



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON · DIOCESE OF RICHMOND  
Representing the Virginia Catholic Bishops and their Dioceses in Public Policy Matters

## **How legislators voted in the 2018 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION**

Most of the Virginia Catholic Conference's top legislative priorities during this year's 60-day Virginia General Assembly session were decided by lawmakers in committees – not by votes on the floors of the Senate or House.

This report details those key committee decisions and how committee members, identified by party and district, voted. Charts of a smaller number of key Senate and House floor votes, accompanied by descriptions, follow.

The charts of floor votes have been prepared for Diocese of Arlington residents and therefore include only those General Assembly members whose districts are within that Diocese.

# Committee votes

√: vote agreed with VCC position    X: vote disagreed with VCC position  
NV: legislator did not vote

**Protecting unborn life:** By a 4-3 vote, a House subcommittee rejected a spate of Conference-opposed bills that together would have eliminated most of Virginia's current protections for unborn children.

√: **Bell, Robert B. (R-58); Cline (R-24); Collins (R-29); Gilbert (R-15)**

X: **Herring (D-46); Mullin (D-93); Watts (D-39)**

A Senate committee voted 8-7 to reject a similar collection of bills.

√: **Black (R-13); Carrico (R-40); Chase (R-11); Cosgrove (R-14); Dunnavant (R-12); Newman (R-23); Peake (R-22); Suetterlein (R-19)**

X: **Barker (D-39); Howell (D-32); Lewis (D-6); Locke (D-2); Lucas (D-18); Petersen (D-34); Saslaw (D-35)**

**Stopping health-plan mandates:** Conference-opposed bills that together would have forced most health plans in Virginia to cover contraceptives, sterilizations, abortion-inducing drugs and some surgical abortions were defeated 5-3 by a House subcommittee.

√: **Byron (R-22); Ware (R-65); O'Quinn (R-5); Ransone (R-99); Webert (R-18); Kilgore (R-1)**

X: **Filler-Corn (D-41); Bagby (D-74); Mullin (D-93)**

Another House subcommittee considered Conference-opposed legislation to impose unprecedented reporting requirements on employers with religious and moral objections to covering contraceptives, and to mandate coverage of gender-transition services by all Virginia health plans. That subcommittee defeated both bills 5-3.

√: **Habeeb (R-8); Hugo (R-40); Marshall (R-14); Bell, Robert B. (R-58); Yancey (R-94)**

X: **Keam (D-35); Lindsey (D-90); Toscano (D-57)**

**Protecting marriage beliefs:** Conference-opposed bills would have created causes of action against faith-based providers for following their beliefs about marriage and sexuality. Together, these measures would have added "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to anti-discrimination criteria for housing, employment and other areas. A House subcommittee defeated them 5-2.

√: **Bell, Richard P. (R-20); Fowler (R-55); Knight (R-81); Miyares (R-82); Wright (R-61)**

X: **Carr (D-69); McQuinn (D-70)**

**NV: Ward (D-92)**

**Education on adoption and marriage:** The Conference opposed a bill that would have removed from public school family life education instruction about the value of marriage, the value of postponing sexual activity and the benefits of adoption in the event of an unplanned pregnancy. A House committee defeated it 12-10.

**√: Bell, Richard P. (R-20); Cole (R-88); Collins (R-29); Davis (R-84); Helsel (R-91); Landes (R-25); LaRock (R-33); Leftwich (R-78); McGuire (R-56); Pogge (R-96); Robinson (R-27); Yancey (R-94)**

**X: Bagby (D-74); Bourne (D-71); Boysko (D-86); Bulova (D-37); Hurst (D-12); Keam (D-35); Rodman (D-73); Turpin (D-85); Tyler (D-75); VanValkenburg (D-72)**

**Banning weapons in churches:** Virginia law restricts guns and other weapons at places of worship during religious gatherings, unless the carrier has a “good and sufficient reason.” Conference-opposed legislation would have shifted the burden to places of worship to keep weapons off their property by express communication. A House committee passed the bill 12-9; it then stalled on the floor.

**√: Adams, Dawn M. (D-68); Bell, John J. (D-87); Carroll Foy (D-2); Carter (D-50); Kory (D-38); Levine (D-45); Rasoul (D-11); Simon (D-53); Tyler (D-75)**

**X: Brewer (R-64); Cline (R-24); Edmunds (R-60); Fariss (R-59); Freitas (R-30); Head (R-17); Morefield (R-3); O’Quinn (R-5); Rush (R-7); Webert (R-18); Wilt (R-26); Wright (R-61)**

**NV: Lopez (D-49)**

**Guns – public safety:** Conference-supported legislation requiring background checks for firearm transfers failed 4-2 in a House subcommittee.

**√: Tyler (D-75); Bell, John J. (D-87)**

**X: Wright (R-61); Webert (R-18); Fariss (R-59); Freitas (R-30)**

This legislation also failed in a Senate committee 9-6, as did Conference-supported legislation to implement risk warrants that would have enabled judges to temporarily suspend gun rights of individuals who pose serious threats to themselves or others.

**√: Saslaw (D-35); Howell (D-32); Lucas (D-18); Edwards (D-21); Deeds (D-25); Petersen (D-34)**

**X: Obenshain (R-26); Norment (R-3); McDougle (R-4); Stuart (R-28); Stanley (R-20); Reeves (R-17); Chafin (R-38); Sturtevant (R-10); Peake (R-22)**

**Helping at-risk students:** Thousands of low-income Virginia students receive financial assistance to attend Catholic and other nonpublic K-12 schools through the state Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits Program. The Conference supported legislation to expand the program to include low-income pre-K children. A House committee defeated it 11-11.

**√:** Ware (R-65); Pogge (R-96); Orrock (R-54); Byron (R-22); Cole (R-88); Cline (R-24); Fariss (R-59); Fowler (R-55); Freitas (R-30); Brewer (R-64); Heretick (D-79)

**X:** Hugo (R-40); Bloxom (R-100); Watts (D-39); Keam (D-35); Filler-Corn (D-41); Kory (D-38); Sullivan (D-48); Lindsey (D-90); Ayala (D-51); Jones, Jerrauld C. (D-89); Carter (D-50)

**In-state tuition for Dreamers:** The Conference supported a bill clarifying that Dreamers brought to Virginia as children and raised here are eligible for in-state tuition, regardless of whether the DACA program continues. It was defeated 8-7 in a Senate committee.

**√:** Saslaw (D-35); Lucas (D-18); Howell (D-32); Locke (D-2); Barker (D-39); Petersen (D-34); Lewis (D-6)

**X:** Newman (R-23); Black (R-13); Carrico (R-40); Cosgrove (R-14); Dunnavant (R-12); Chase (R-11); Suetterlein (R-19); Peake (R-22)

**Driving privileges for immigrants:** Conference-supported legislation would have allowed taxpaying Virginia residents to access temporary driving privileges, regardless of immigration status. A Senate committee defeated the bill 7-6.

**√:** Deeds (D-25); Marsden (D-37); Favola (D-31); Edwards (D-21); Wexton (D-33); McClellan (D-9)

**X:** Carrico (R-40); Newman (R-23); Cosgrove (R-14); DeSteph (R-8); Chase (R-11); Suetterlein (R-19); Peake (R-22)

**Coastal protection:** The Conference-supported Virginia Alternative Energy and Coastal Protection Act would have funded coastal protections, energy efficiency programs and southwest Virginia workforce development through money raised from regulating carbon pollution. A Senate committee defeated it 8-7.

**√:** Petersen (D-34); Marsden (D-37); Ebbin (D-30); Lewis (D-6); Dance (D-16); Mason (D-1); McClellan (D-9)

**X:** Stuart (R-28); Hanger (R-24); Ruff (R-15); Obenshain (R-26); Stanley (R-20); Black (R-13); Chafin (R-38); Suetterlein (R-19)

# Senate floor votes

√: vote agreed with VCC position    X: vote disagreed with VCC position  
 NV: Senator did not vote

Name of Senator (Party, District)	Religious liberty in housing	Banning weapons in churches	Expanding Medicaid coverage	Helping at-risk students	Promoting safe immigrant communities	Protections against usury	Improving suspension policies
Barker, George L. (D-39)	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
Black, Richard H. (R-13)	√	X	X	√	X	√	X
Ebbin, Adam P. (D-30)	X	√	√	X	√	√	√
Favola, Barbara A. (D-31)	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
Hanger, Emmett W., Jr. (R-24)	X	X	X	√	X	√	√
Howell, Janet D. (D-32)	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
Marsden, David W. (D-37)	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
McDougle, Ryan T. (R-4)	√	X	X	√	X	X	√
McPike, Jeremy S. (D-29)	X	√	√	X	√	√	√
Obenshain, Mark D. (R-26)	√	X	X	√	X	√	√
Petersen, J. Chapman (D-34)	X	√	√	X	√	√	√
Reeves, Bryce E. (R-17)	√	X	X	√	X	√	√
Saslaw, Richard L. (D-35)	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
Stuart, Richard H. (R-28)	X	X	X	√	X	√	X
Surovell, Scott A. (D-36)	X	√	√	X	√	√	√
Vogel, Jill Holtzman (R-27)	X	X	X	√	X	√	√
Wexton, Jennifer T. (D-33)	X	√	√	X	√	√	√

## Descriptions of Senate floor votes

**Religious liberty in housing:** Conference-opposed legislation would have created causes of action against faith-based providers for following their beliefs about marriage and sexuality. The bill would have added “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” to existing anti-discrimination criteria for housing. After passing the Senate 29-10 (see Senate chart), the bill was defeated in a House subcommittee 5-2 (see Committee vote).

**Banning weapons in churches:** Virginia law restricts guns and other weapons at places of worship during religious gatherings, unless the carrier has a "good and sufficient reason." Conference-opposed legislation would have shifted the burden to places of worship to keep weapons off their property by express communication. The legislation passed the Senate 21-18 (see Senate chart) but ultimately failed when the House did not act on it.

**Expanding Medicaid coverage:** The Conference supports expanding Medicaid to provide health insurance for Virginians whose incomes are up to 138% of the poverty level and who do not qualify for Medicaid. A budget amendment proposed on the Senate floor sought to provide this coverage, but it failed 21-19 (see Senate chart). The House voted 69-31 to include federal funds in its budget to provide private health insurance for these low-income Virginians (see House chart). A final budget is still being negotiated.\*

**Helping at-risk students:** Thousands of low-income Virginia students receive financial assistance to attend Catholic and other nonpublic K-12 schools through the state Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits Program. Conference-supported legislation to expand the program to include low-income pre-K children passed the Senate 28-12 (see Senate chart) but was defeated in a House committee 11-11 (see Committee vote).

**Promoting safe immigrant communities:** Conference-opposed legislation purporting to crack down on “sanctuary cities” would jeopardize trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement and threaten the willingness of crime victims and witnesses to come forward. It passed the House 51-49 (see House chart) and Senate 21-18 (see Senate chart) and awaits Governor Northam’s action.\*

**Protections against usury:** Conference-supported legislation would have cut down on unjust lending practices by regulating internet lenders and capping consumer finance loans at 36% APR. It passed the Senate 37-2 (see Senate chart) before failing in a House subcommittee without a recorded vote.

**Improving suspension policies:** This session saw a breakthrough in the movement to mitigate the school-to-prison pipeline after years of advocacy by the Conference, which supported a public school suspension policy reform that banned out-of-school suspensions of K-3 students lasting longer than three days. It passed the House 87-11 (see House chart) and Senate 34-6 (see Senate chart) and Governor Northam signed the bill.

\*as of April 5, 2018

# House of Delegates floor votes

√: vote agreed with VCC position X: vote disagreed with VCC position  
 NV: Delegate did not vote

Name of Delegate (Party, District)	Defunding abortion of children with disabilities	Expanding Medicaid coverage	Promoting safe immigrant communities	In-state tuition for Dreamers	Improving suspension policies
Ayala, Hala S. (D-51)	X	√	√	√	√
Bell, John J. (D-87)	X	√	√	√	√
Boysko, Jennifer B. (D-86)	X	√	√	√	√
Bulova, David L. (D-37)	X	√	√	√	√
Carroll Foy, Jennifer (D-2)	X	√	√	√	√
Carter, Lee J. (D-50)	X	√	√	√	√
Cole, Mark L. (R-88)	√	X	X	X	√
Collins, Christopher E. (R-29)	√	X	X	X	√
Delaney, Karrie K. (D-67)	X	√	√	√	√
Filler-Corn, Eileen (D-41)	X	√	√	√	√
Fowler, Hyland F. "Buddy", Jr. (R-55)	√	X	X	X	X
Freitas, Nicholas J. (R-30)	√	X	X	X	X
Gilbert, C. Todd (R-15)	√	X	X	X	√
Gooditis, Wendy W. (D-10)	X	√	√	√	√
Guzman, Elizabeth R. (D-31)	X	√	√	√	√
Herring, Charniele L. (D-46)	X	√	√	√	√
Hope, Patrick A. (D-47)	X	√	√	√	√
Hugo, Timothy D. (R-40)	√	X	X	X	√
Keam, Mark L. (D-35)	X	√	√	√	√
Kory, Kaye (D-38)	X	√	√	√	NV
Krizek, Paul E. (D-44)	X	√	√	√	√

# House of Delegates floor votes

√: vote agreed with VCC position    X: vote disagreed with VCC position  
 NV: Delegate did not vote

Name of Delegate (Party, District)	Defunding abortion of children with disabilities	Expanding Medicaid coverage	Promoting safe immigrant communities	In-state tuition for Dreamers	Improving suspension policies
LaRock, David A. (R-33)	√	X	X	X	X
Levine, Mark H. (D-45)	X	√	√	√	√
Lopez, Alfonso H. (D-49)	X	√	√	√	√
Murphy, Kathleen J. (D-34)	X	√	√	√	√
Orrock, Robert D., Sr. (R-54)	√	√	X	X	√
Plum, Kenneth R. (D-36)	X	√	√	√	√
Ransone, Margaret B. (R-99)	√	X	X	X	X
Reid, David A. (D-32)	X	√	√	√	√
Roem, Danica A. (D-13)	X	√	√	√	√
Sickles, Mark D. (D-43)	X	√	√	√	√
Simon, Marcus B. (D-53)	X	√	√	√	√
Sullivan, Richard C. "Rip", Jr. (D-48)	X	√	√	√	√
Thomas, Robert M. "Bob", Jr. (R-28)	√	√	X	X	√
Torian, Luke E. (D-52)	X	√	√	√	√
Tran, Kathy K. L. (D-42)	X	√	√	√	√
Watts, Vivian E. (D-39)	X	√	√	√	√
Webert, Michael J. (R-18)	√	X	X	X	√



## Descriptions of House of Delegates floor votes

**Defunding abortion of children with disabilities:** By a 51-49 vote (see House chart), the House adopted a Conference-supported budget amendment to bring Virginia into line with the majority of other states that limit taxpayer funding of abortion to the three Hyde Amendment exceptions (life of the mother, rape and incest). Currently, Virginia exceeds federal Hyde policy by also funding abortions of children who may be born with certain disabilities. The Senate budget, however, does not include this budget amendment. A final budget is still being negotiated.\*

**Expanding Medicaid coverage:** The Conference supports expanding Medicaid to provide health insurance for Virginians whose incomes are up to 138% of the poverty level and who do not qualify for Medicaid. A budget amendment proposed on the Senate floor sought to provide this coverage, but it failed 21-19 (see Senate chart). The House voted 69-31 to include federal funds in its budget to provide private health insurance for these low-income Virginians (see House chart). A final budget is still being negotiated.\*

**Promoting safe immigrant communities:** Conference-opposed legislation purporting to crack down on “sanctuary cities” would jeopardize trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement and threaten the willingness of crime victims and witnesses to come forward. It passed the House 51-49 (see House chart) and Senate 21-18 (see Senate chart) and awaits Governor Northam’s action.\*

**In-state tuition for Dreamers:** The Conference supported a budget amendment proposed on the House floor to clarify that Dreamers brought to Virginia as children and raised here are eligible for in-state tuition, regardless of whether the DACA program continues. The proposed amendment failed 51-49 (see House chart).

**Improving suspension policies:** This session saw a breakthrough in the movement to mitigate the school-to-prison pipeline after years of advocacy by the Conference, which supported a public school suspension policy reform that banned out-of-school suspensions of K-3 students lasting longer than three days. It passed the House 87-11 (see House chart) and Senate 34-6 (see Senate chart) and Governor Northam signed the bill.

\*as of April 5, 2018

*The Virginia Catholic Conference is the public-policy agency representing Virginia’s Catholic bishops and their two dioceses. Sign up for Conference advocacy alerts and updates at [www.vacatholic.org](http://www.vacatholic.org).*

Dated: April 5, 2018