

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2023



Detailed fact sheets are available at www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org

Criminal Justice Reform (Key staff: Salim Khalfani)

- **Limit the use of solitary confinement.** VICPP is leading the faith advocacy in the Virginia Coalition on Solitary Confinement to limit time in isolation to less than 15 days.
- **End profiteering in jails.** Prisons and jails charge outrageous prices for phone calls, emails, and basic toiletries. VICPP is supporting a bill from the ACLU to limit this practice.

Health Equity (with a focus on maternal health in 2023) (Key staff: Dora Muhammad)

- **Unconscious bias training requirement.** VICPP is supporting a bill to add unconscious (implicit) bias training as a criterion for health care professionals who work with people who are expecting or of birthing age.
- **Plan for expanding perinatal health hub model.** Bill would form a workgroup to address maternal health care deserts in Virginia.
- **Authorize drugs for midwives to save lives.** Top causes of preventable pregnancy-related deaths could be reduced by authorizing midwives to carry and use two typical drugs.

Worker and Family Support (Key staff: Jase Hatcher)

- **Protecting the minimum wage.**
- **Paid sick days.** VICPP and the Virginians for Paid Sick Days coalition won paid sick days for 30,000 home health care aides in 2021, but Virginia needs a standard for all 1.2 million workers without paid sick days.
- **Child care assistance.** VICPP will support child care assistance for families with low incomes.

Affordable Housing (Key staff: Sheila Herlihy)

- **Increase money for affordable housing (as proposed by Virginia Housing Alliance and Virginia Poverty Law Center):**
 - **\$75 million to the Virginia Housing Trust Fund** to build more affordable housing and help prevent homelessness.
 - **\$738 million to the Housing Stability Fund** to fund a rental voucher program to assist families with low incomes.
 - **\$12.5 million to the Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP)** to reduce evictions with short-term financial assistance to at-risk renters or homeowners.
- **Improve tenant protections.** In 2022, several commonsense tenant protections that had broad bi-partisan support were vetoed. VICPP will support these again.
- **Support reforms to increase supply of affordable housing.** VICPP will be reviewing the Governor's proposals and will support ones sought by nonprofit housing developers.

Other

- **Commonsense gun reforms.**
- **Defending past gains, such as in-state tuition for immigrant students, and minimum wage increases.**

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP) advocates racial, social, and economic justice in Virginia's policies and practices through education, prayer, and action. VICPP is a non-partisan coalition of more than 750 faith communities working for a more just society.