

What VA's Democratic-Led Legislature Did in TWO Years

Voting Rights and Access



- Enacted 45 days of no-excuse absentee voting and vote-by-mail
- Approved ballot drop-off boxes, prepaid postage for ballot return envelopes, and a formalized process allowing voters to correct errors with absentee paperwork
- Repealed Virginia's voter ID rule
- Enacted near-automatic voter registration through the DMV
- Created a stricter review process for any local election changes that might discriminate against racial or linguistic minorities
- Approved a constitutional amendment that, if passed again next year and approved by voters, would automatically restore felons' voting rights upon release from prison
- Allowed ranked-choice voting in local races
- Authorized same-day voter registration starting in 2022

Civil rights



- Ratified the Equal Rights Amendment
- Made it easier to raise discrimination claims in state court via the Virginia Values Act
- Banned discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in housing, employment, and public accommodations.
- Extended driver privilege cards, in-state tuition, and financial assistance to undocumented immigrants
- Allowed local governments to remove Confederate statues and monuments

Criminal justice



- Decriminalized marijuana possession
- Abolished the death penalty
- Banned no-knock police searches and limited the use of chokeholds
- Authorized the attorney general to investigate local police departments
- Allow records of some past convictions to be sealed, making it easier to rebuild lives

Education



- Made community college free for low- to middle-income students
- Increased teacher pay
- Allocated funds to improve school support staff ratio (counselors, nurses, social workers)

Environment



- Passed the Virginia Clean Economy Act, setting binding annual targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency, and setting a goal for a carbon-free grid by 2050
- Agreed to participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative carbon pricing
- Committed to abiding by California's stringent automobile emissions standards
- Mandated that a percentage of new vehicles sold must be fully electric

Guns



- Mandated background checks for all gun sales
- Allowed the State Police more time to complete a background check
- Reinstating the one-handgun-a-month rule
- Gave local governments more leeway to ban guns at public events
- Banned guns in Capitol Square, state buildings and polling places

Healthcare



- Improved the state health care exchange to stabilize enrollment and lower premiums
- Lifted restrictions on abortion access:
 - Repealed the mandatory ultrasound and 24-hour waiting period for abortions
 - Repealed a ban on abortion coverage for plans offered through state exchange

Labor



- Increased the minimum wage to \$12/hour by 2023, with planned increases to \$15/hour by 2026 if a future legislature approves
- Allowed local governments to engage in collective bargaining with their employees