wage Act; removes exemption for persons employed in domestic service, etc.
- HB 405 Menstrual supplies; certain school buildings.
- SB 50 Virginia Human Rights Act; racial discrimination, hair.
- SB 76 Protective orders; possession of firearms, penalty.

- SB 231 Sales and use tax exemption for menstrual supplies.

The eighth piece of legislation is pending a bill number, but would direct a judge to release misdemeanor arrestees without bond, except in certain circumstances (like stalking).

To help amplify and elevate the conversation of gender equality, WSN, an international network of more than 3,000 female skydivers, and its Pro Team are kicking off the summit with a jump down to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, with an anticipated land time of 9:45 a.m.

“The WSN Pro Team’s mission is to inspire women to live bold, brave lives of their own design and to elevate the conversation of gender equality in skydiving and beyond,” said Melanie Curtis, co-founder of the WSN Pro Team. “Virginia has the opportunity to make history and we’re proud to make this summit our first jump of 2020 to honor the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment. We are beyond thrilled to show that women can defy history and make bold moves.”

The summit is open to the public and tickets are available for purchase on the VAratifyERA website. Members of the media are welcome.

For more information about the inaugural Virginal Women’s Equality Legislative Summit, visit [www.varatifyera.org](http://www.varatifyera.org) or @VAratifyERA on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

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### **About VAratifyERA**

VAratifyERA is a nonpartisan, grassroots campaign supporting the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in Virginia. Our campaign works with other organizations across the Commonwealth and nationally that support ERA ratification. We advocate for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, but do not endorse or support candidates. Other organizations that support VAratifyERA’s mission include:

Alliance for a Progressive Virginia  
American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Virginia  
American Bar Association  
American College of Radiology  
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Virginia  
Arlington Civic Federation  
Arlington County Commission for the Status of Women  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Virginia Social Task Force)  
Democratic Party of Virginia  
Fairfax County Council PTA  
Fairfax County Federation of Civic Associations  
George Mason University Student Senate  
League of Women Voters of Virginia

Local Democratic Committees (Arlington, Madison County, Manassas, Manassas Park,  
Occoquan District, Prince George, and Stafford County)  
Muslim Community Center of Chesterfield  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women (Prince William Chapter)  
National Congress of Black Women (Metro Richmond Area and Prince William Chapters)  
U.S. Conference of Mayors  
Virginia American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)  
Virginia Education Association  
Virginia Municipal League  
Virginia NAACP State Conference  
Virginia National Organization for Women (NOW)  
Virginia Parent Teacher Association  
Virginia Poor People’s Campaign