VCA Advocacy Report

Social/racial justice legislation passed and signed into law.

Effective date for enactment for most bills is July 1, 2021 unless otherwise indicated.


HB 1990 Aird. Racial and ethnic impact statements for criminal justice legislation. Provides that the Chair of the House Committee for Courts of Justice or the Chair of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary may request the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to review and prepare a racial and ethnic impact statement for a proposed criminal justice bill to outline its potential impact on racial and ethnic disparities within the Commonwealth.

HB 2130 Levine. Virginia LGBTQ+ Advisory Board. Establishes the Virginia LGBTQ+ Advisory Board to advise the Governor regarding the economic, professional, cultural, educational, and governmental links between the Commonwealth and the LGBTQ+ community in Virginia and sets out the powers and duties of the Board.

HB 2138 Guzman. Identification privilege cards; fee; confidentiality; penalties. Authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue identification privilege cards to applicants who hold a citizenship or legal presence status that is eligible for a special identification card or a limited duration special identification card and have reported income from Virginia sources or been claimed as a dependent on an individual tax return filed with the Commonwealth in the preceding 12 months. The bill has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2022.

HB 2263 Herring. Abolition of the death penalty. Abolishes the death penalty, including for those persons currently under a death sentence. The bill provides that no person may be sentenced to death or put to death on or after its effective date for any violation of law. The bill incorporates HB 1779 and is identical to SB 1165 (Stanley)

HB 2313 Herring. Marijuana; legalization; retail sales; penalties. Eliminates criminal penalties for simple possession of up to one ounce of marijuana by persons 21 years of age or older, modifies several other criminal penalties related to marijuana, and imposes limits on dissemination of criminal history record information related to certain marijuana offenses. The bill has staggered effective dates, and numerous provisions of the bill are subject to reenactment by the 2022 Session of the General Assembly. This bill incorporates HB 1815 and is identical to SB 1406. See H. B. 2312 Enrolled PDF text:

HJ 537. Racism Bagby. Racism; public health crisis. Recognizes that racism is a public health crisis in Virginia.

HJ 538. Aird. Access to water; human right. Recognizing that access to clean, potable, and affordable water is a necessary human right.

HJ 582 Lopez. Constitutional amendment (first reference); marriage; repeal of same-sex marriage prohibition; affirmative right to marry.
SJR 270 (Ebbin). Constitutional amendment (first reference); marriage; repeal of same-sex marriage prohibition; affirmative right to marry.

SB 1178 Ebbin. Genetic counseling; conscience clause. Repeals the conscience clause for genetic counselors who forgo participating in counseling that conflicts with their deeply held moral or religious beliefs, provided that they inform the patient and offer to direct the patient to the online directory of licensed genetic counselors maintained by the Board of Medicine. The law being repealed also prohibits the licensing of any genetic counselor from being contingent upon participating in such counseling.

School and education-related bills

HB 1800. The budget bill. Includes funding, effective in the 2021-2022 school year, for one fulltime equivalent school counselor position per 325 students in grades K-12.

HB 1820: Helmer. TANF Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; food stamp program; eligibility; postsecondary education. Adds participation in educational activities that lead to a post-secondary credential from an accredited institution of higher education or other postsecondary school licensed or certified by the Board of Education or the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to the list of activities to which a participant in the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work may be enrolled.

HB 1904 Bagby. Teachers and other licensed school board employees; cultural competency. Requires teacher, principal, and division superintendent evaluations to include an evaluation of cultural competency. This bill is identical to SB 1196 (Locke).

HB 1930 Aird. Public institutions of higher education; admissions applications; criminal history. Prohibits each public institution of higher education, with the exception of the Virginia Military Institute and a law school of a public institution of higher education that is accredited by the American Bar Association, from (i) utilizing an institution-specific admissions application that contains questions about the criminal history of the applicant or (ii) denying admission to any applicant on the basis of any criminal history information provided by the applicant on any third-party admissions application accepted by the institution. The bill has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2022.

HB 2013 Roem. School board policies; school meal debt; enforcement. Requires each school board to adopt a policy that prohibits the board from filing a lawsuit against a student or the student's parent because the student cannot pay for a meal at school or owes a school meal debt.

HB 2123 Lopez and Keam. Public institutions of higher education; DACA students; financial assistance programs. Provides that students who meet the criteria to be deemed eligible for in-state tuition regardless of their citizenship or immigration status shall be afforded the same educational benefits, including financial assistance programs administered by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia the State Board for Community Colleges, or a public institution of higher education, as any other individual who is eligible for in-state tuition. The bill has a delayed effective date of August 1, 2022, and is identical to SB 1387 (Boysko).

HB 2135 McQuinn. Certain school boards; student meals; participation in the Afterschool Meal Program. The bill requires the Department of Education to administer the Afterschool Meal Program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The bill provides that the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall issue a waiver to this requirement upon determination that participation is not
financially viable for a school or group of schools. The bill requires the Department of Education to develop a process and criteria for evaluating such waivers. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2022.

HB 2204 Carr. Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back (G3) Fund and Program established. Establishes the Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back (G3) Fund and requires the Virginia Community College System to establish the G3 Program for the purpose of providing financial assistance from the Fund to certain low-income and middle-income Virginia students who are enrolled in an educational program at an associate-degree-granting public institution of higher education that leads to an occupation in a high-demand field. The bill contains provisions for student eligibility, financial assistance award amounts, and data reporting. This bill is identical to SB 1405 (Saslaw).

Clinical services

HB 1987 Adams Telemedicine. Requires the Board of Medical Assistance Services to amend the state plan for medical assistance to provide for payment of medical assistance for remote patient monitoring services. This bill is identical to SB 1338 (Barker).

SB 1302. McPike. Crisis call center; Crisis Call Center Fund established. Provides that the crisis call center, which under current law is administered by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (the Department), shall provide crisis intervention services and crisis care coordination to individuals accessing the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline from any jurisdiction in the Commonwealth 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Substance use disorder

HB 1821 Carr and Bulova. Overdoses. Prohibits the arrest or prosecution of an individual for the unlawful purchase, possession, or consumption of alcohol, possession of a controlled substance, possession of marijuana, intoxication in public, or possession of controlled paraphernalia if such individual, in good faith, renders emergency care or assistance, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or the administration of naloxone or other opioid antagonist for overdose reversal.