

HB652: Chief Patron Delegate Suhas Subramanyam Admission to bail; presumption of release on recognizance.

Provides that a judicial officer shall release any person taken into custody by an arresting officer for any misdemeanor violation committed in such arresting officer's presence, except for violations of driving or operating a motor vehicle, watercraft, or motorboat while intoxicated offenses that give rise to a rebuttable presumption against bail; or as otherwise provided in Title 46.2.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- Virginia is one of only three states where you can hold a misdemeanant without any conditions of bond. Virginia also has an abnormally high percentage of pretrial population receiving no-bond. For example, during the 2019 session Sister Leona was originally ordered to be held in jail without bond pending her trial (thirty days later) for portraying Virtus in the Virginia state flag / seal.
- Women face significant financial obstacles to securing pretrial release when cash bond is set and sometimes bond is denied for no readily apparent reason.
- If a judge denies bail, a woman must remain in jail throughout the court process, which can take months. If she does not promptly work out a plea deal, she risks losing her job, housing and, in many cases, the custody of her children. This can put tremendous pressure on a woman to accept a plea deal instead of exercising her right to a trial.
- HB652 will change the law to direct a judge to release misdemeanor arrestees without bond, except in certain circumstances (like stalking).
- More Information: ACLU of Virginia -- acluva.org/en/women-in-prison

~ Take Action ~

- Write / call your Delegate / Senator and ask them to support this legislation
- Ask 3 friends / neighbors / family members to contact their Delegate / Senator and ask them to support this legislation
- Using the above talking points, please write a letter to the editor. Key newspapers to target: Fairfax County Times, Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg), Loudoun Times Mirror, Richmond Times Dispatch, Prince William Times
- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Saman Aghaebrahim, Legislative Aide to Delegate Subramanyam, at 804-698-1187.

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HB 338: Chief Patron Delegate Marcia "Cia" Price Virginia Minimum Wage Act; removes exemption for persons employed in domestic service, etc.

Removes the exemption from the Virginia Minimum Wage Act for persons employed in domestic service or in or about a private home or in an eleemosynary institution primarily supported by public funds.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- When the 1935 National Labor Relations Act was passed, domestic workers were deliberately excluded from the NLRA. Virginia's Minimum Wage Act continues to exclude Virginians in domestic work. Domestic workers are overwhelmingly women of color, and domestic and care work is a rapidly growing industry in Virginia.
- A survey of 2,000 workers by the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) found that 67% were paid less than their state's minimum wage and almost as many lacked health insurance.
- HB338 removes domestic workers from the list of exemptions to Virginia's minimum wage earners.
- More information: National Domestic Workers Alliance, domesticworkers.org

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- Using the above talking points, please write a letter to the editor. Key newspapers to target: Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg), Richmond Times Dispatch, Roanoke Times, or Virginian Pilot.
- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Tempest Boone, Legislative Aide to Delegate Price, at 804-698-1195 -OR- Anika Rahman, Legislative Director for Delegate Kory, at 804-698-1138.

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SB 50: Chief Patron Senator Lionell Spruill, Sr Virginia Human Rights Act; racial discrimination, hair.

Provides that the terms "because of race" and "on the basis of race," and terms of similar import, when used in reference to discrimination in the Code of Virginia and acts of the General Assembly, include traits historically associated with race, including hair texture, hair type, and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- All women experience society's pressure to conform to certain standards of appearance, but Black women are unfairly impacted, particularly with because of dress codes at work / school.
- A Black woman is 80% more likely to change her natural hair to meet social norms or expectations at work. Black women are 50% more likely to be sent home or know of a black woman sent home from the workplace because of her hair.
- The CROWN Coalition (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair) is passing legislation to outlaw hair discrimination. The Coalition was founded by Dove, National Urban League, Color Of Change, and Western Center on Law and Poverty.
- More Information: National Urban League
nul.org/news/ending-hair-discrimination-workplace-dove-and-crown-coalition

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- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Susan Rowland, Legislative Aide to Senator Spruill, at 804-698-7505.

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SB 76: Chief Patron Senator Janet Howell

Protective orders; possession of firearms, penalty.

Provides that it is a Class 6 felony for a person who is subject to a permanent protective order (i.e., a protective order with a maximum duration of two years) for subjecting another person to an act of violence, force, or threat to possess a firearm while the order is in effect, which is equivalent to the existing penalty for possession of a firearm by a person subject to a permanent protective order for family abuse. The bill also provides that such person may continue to possess and transport a firearm for 24 hours after being served with the order for the purposes of selling or transferring the firearm to another person.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- Domestic violence and firearms are a lethal combination. Recent data from the Virginia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner indicate that 64% of all intimate partner violence homicide victims were killed with a firearm.
- In 2016 a bipartisan legislature in Virginia passed legislation to prohibit domestic abusers from having firearms in their possession but that bill only applied to family or household members with a protective order.
- SB 76 will expand the firearm prohibitions to include all offenders who have a permanent protective order against them, regardless of family or household status. SB 76 or another piece of legislation will be updated to also direct courts and law enforcement to use a uniform process in removing firearms from offenders.
- For more information: disarmdv.org

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- Using the above talking points, please write a letter to the editor. Key newspapers to target: Roanoke Times, Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg), Winchester Star
- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Jonathan Ygelsias, Policy Director at Virginia Action Alliance, at 804-933-8762.

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HB 8: Chief Patron Delegate Jeffrey M. Bourne Disorderly conduct in public places; school activities.

Eliminates the Class 1 misdemeanor for disrupting willfully or while intoxicated, whether willfully or not, the operation of any school or any school activity conducted or sponsored by any school if the disruption (i) prevents or interferes with the orderly conduct of the operation or activity or (ii) has a direct tendency to cause acts of violence by the person or persons at whom, individually, the disruption is directed.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- Currently, disorderly conduct (a misdemeanor) at school can result in school discipline issues being sent from the school system into the criminal justice system. Criminalizing disruptive student behavior is a major contributor to the school-to-prison pipeline in Virginia.
- Although the direct impact of children ending up in juvenile detention is on the student, the indirect impact falls disproportionately on women. Also, school discipline cases in Virginia disproportionately impact racial minorities. In Virginia in 2015, Black girls were 5.2% more likely to be suspended from school than White girls.
- HB 8 Eliminates school & school activities from the Disorderly Conduct in Public Places misdemeanor in Virginia code which will reduce the number of Virginia schoolchildren charged in Virginia's criminal justice system.
- More information: nwlc.org/let-her-learn

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- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Eugene Chigna, Legislative Aide to Delegate Bourne, at 804-698-1171.

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HB 286: Chief Patron Delegate C. E. Cliff Hayes, Jr. Grand larceny; increases threshold amount.

Increases from \$500 to \$1,500 the threshold amount of money taken or value of goods or chattel taken at which the crime rises from petit larceny to grand larceny. The bill increases the threshold by the same amount for the classification of certain property crimes.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- Stealing a phone worth \$800 in Virginia is a felony that can put you in a state prison for at least one year, cost you thousands of dollars in fines, take away your right to vote (unless the governor restores it), and leave long-lasting consequences that follow you after you've served your time. That's because Virginia is one of just six states with a felony larceny threshold set at \$500 or below. In comparison, the felony threshold in Texas is \$1,500.
- Virginia women report economic need as the underlying motivation for their crimes more than twice as often as men. According to the ACLU-VA's analysis of women who were arrested, shoplifting and theft offenses accounted for 39.3% of the arrests. Raising the threshold to \$1500 will reduce the rate at which women are charged with felonies for theft and incarcerated in Virginia.
- According to a 2017 report from the Pew Charitable Trusts, raising the felony theft threshold does not increase overall property crime or larceny rates.
- More Information: ACLU of Virginia -- acluva.org/en/women-in-prison

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- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Sheryl Reddington, Legislative Aide to Delegate Hayes, at 804-698-1177.

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SB 231: Chief Patron Senator Jennifer Boysko Sales and use tax exemption for menstrual supplies.

Provides that menstrual cups and pads, pantyliners, sanitary napkins, tampons, and other products used to absorb or contain menstrual flow shall be fully exempt from sales and use tax. Under current law, such menstrual supplies are subject to a reduced rate of 1.5 percent, which also applies to food purchased for human consumption and essential personal hygiene products.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- Virginia exempts various items from sales and use taxes, including bandages, airplane parts, insulin and insulin equipment, prescription drugs like Viagra, artificial eyes, firewood, and nonprescription drugs used to treat diseases. Menstrual supplies are currently taxed at 1.5% (state) and 1% (local).
- SB231 eliminates the "tampon tax" by adding menstrual supplies to the list of tax-exempt items in Virginia.
- In the first study on menstrual supply accessibility, 46% of low-income women had to choose between food and period products.
- Period.org / freetheperiod

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- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Karen Harrison, Legislative Aide to Senator Boysko, at 804-698-7533.

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HB 405: Chief Patron Delegate Mark Keam Menstrual supplies; certain school buildings.

Requires each school board to make tampons and pads available at all times and at no cost to students in the bathrooms of each facility that it owns, leases, or otherwise controls that houses a public school at which any student in grades five through 12 is enrolled.

~ Key Talking Points ~

- 1 in 5 students have struggled to purchase menstrual supplies or were not able to buy them. Among teens, 61% have worn a tampon or pad for more than 4 hours because they did not have access to period products. This puts menstruators at risk of infection and Toxic Shock Syndrome.
- More than 4 in 5 teens have either missed class time or know a classmate who missed class time because they did not have access to period products.
- Period.org, "State of the Period"

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- For questions on which legislators to lobby or to coordinate testimony you'd like to provide at a committee hearing, please contact Janine Gaspari, Legislative Aide to Delegate Keam, at 804-698-1135.

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