

2012

On January 19, 2012, The Progressive Caucus has released 2012 policy goals in areas including education, reproductive health care, and immigration. Delegate Patrick Hope (D-Arlington), co-Chairman of the Progressive Caucus, said, "The legislative agenda of the Virginia Progressive Caucus will focus on policies that continue to promote Virginia's economic growth and protect civil liberties and freedoms. We will aggressively fight back attempts to undermine Virginia's ability to compete in the 21st century economy and take away hard fought gains in human and civil rights."

Progressive Caucus members have promised to "stand together as we work to move Virginia forward." Senator Adam P. Ebbin (D-Alexandria), co-Chairman of the Progressive Caucus, said, "It is quite appropriate that the Progressive Caucus take even deeper root in Virginia's General Assembly. After all it was Jefferson who said, 'I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions, but laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times.'"

The Caucus will take positions on individual bills on an ongoing basis. These positions will be posted online at vaproggressivecaucus.blogspot.com as they are announced.

The policy goals of the Progressive Caucus include the following subjects on which Caucus members released statements:

Education. Senator Donald McEachin (D-Henrico) said, "Education is the cornerstone of any successful society. To ensure the continued success of our Commonwealth in the 21st century, we must have a topnotch public education system, from pre-k through higher education and vocational training. We cannot achieve these necessary goals by taking resources from public education and giving it, as a band-aid, to transportation."

Reproductive Health Care. Delegate Charniele Herring (D-Alexandria) said, "Legislation like HB 1 (the 'personhood' bill) and similar bills that restrict a woman's right to choose are irresponsible; you might expect the General Assembly to get to work creating jobs and improving education, but unfortunately that's not the case. This kind of legislation won't help Virginia business, won't make college more affordable for young adults, and it won't make our streets safer. It is unnecessary and amounts to an attack on personal freedom which could have many unintended consequences."

Immigration. Delegate Mark Keam (D-Vienna) said, "As an immigrant who left behind two childhood home countries, struggled to learn English, worked manual labor through schools and fought for my share of the American Dream, I value policies and laws that treat people like me fairly. The Progressive Caucus also understands this and our agenda will put immigrants' concerns ahead of politics."

Delegate Alfonso Lopez (D-Arlington) said, "Immigration is an essential part of the American dream, the dream for a better life and an opportunity to succeed. While working to achieve this dream, immigrants - documented and undocumented - contribute to our economy. In 2010, undocumented immigrants in Virginia paid an estimated \$165 million in state income tax, property tax, and sales tax combined. They also paid an additional \$115 million in Social Security and Medicare taxes. Legislation that seeks to identify and reprimand undocumented immigrants not only takes this money away from the Commonwealth, but also removes \$2.6 billion in income and purchasing power that undocumented immigrants earn in Virginia."

Good Government. Bills designed to suppress voting rights "will have a disproportionate impact on minority communities, the elderly, and the poor," said Delegate Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond). "In the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose history is scarred by the legacy of Jim Crow, we have a special responsibility to oppose any efforts to restrict one of our most fundamental rights. We owe it to those who fought, and indeed died, to ensure the right of all citizens to vote."

Environment. Delegate Kaye Kory (D-Falls Church) said, "Our commitment to a healthy environment is a measure of our investment in Virginia's economic future. We must protect the natural resources we need for a healthy and prosperous future: our air and our water. Water source reliability is key to maintaining the businesses we have worked so hard to attract."

Fair Civil & Criminal Justice System. "A civil and criminal justice system that treats people

with fairness and reaches outcomes based on facts and not the means of the parties strengthens our society," said Delegate Scott Surovell (D-Mount Vernon), who is leading efforts towards civil and criminal justice reforms. "Virginia is the birthplace of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which laid the groundwork for the Bill of Rights. Our heritage demands that a system that is fair to all."

Budget. "Virginians lose billions of dollars of revenue because of tax loopholes that, once on the books, remain so forever with little transparency, little accountability, and, therefore little effort or opportunity to change course," said Delegate David Englin (D-Alexandria), who is leading the effort to shine a light on these tax giveaways. "We must ensure that all tax preferences -- even the ones we may like -- include sunset dates and reporting and evaluation requirements so citizens and legislators can weigh the costs and benefits of each tax preference. Preferential tax policies that prove to be effective and efficient and whose purpose remains necessary will survive our scrutiny and be renewed, while others will not. As Progressives, that's the kind of transparent, accountable, responsible fiscal management we will keep fighting for."

Health Care. Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington) said, "According to the Association of Free Clinics, 62% of medical services provided at Virginia's safety net providers go to women, who are disproportionately poor, uninsured or underinsured. That population is expected to grow even after Health Benefits Exchanges are implemented. When women are denied health care, their children and families suffer significant consequences. Families USA estimated that as many as 10 working-age Virginians die each week because they lack health insurance, most from diseases that could have been treated easily if caught early. I feel strongly that Virginia women and their families need quality, affordable health care."

The Virginia Progressive Caucus was formed in February 2011 to fight for the interests of the average citizen and to educate the public on progressive issues.

2012 Members of the Virginia Progressive Caucus:

Delegate Patrick A. Hope (D-Arlington-47th District), co-Chairman of Progressive Caucus

Senator Adam P. Ebbin (D-Alexandria-30th District), co-Chairman of Progressive Caucus

Delegate Mamy E. BaCote (D-Newport News-95th District)

Delegate Robert H. Brink (D-Arlington-48th District)

Delegate Betsy B. Carr (D-Richmond-69th District)

Delegate David L. Englin (D-Alexandria-45th District)

Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington-31st District)

Delegate Charniele L. Herring (D-Alexandria-46th District)

Delegate Matthew James (D-Portsmouth-80th District)

Delegate Mark L. Keam (D-Vienna-35th District)

Delegate Kaye Kory (D-Falls Church-38th District)

Delegate Alfonso H. Lopez (D-Arlington-47th District)

Delegate Jennifer L. McClellan (D-Richmond-71st District)

Senator A. Donald McEachin (D-Henrico-9th District)

Delegate Delores L. McQuinn (D-Richmond-70th District)

Delegate Joseph D. Morrissey (D-Henrico-74th District)

Delegate Kenneth R. Plum (D-Reston-36th District)

Delegate James M. Scott (D-Merrifield-53rd District)

Delegate Scott A. Surovell (D-Mount Vernon-44th District)

Delegate David A. Toscano (D-Charlottesville-57th District), House Democratic Leader

Delegate Roslyn C. Tyler (D-Jarratt-75th District)

Delegate Jeion A. Ward (D-Hampton-92nd District)

2012 Agenda

Education

Virginia must prepare the next generation of American innovators by investing in 21st century schools

- Fully fund our constitutional obligation to provide a quality K-12 public education
- Expand access to quality early childhood education
- Oppose vouchers and other programs that divert public dollars away from public schools
- Ensure just and competitive compensation for Virginia's educators

Budget

Virginia needs a balanced approach to budgeting that prioritizes investments in our future to grow our economy

- Promote a balanced approach to the budget that includes both cuts and revenue
- Reform tax loopholes and giveaways that receive little or no state oversight

Environment

Virginia must protect the health and safety of our communities and secure our bountiful natural resources and landscapes that support Virginia's economy and contribute to our unique

character and way of life

- Keep the Ban on uranium mining
- Support and incentivize renewable energy
- Protect water quality
- Continue land conservation

Health Care

Everyone needs health care at some point and Virginians shouldn't go bankrupt trying to get it. We must expand access to affordable health care options through consumer-friendly implementation of health care reform and protect access to Medicare and Medicaid.

- Oppose efforts to weaken Medicaid by reducing provider payments
- Expand eligibility of FAMIS coverage
- Oppose \$800M in cuts to Medicare in Governor McDonnell's budget
- Protect home and community-based services

- Support consumer friendly implementation of health care reform.

Workers' Rights

We have a responsibility to ensure that all Virginians can lead safe, secure, and rewarding lives. Economic security starts with good jobs, and Virginia's workers are ready to get put back to work. Our lawmakers must ensure that Virginia is worker-friendly, not just business-friendly. Our future depends on working families.

- Oppose bills attacking Project Labor Agreements, which lower costs and improve quality and performance
- Fully fund and protect the Virginia Retirement System
- Oppose an unnecessary "right to work" constitutional amendment
- Protect public employees dues check-off
- Oppose budget cuts to occupational safety

Good Government

Voting restrictions and gerrymandering threaten Virginia's democracy. The Commonwealth must ensure all Virginians have a voice at the ballot box.

- Support bipartisan or nonpartisan redistricting

- Expand voting access for eligible citizens
- Oppose restrictions on voting rights
- Support restoration of voting rights

Reproductive Health Care

Women's access to critical health services and information shouldn't be obstructed by ideologically driven legislator-activists. The choice to terminate a pregnancy is a difficult personal decision – not a government decision – that should be left to a woman, her family, her health care providers, and her faith.

- Oppose attacks on the fetal anomaly exception for Medicaid recipients
- Oppose attempts to define "personhood" as beginning at conception
- Oppose a ban on abortion after 20 weeks
- Oppose a requirement for a physician to administer and show a fetal ultrasound before providing an abortion
- Oppose attempts to criminalize forms of birth control

- Support Planned Parenthood, which provides critical health care services other than abortion, and oppose threats to its funding
- Support the continued availability of the HPV vaccine

Fair Civil & Criminal Justice System

A person's access and outcomes in a fair justice system should not be predicated on their wealth or background and premises upon a flexible system to accommodate diverse circumstances.

- Oppose mandatory minimum sentences
- Expand access to court appointed counsel
- Support appropriations to restore cut federal funding to Legal Aid
- Oppose limits to judicial discretion to fashion appropriate sentences
- Support prisoner re-entry programs
- Support measures to reform treatment of prisoners

Immigration

When it comes to immigration, we need workable solutions that uphold our nation's values and moves us forward together. We need a system that is fair and effective for everyone. Proposed anti-immigrant laws are impractical, violate our values, and divide our communities. We need real solutions so that people can contribute and participate fully in American economy and society.

- Oppose bills that require local and state police officers to enforce federal immigration policies, particularly ones that would give local police the authority to check the immigration status of anyone lawfully stopped for any reason
- Oppose bills that attempt to limit or deny access to education for Virginia's youth
- Oppose legislation that would require local schools to collect information on citizenship or legal presence

2011



The Virginia Progressive Caucus
Virginia Sierra Club
Virginia League of Conservation Voters

Invite you to watch the thought provoking movie

GASLAND

Tuesday, October 18, 2011 from 7:00 - 9:00 pm

**National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
4301 Wilson Boulevard Arlington, VA 22203**

**Proceeds will benefit the Virginia Progressive Caucus
Friend \$ 25 • Donor \$ 50 • Sponsor \$ 100 • Patron \$ 250 • Benefactor \$ 500**

To register in advance visit
<https://secure.actblue.com/entity/fundraisers/27545>
or call Mary 703-486-1010



<http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/about-the-film>

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