

Virginia Legislative

NAACP Elections 2025

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The 100 seats in Virginia's House of Delegates will be up for grabs in November. Currently Democrats control both houses in the Virginia legislature, the House of Delegates 51-49 and the Senate 21-19, while Republicans control the governorship. **Your votes will determine Virginia's future. Here's a look at what both parties have done over the past few years.**

In 2020-2021, the Democrats controlled the governorship and both houses of the legislature and **were able to pass major legislation supporting their priorities**, as described below. Since 2022, control of both houses and the governorship has been split. Neither party has been able to pass major partisan legislation, though a number of bipartisan bills have passed. In both [2022](#) and [2024](#) Virginia passed nearly unanimous two-year budgets with new education spending both years and [almost \\$4 billion in tax cuts](#) in 2022. Unless otherwise noted, this guide describes mostly party-line votes, or near party-line votes, from the past six years. **It also includes some major bills Republicans passed in 2012-2013**, the last time they controlled the governorship and both houses of the legislature.

Democrats...	Republicans...
Abortion	
Passed a bill shielding Virginia abortion providers from extradition to another state, vetoed. Repealed previous abortion restrictions. These include the mandatory ultrasound law, the 24-hour abortion waiting period, and state-mandated counseling for those seeking an abortion. Removed restrictions on women's health centers.	Opposed shielding Virginia abortion providers from extradition to another state. Opposed repealing abortion restrictions. Tried to pass bills to restrict, ban, or criminalize abortion. In 2012 passed a mandatory ultrasound and a 24-hour waiting period that were later repealed.
Climate Change	
Passed a bill increasing access to shared solar. Passed a bill to make the Virginia electric grid carbon-free by 2050. Created a carbon dioxide cap and trade program and a shared solar program. Joined the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and adopted California regulations that set stringent vehicle emissions standards and set targets for electric car sales.	Tried to block efforts to make the Virginia electric grid carbon-free by 2050 and tried to pull Virginia out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Passed a bill funding "innovative energy technologies," including nuclear, hydrogen, and carbon capture, with support from most Democrats. Passed a bipartisan bill funding a small modular nuclear reactor.
Criminal Justice	
Abolished the death penalty. Passed policing changes. These include banning chokeholds and no-knock arrest warrants, downgrading minor traffic violations, and creating mental health response teams. Established the chance for some prisoners to earn early release dates and ensured defendants the right to seek a jury trial without risking higher sentences.	Mostly opposed ending the death penalty. Tried to repeal Democratic policing changes, launching bills that would end prohibitions against "bias-based profiling" and would stop de-emphasizing minor traffic violations. Passed a bill classifying fentanyl as a weapon of terrorism, with support of most Democrats in the Senate and one Democratic House vote. Passed a bipartisan bill that gives in-state tuition to out-of-state students who are victims of human trafficking.
Education	
Passed a bill providing tuition-free community college for low- to middle-income students, with support of most Republicans. Passed with some Republican support a requirement that each school board provide at least three specialized student support positions, such as social workers, nurses, and school psychologists.	Passed a requirement for the Virginia Department of Education to issue model policies for school boards to adopt on "sexually explicit content in instructional material." Tried to pass public funding for families to pay for private school. Sought to ban transgender athletes and the teaching of "inherently divisive subjects."

Democrats...	Republicans...
Gun Laws	
• Passed an assault weapons ban, vetoed. • Passed a “red flag” bill. It allows a judge to temporarily remove firearms from someone deemed a threat. • Passed a bill that allowed localities to ban guns in certain public spaces. • Established background checks, prohibited firearms within 40 feet of a polling place, and required gun owners to report lost or stolen firearms.	• Opposed an assault weapons ban. • Opposed a “red flag” bill that allows a judge to temporarily remove firearms from someone deemed a threat. • Opposed a bill establishing background checks. • Rejected in committee a bill that would require locked storage of firearms and ammunition in a residence where a minor is present.
Healthcare	
• Created a state-run health insurance exchange that ended Virginia’s reliance on the federal marketplace. • Passed an affordability board to reduce drug costs, vetoed. • Passed Medicaid expansion with some Republican support.	• Opposed the state-run health insurance exchange that ended Virginia’s reliance on the federal marketplace. • Mostly opposed creation of an affordability board to reduce drug costs.
LGBTQ Rights	
• Passed a bill protecting same-sex marriage, with limited Republican support. • Passed a bill that extended existing state non-discrimination protections to LGBTQ people in housing, employment, and public accommodation. • Passed a repeal of prohibitions on same-sex marriages and civil unions, with some Republican support.	• Tried to create exemptions to the Virginia Human Rights Act that would allow faith-based entities to deny services to LGBTQ people. • In 2012 passed a bill that allowed private child-placing agencies to refuse adoption placement, if “placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions.” The bill passed with six Democratic votes.
Marijuana	
• Decriminalized marijuana, then legalized it. Allowed personal possession and cultivation of small quantities of cannabis by adults 21 and older. • Delayed full legalization and retail sales until 2024 and left implementation details open to review. • Tried in 2024 and 2025 to establish a framework for a retail marijuana market. Both attempts were vetoed.	• Opposed marijuana legalization. • Blocked attempts to speed up recreational marijuana sales. • Blocked 2023 attempts to set up retail marijuana sales by 2024. • Opposed the 2024 and 2025 attempts to establish a framework for a retail market.
Minimum Wage	
• Increased the minimum wage in 2020 from \$7.25 gradually to \$12 by 2023. • Tried in 2024 to raise the minimum to \$13.50 and in 2025 to raise it to \$15. Both attempts were vetoed. • Passed a bill that limited the use of subminimum wages for employees with disabilities, ending them by July 2030. It passed with unanimous Republican support in the House.	• Opposed a 2020 minimum wage increase to \$12 by 2023. • Opposed wage increase attempts in 2024 and 2025. • Tried to freeze, limit, or add exemptions to scheduled wage increases. These attempts were passed in a Republican House but defeated in a Democratic Senate. • Tried to lower the minimum wage for under-18 youth. • In the House voted unanimously to end subminimum wages for employees with disabilities; opposed in Senate.
Voting Rules	
• Passed no-excuse absentee voting, automatic DMV registration, same-day voter registration, and permitting the use of ranked-choice voting in local elections. • Added Election Day as a state holiday. • Repealed Virginia’s mandatory voter photo ID, allowing voters to instead sign a sworn statement of identity. • Passed a Virginia version of the federal Voting Rights Act.	• Tried to end the use of drop boxes, limit absentee in-person early voting to two weeks preceding an election, and restrict election-day voter registration. • Tried to pass new photo-ID requirements for voting. • In 2013 implemented mandatory voter photo ID. • In 2012 eliminated a provision that allowed a voter without ID to sign a sworn statement attesting to their identity.

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