



## NAKASEC Virginia Policy Agenda at 2021 Virginia General Assembly

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### Education Equity

- Extend access to state financial aid programs and resources to all Virginia students who are currently eligible for in-state tuition. This proposal would build upon HB 1547/SB935 that passed in the 2020 legislative session. ([SB 1387](#) by Senator Boysko and Senator Hashmi, [HB 2123](#) by Delegate Lopez; budget amendments: [Item 152 #4s](#) by Senator Hashmi and Senator Boysko, [Item 150 #4h](#) by Delegate Lopez – amended verbally at HAC to match)

### Increase Voting Access

- Creates a curing process and establishes the permanent expansion of drop boxes for absentee ballots. ([HB 1888](#) by Delegate VanValkenberg)
- No longer require witness signature on absentee ballots. ([SB 1097](#) by Senator Favola)
- Funding for the Department of Elections to modernize the VERIS database. The online Citizen Portal needs to work for all Virginia voters, and those who are registering to vote, including limited English proficient Virginians. (Governor's budget amendment, [Item 86 I3](#))

### Expand Health Care Access

- Clarify that Medicaid "Emergency Services" specifically cover COVID-19 screening, testing and all related treatment: Federal law allows states to cover COVID-19 screening, testing and all related treatment for any immigrant who meets financial requirements for Medicaid. ([HB 2124](#) by Delegate Lopez; budget amendments: [Item 313 #36s](#) by Senator Ebbin, [Item 313 #4h](#) by Delegate Lopez)

### LGBTQ Rights

- A Constitutional Amendment repealing the same gender "marriage ban" and replacing it with an affirmative right to marry, regardless of gender. ([SJ 3](#), [SJ 7](#), [SJ 270](#), and [HJ 113](#))

### Immigrant Justice

- Provide regulations and restrictions related to the collection and sharing of privileged information resulting from Virginians applying for various licenses and credentials from the Department of Motor Vehicles, including the newly enacted Driver's Privilege Card. The state can prevent ICE from using DMV data to make civil immigration arrests. ([HB 2163](#) by Delegate Tran)

### Eviction Protection

- Strengthen protection against unlawful evictions. Moreover, if a tenant can provide proper evidence and complete a full hearing on said unlawful eviction, the tenant will be compensated reasonable attorney fees and \$5,000 or four months' rent (whichever is greater). ([SB 1215](#) by Senator Ebbin, [HB 1900](#) by Delegate Hudson)
- Removes sunset clause, thereby keeping the payment plan requirement and 14-day pay-or-quit period after July 1, to protect renters. ([HB 1889](#) by Delegate Price)
- Remove the "45-day cliff" if a Rent and Mortgage Relief Program application is not approved, allowing more time for the completion of the application process, and require landlord to promptly begin rental assistance application process – specifically, within 14 days of serving the

written notice on the tenant. (Budget amendments: [Item 4-14 #1s](#) by Senator Hashmi, [Item 4-14 #2h](#) by Delegate Aird)

### **Language Access**

- Require the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to convene stakeholders to develop and implement a language access policy for the Virginia state government to ensure equitable access to state services for Virginians. (Budget amendments: [Item 83 #4s](#) by Senator McClellan, [Item 52 #4h](#) by Delegate Tran)
- Provide funds for the Department of Social Services to increase interpretation and translation services to help immigrants in Virginia access local resources through 2-1-1 and issue grants through the Office of New Americans to community-based organizations that directly serve immigrants. (Budget amendments: [Item 355 #1s](#) by Senator McClellan, [Item 355 #1h](#) by Delegate Tran)

NAKASEC Virginia is a proud member and supportive of the legislative priorities of the [Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights](#), the [Virginia Civic Engagement Table](#), and [Healthcare for All Virginians](#).