

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2023



Detailed fact sheets are available at www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org

Criminal Justice Reform

- **Limit the use of solitary confinement.** VICPP led faith advocacy in the Virginia Coalition on Solitary Confinement to limit the use of solitary confinement. *A modest reform bill passed both chambers and agreed to by the Governor.*
- **End profiteering in jails.** VICPP supported a bill to allow free phone calls to people who are incarcerated. *Passed the Senate but killed in the House.*
- **DOC Oversight Bill.** VICPP supported increasing DOC oversight. *Startup money for the office was included in the budget passed in September.*

Health Equity (mostly a focus on maternal health in 2023)

- **Unconscious bias training requirement.** *Bill killed in both chambers.*
- **Plan for expanding perinatal health hub model.** Bill would form a workgroup to address maternal health care deserts in Virginia. *Passed both chambers.*
- **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. *Passed both chambers.*
- **Cover All Kids.** Supported a bill to expand Medicaid coverage to undocumented children. *Passed the Senate, killed in the House.*

Worker and Family Support

- **Paid sick days.** VICPP supported a bill to expand paid sick days to more essential workers. *Passed the Senate, killed in the House.*
- **Childcare assistance.** VICPP supported childcare assistance for families with low incomes. *Money was initially in both the House and Senate budgets, but removed in the final compromise budget.*

Affordable Housing

- **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. *Not in budget.*
 - **\$738 million to the Housing Stability Fund** to fund a rental voucher program to assist families with low incomes. *Not in budget.*
 - **\$12.5 million to the Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP)** to reduce evictions with short-term financial assistance. *Not in budget.*
- **Improve tenant protections.** VICPP supported several commonsense tenant protections that had broad bi-partisan support. *Two reform bills passed both chambers.*
- **Support reforms to increase supply of affordable housing.** *No good bills emerged.*

Other

- **Commonsense gun reforms.** *No bills moved forward to support.*
- **Defending past gains, such as in-state tuition for immigrant students, and minimum wage increases.** *No serious efforts to roll back past gains.*

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.