



2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

INVESTING IN SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Virginia has been using federal grant dollars to invest in a small number of evidence-informed sexual and domestic violence prevention programs for more than 15 years. These programs use best practices in public health to not only reduce risks, but to build protective factors and resilience for all young people, in order to prevent violence before it can occur.

Given the limited availability of federal funds, only 16 out of Virginia's 65 sexual and domestic violence agencies are currently able to engage in prevention work in their communities. This is not enough to sustain or expand vital sexual and domestic violence prevention programming across the state.

What are we asking for?

- ✓ **HB 1015 (Del. Herring) and SB 297 (Sen. Favola and Sen. McClellan):** Legislation to establish the *Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund* to authorize dedicated staff positions and new grant programs.
- ✓ **A budget request** of \$5 million as initial funding for the program with no less than 85% of funds awarded to community-based sexual and domestic violence agencies for prevention programming.

PREVENTING IPV HOMICIDE

Guns and domestic violence 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.

What are we asking for?

- ✓ **SB 479 (Sen. Howell and Sen. Saslaw) and HB 1004 (Del. Mullin):** Legislation to adopt uniform court practices in cases of final family abuse protective orders where respondent possession, transport, and purchase of firearms are prohibited. This proposal establishes the requirement for a judicial mechanism to certify that respondents of final protective orders have relinquished access to or possession of firearms.

STATEWIDE HOPE CARD ACCESS

The Hope Card Program allows anyone who has a non-temporary valid civil protection order to obtain a card summarizing the protection order's critical information. The design of the Card combines law enforcement's immediate need for information in response to a domestic violence incident with a victim's need for safety, convenience, and wraparound services.

What are we asking for?

- ✓ **HB 498 (Del. Hope) and SB 534 (Sen. Vogel):** Legislation to establish the Hope Card Program under the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia and an annual budget item to cover the cost of the total estimated amount to implement the program in all trial courts statewide: \$81,062 each year or \$162,124 per biennium.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO FNEs & TRAUMA INFORMED MEDICAL SERVICES

Survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence shouldn't have to travel long distances to reach hospitals and medical staff who can adequately serve them in completing a forensic exam or providing trauma-informed care. It's time to expand medical services for survivors, including protecting and expanding access to comprehensive and gender-affirming reproductive and sexual healthcare.

What are we asking for?

- ✓ **HB 806 and HB 808 (Del. Delaney):** Legislation to support every hospital to provide treatment or transfer services to survivors of sexual assault pursuant to a plan approved by VDH; requires the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund to pay the costs of services provided to survivors; establishes Task Forces and Committees to support the expansion of forensic nursing and trauma-informed medical care throughout the state; eliminates the requirement that a survivor report the assault to law enforcement or undergo a PERK examination to be eligible for compensation for uncompensated medical costs through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, and directs the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to establish a work group to evaluate the feasibility of moving responsibility for the SAFE program from the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission to the Department of Medical Assistance Services.

HOUSING PROTECTIONS FOR IPV SURVIVORS

The two most pressing concerns for survivors are often the need for safe housing and the need for economic resources to maintain safety. As a direct result of the power and control dynamics related to their abuse, survivors often face unique barriers to accessing shelter and affordable housing including poor credit or rental histories, lack of employment or income, and housing discrimination.

What are we asking for?

- ✓ **HB 99 (Del. Rasoul):** Including victims of family abuse in those eligible for housing protections by preventing landlords from denying housing to survivors because of their credit history or discriminating based on their protected status as victim of family abuse.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS THAT WE SUPPORT IN 2020:

- ✓ **SJ 1 (Sen McClellan) and HJ 1 (Del. Carrol-Foy):** Including victims of family abuse in those eligible for housing protections by preventing landlords from denying housing to survivors because of their credit history or discriminating based on their protected status as victim of family abuse.
- ✓ **SB 105 (Sen. Favola) and HB 861 (Del. Levine):** Including *any act of violence, force, or threat against an intimate partner or an intimate partner's child* as a factor in child custody determinations.
- ✓ **HB 551 (Del. Ward):** Bringing VA's Juvenile Justice System into alignment with best practices for supporting healthy youth development by enacting the Healthy Communities Secure Care Legislation.
- ✓ **HB 565 (Del. Bloxom) and SB 643 (Sen. Boysko):** Promoting safety and justice for immigrant survivors by providing access to drivers permits and in-state tuition to all Virginian's regardless of immigration status.