

January 19, 2021

Dear Northern Virginia Senators and Delegates:

As the community and government relations arm for over 100 Jewish organizations in our region, we thank you for your ongoing support of our legislative and budget priorities, as well as your efforts to ensure that Virginia remains safe and a place where all communities can grow and thrive.

With the 2021 Session underway, we write now to share our legislative priorities and the specific legislation we support. In addition to our year-round work to secure funds to support our network of Northern Virginia agencies that provide excellent cost-effective social services to the community at-large on a non-sectarian basis, we also support the legislation that aims to better our Commonwealth for all of her citizens and residents. While we support many of the bills you have introduced, we have highlighted a few below:

Fighting Poverty and COVID-19 Relief:

- **HB 2016 Paid family and medical leave program (Ayala)**
- **HB 2124 COVID-19; DMAS to deem testing, treatment, and vaccination to be emergency services (Lopez)**
- **HB 2203 Virginia agriculture food assistance program and fund; established and created (Filler-Corn)**
- **SB 1159 Use of sick leave for the care of immediate family members (Favola)**
- **SB 1228 Virginia equal pay act; civil penalties (Boysko)**
- **SB 1327 Housing bill of rights; housing protections; foreclosures; manufactured housing (McClellan)**

Security for Faith-Based Institutions:

- **Budget line item 406N:** Competitive grants to localities to combat hate crimes, including but not limited to target hardening activities, contractual security services, critical technology infrastructure, cybersecurity resilience activates, monitoring, inspection and screening systems; security-related training for employed or volunteer security staff; and terrorism awareness training for employees.

Criminal Justice Reform:

- **HB 2113 Automatic expungement of criminal records (Herring)**
- **SB 1165 Abolition of the death penalty (Surovell)**
- **SB 1283 Automatic expungement of criminal records (Morrissey)**
- **SB 1301 Isolated confinement; restrictions on use (Morrissey)**

Supports for Social Services:

- **Budget line item 304:** Contract with the Jewish Social Services Agency to provide assistance to low-income seniors who have experienced trauma.
- **Budget line item 321 L:** contract with the Jewish Foundation for Group Homes to expand the Transitioning Youth program for individuals with developmental disability who are aging out and exiting the school system in Loudoun County.

Gun Violence Protection:

- **HB 2081:** Polling places; prohibited activities; unlawful possession of a firearm; penalty. (Levine)
- **HB 1992:** Purchase, possession of firearms following conviction for assault and battery of a family member (Murphy)

Our Environment:

- **HB 2048:** Electric utility regulation; purchasing from competitive suppliers (Bourne)
- **HB 2074:** Environmental justice; interagency working group (Simonds)

Immigration:

- **HB 2123:** State council of higher education for Virginia; eligibility for in-state tuition. (Lopez)

Voter Access:

- **HB 1968:** Absentee voting; early in person; availability on Sundays. (Babgy)
- **SB 1245:** Absentee voting; establishment of drop-off locations; ballot defects; cure process. (Deeds)
- **SJ 272:** Constitutional Amendment; Qualifications of Voters and the Right to Vote (Locke)

Disability Advocacy:

- **HB 1848:** Virginia Human Rights Acts; discrimination on the basis of disability (Sickles)

Women's Health:

- **HB 1896:** Essential health benefits; abortion coverage (Hudson)/ **SB 1276:** Essential health benefits; abortion coverage (McLellan)
- **HB 2111:** Maternal health data and quality measures; task force (Herring)

Separation of Church and State:

- **SJ 270/Constitutional amendment; marriage (Ebbin)**

Ensuring non-discrimination also is always high on our agenda. For that reason, we also support the following bills:

- **HB 1904: Teachers and other licensed school board employees; cultural competency. (Jenkins)**
- **SB 1360 : Virginia Human Rights Act; nondiscrimination in employment; sexual harassment. (McClellan)**

Thank you, again, for all that you do. If you have any questions about our positions on these or other bills, do not hesitate to reach out to Vicki Fishman, JCRC Director of Virginia Government and Community Relations, at vfishman@jcouncil.org or (703) 307-3467 or our lobbyists in Richmond, Missy Wesolowski at (703) 975-5411 and Aimee Perron Seibert at (804) 647-3140.

Sincerely,



Vicki E. Fishman