



# 2025 Affordability Scorecard



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As we reflect on the 2025 General Assembly session, one word comes to mind: momentum. Building on momentum from the 2024 session, this year the General Assembly once again advanced crucial affordability legislation and defeated corporate handouts. Key policies passed this session would have provided direct economic relief for hardworking families. With upheaval at the federal level making regular people’s lives feel more uncertain than ever, Virginians are looking to the General Assembly and statewide officials to ensure stability so they can keep more of what they earn.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Board, Paid Family and Medical Leave, banning hidden fees, and giving \$10,000 to first-time homebuyers would have guaranteed Virginians had targeted and meaningful support.

Unfortunately, all of these measures were either vetoed or gutted by Governor Youngkin, emphasizing more than ever how important the 2025 elections are for electing leaders who will put the middle class first, not billionaires and elite special interests.

Certain measures like an increase to the standard deduction and increased refundability for the Earned Income Tax Credit were included in the 24-26 biennial budget and will provide substantial relief for Virginians this year, alongside one-time \$200 rebates this fall.

As we reflect on the progress made this session, we also look forward to next year and the opportunity to enact groundbreaking affordability measures. We will ensure we put Virginians first, that corporations and the ultra-wealthy have to play by the same rules as hardworking people, and that we lower the cost of everyday needs like medicine, child care, energy, housing, and groceries.

Rhena Hicks & Ryan O’Toole, Co- Executive Directors

# 2025 Legislators of the Year



## Senator Jennifer Boysko

Senator Jennifer Boysko has been Paid Family and Medical Leave’s champion in the General Assembly for over seven years, first introducing the bill in 2019. The measure has been called “a lifeline for working families who are grappling with illness, helping care for family members, or taking some time to welcome a new child” by

Progress Virginia. Senator Boysko has boldly brought this legislation back year after year to for the families most affected by lack of access to paid leave. More than ever, families depend on women’s earnings, yet women often have to leave the workforce to care for their loved ones.

SB 1122 passed in the Senate this year, after similar legislation brought by Senator Boysko was vetoed by the Governor last year. We applaud Senator Boysko for her tireless efforts to ensure Paid Family and Medical Leave for all Virginians and look forward to working with her to pass this legislation and sign it into law next year.



## Delegate Briana Sewell

Delegate Briana Sewell has been fighting for Paid Family & Medical Leave both within the General Assembly and as a leader in Virginia’s communities, where she helped to establish the Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy. Delegate Sewell has pushed for Virginia to become a leader in paid leave in the United States. which is one of only

eight countries worldwide that does not guarantee access to paid leave. More than that, she fights for those Virginians who are most disadvantaged by lack of access to Paid Family and Medical Leave; 1.1 million Black women across the country need leave but do not take it, often resulting in delayed or foregone medical treatment.

This year HB 2531 passed the General Assembly but was vetoed by the Governor this year after similar legislation brought by Senator Jennifer Boysko was vetoed in 2024. We commend Delegate Sewell’s commitment to guaranteed Paid Family and Medical Leave for all Virginia workers, and look forward to working with her to pass this legislation and sign it into law next year.

# 2025 Affordability Champions



Sen. Creigh Deeds



Sen. Mamie Locke



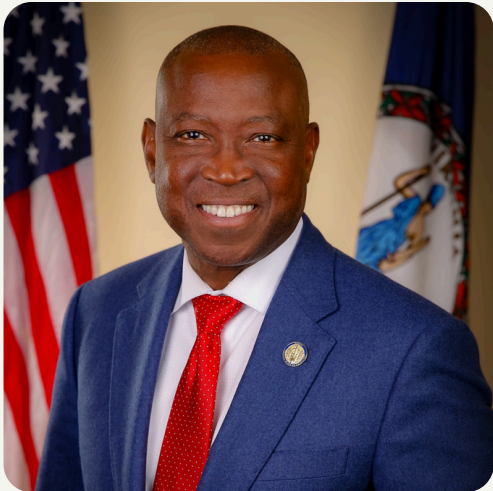
Sen. Schuyler  
VanValkenburg



Sen. Saddam Salim



Sen. David  
Suetterlein



Speaker Don Scott



Chairman Luke Torian



Del. Ellen Campbell



Del. Paul Krizek



Del. Vivian Watts

# 2025 Economic Security Allies



Sen. Lamont Bagby



Sen. Kannan Srinivasan



Del. Bonita Anthony



Del. Elizabeth  
Bennett-Parker



Del. Katrina Callsen



Del. Betsy Carr



Del. Nadarius Clark



Del. Josh Cole

# 2025 Economic Security Allies



Del. Kelly  
Convirs-Fowler



Del. Rae Cousins



Del. Mike Feggans



Del. Cliff Hayes



Del. Dan Helmer



Del. Rozia Henson



Del. Phil Hernandez



Majority Leader  
Charniele Herring

# 2025 Economic Security Allies



Del. Patrick Hope



Del. Michael Jones



Del. Karen  
Keys-Gamarra



Del. Destiny  
LeVere Bolling



Del. Alfonso Lopez



Del. Michelle  
Maldonado



Del. Marty Martinez



Del. Adele McClure

# 2025 Economic Security Allies



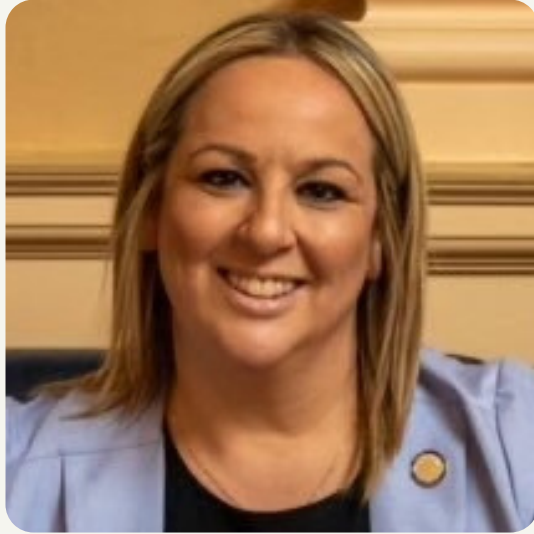
Del. Candi  
Mundon King



Del. Cia Price



Del. Sam Rasoul



Del. Holly Seibold



Del. Irene Shin



Del. Kathy Tran



Del. Jeion Ward



Del. Rodney Willett

# LOWERING THE COST OF MEDICINE

## Prescription Drug Affordability Board - [HB 1724](#)

This bipartisan legislation would lower the cost of medicine for Virginians by creating a Prescription Drug Affordability Board, an independent body of health and medical experts appointed by the Governor, House, and Senate. The board would use proven data-based strategies already working in other states to understand the root causes of high medicine costs, including input from manufacturers, PBMs, insurers, and other stakeholders, when determining the affordability of selected drugs.

In 2023, pharmaceutical companies hiked the list prices for 112 drugs at a rate higher than the rate of inflation. Due to these high costs, Virginians are forced to choose between life-saving medications and other essentials, like groceries or rent. The PDAB would deliver cost benefits to 7+ million Virginians who are not eligible for savings under current Medicare price negotiations.

**HB1724: Vetoed by the Governor**  
[Vote History here](#)



“Since being elected, I’ve made it a priority to listen to the needs of people in the 36th District. Every single day we hear about our friends and neighbors who have trouble

affording their medication. I was proud to be named an affordability champion, and I will continue this fight for as long as it takes to provide relief to those who need it most”

**-Delegate Ellen Campbell**

## Other Bills We Supported to Lower the Cost of Medicine:

Creating a Single Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) for Medicaid - [SB 875](#) & [HB 2610](#)

# LOWERING THE COST OF LIVING

## Banning Hidden Fees - [SB1212](#); [HB2515](#)

A “hidden fee” is any mandatory fee for which the consumer does not receive a good or service. These bills require all mandatory fees and charges to be clearly included upfront in the advertised and displayed price of any good or service. Hidden fees exist across the economy, but consumers often see them in [live-event ticketing](#), [hotels](#), [rental cars](#), [cable and cell phone bills](#), [utilities](#), and [rent](#).

Consumers feel the impact of hidden fees across the economy; on average, families lose [\\$3,200 a year](#) to hidden fees on purchases. Hidden fees often harm responsible businesses, especially small ones that price their products fairly and transparently. This bill addresses unfair price gouging of hardworking Virginians and ensures consumers know the total price of something upfront.

SB 1212: Governor’s  
Amendments Rejected by  
General Assembly  
Vote History [here](#)

HB 2515: Governor’s  
Amendments Rejected by  
General Assembly  
Vote History [here](#)



“I’m proud to be named an affordability champion. From housing and the cost of groceries to child care and prescription drugs, affordability is the most important issue facing Virginia today. I will

continue to prioritize working and middle-class families to ensure the American dream is accessible to all Virginians.”

-Senator Schuyler VanValkenburg

## Other Bills We Supported That Would Lower the Cost of Living:

Direct Tax Filing for Virginians - [HB 2264](#) & [SB 1306](#)  
Lowering Toll Costs - [HB 2368](#)

# INVESTING IN HARDWORKING VIRGINIANS

## Paid Family and Medical Leave - [HB 2531](#); [SB1122](#)

A Paid Family Medical Leave program in Virginia would create an insurance program financed by small contributions from employers and employees to provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave with up to 80% wage replacement and health care protection when experiencing events like a new baby, serious illness or injury. Virginia is the only state in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area that does not have a guaranteed paid leave program.

3.4 million Virginia workers do not have access to Paid Family and Medical Leave. A typical Virginia worker taking 4 weeks of unpaid leave could lose up to \$3,700 in income. Establishing Paid Family Medical Leave would mean Virginians are not forced to choose between financial security and caring for themselves and their families when life-changing medical events arise.

**HB 2531: Vetoed by the Governor**  
Vote History [here](#)

**SB1122: Failed in the House**  
Vote History [here](#)





“Paid Family and Medical Leave is more than just a policy; it is a commitment to working families. It is a promise they won't have to choose between earning a paycheck and caring for a loved one or recovering from an illness. I am incredibly

proud of what we achieved during the legislative session, particularly our success in passing this transformative bill through both chambers of the General Assembly and securing budgetary provisions to support its implementation. Although the governor's veto was a setback, our efforts will not cease. I have fought for nearly a decade to reach this point, and I will continue to advocate for Paid Family and Medical Leave until it becomes law. Our hardworking families in Virginia deserve nothing less, and I will always be their champion.”

-Delegate Briana Sewell



“I'm proud to be named an Affordability Champion and Legislator of the Year by Freedom Virginia. I've fought hard to make Virginia a place where families can thrive - with fair pay, good benefits, affordable housing and

healthcare, and transportation, clean air and water, world class education, and safe communities. Working together with Freedom Virginia, I've been proud to fight for paid Family and Medical Leave over the past seven years to give people the dignity they deserve to care for themselves and their loved ones and keep their jobs alongside the people who are doing the hard work - our caregivers, our teachers, our medical professionals and more - I listen to my community and fight for solutions.”

-Senator Jennifer Boysko

# INVESTING IN HARDWORKING VIRGINIANS

## Paid Sick Leave - [HB 1921](#)

This bill would expand paid sick leave for all Virginia workers, regardless of full-time status.

HB 1921: Vetoed by the Governor  
[Vote History here](#)



## Other Bills We Supported That Would Invest in Hardworking Virginians:

Raising Minimum Wage - [HB 1928](#)

Eliminating Exemptions on Minimum Wage Requirements for Farmworkers - [HB 1625](#)



# CREATING A FAIR TAX SYSTEM

## Millionaire's Tax - [HB 2333](#)

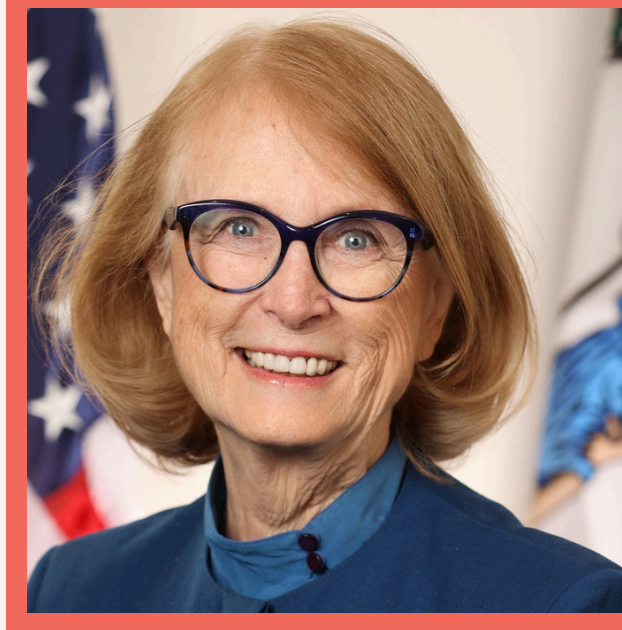
A “Millionaire’s Tax” would create a new tax bracket for income earned over \$1 million annually, which would only apply to 0.4% of Virginia's more than 4 million tax filers. The bill stipulates that revenue would go towards funding K-12 education, child care subsidy programs, and the Virginia Housing Trust Fund.

In Virginia, teachers and millionaires are in the same tax bracket. The Millionaire’s Tax would ensure hardworking Virginians can get ahead and that the ultra-wealthy are held accountable for paying their fair share.

[HB 2333: Left in House Finance Vote History here](#)

## Other Bills We Supported to Create A Fair Tax System:

Earned Income Tax Credit - [SB 810](#) & [HB 1717](#)  
Increasing the Standard Deduction - [HB 1754](#)



“Freedom Virginia is a valuable partner in the fight to reverse the insidious shift of taxes to fall more and more heavily on working families and fixed incomes. I’m especially grateful to be your partner on the Earned Income Tax Credit, using the Standard Deduction to increase tax-free income with inflation, and shifting away taxing essentials. Informed voices matter.”

-Del. Vivian Watts



# SAVING PARENTS MONEY

## Child Tax Credit - [SB 1378](#) & [HB 2180](#)

A Child Tax Credit (CTC) in Virginia would create a \$300 one-time tax credit to Virginia families for each child under 12 in their household. The CTC would save parents money and ensure they could keep more of what they earn to help pay for the care and education of their children.

**SB 1378:** Passed by indefinitely in Senate Finance and Appropriations  
[Vote History here](#)

**HB 2180:** Passed House Finance, Left in House Appropriations  
[Vote History here](#)



"In housing, in energy, and in transportation, there is so much we can do to improve the lives of Virginians with better policies at the state level - and so much more we could do with a stronger majority in Richmond next year. Regardless of the economic chaos the Trump administration creates,

Virginia Democrats will continue to fight for an economy that works for all Virginians."

**-Sen. Saddam Salim**



# SAVING PARENTS MONEY

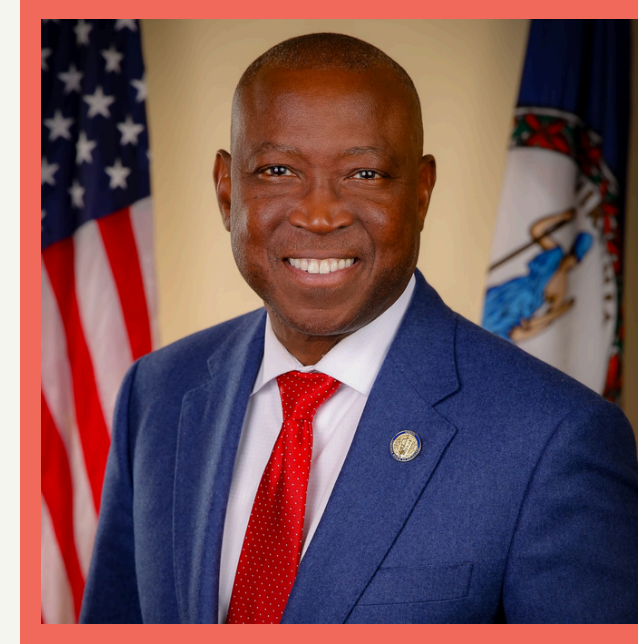
## Dedicated Child Care Funding Formula - [SB 756](#) & [HB 2538](#)

These bills would require the Department of Education to establish and maintain a funding formula to support quality, affordable, and accessible child care for hardworking parents that are struggling right now to balance the demands of family and making money.

**SB 756: Left in Senate Finance & Appropriations**  
Vote History [here](#)

## Other Bills We Supported that Would Save Parents Money:

Exempting Car Seats from Sales Tax - [HB 2049](#)  
5000 Families Pilot Program - [SB 832](#) & [HB 1870](#)



**“I’m proud of the work we did in this General Assembly session to put Virginians first. Lowering costs was at the heart of the agenda we passed this**

**year—delivering immediate relief to hardworking people by tackling the rising expenses of housing, child care, health care, and their jobs. We made real progress to make life more affordable, and we’ll keep fighting to ease the burden on families and help Virginians get ahead.”**

**-Speaker Don Scott**

# MAKING HOUSING MORE ACCESSIBLE & AFFORDABLE

## First Time Homebuyer's Grant Program - [HB 1598](#)

The first-time homebuyer's grant program would provide a \$10,000 one-time grant to an individual, or a couple filing jointly, who is buying a home for the first time. This bill would allow more Virginians to own a home. Hardworking families need solutions that will lower the cost of housing, not line the pockets of greedy developers and landlords who have profited off of jacking up home prices or rents.

**HB 1598: Included in the General Assembly Conference Budget**  
[Vote History here](#)

## Other Bills We Supported That Would Ensure Accessible and Affordable Housing:

Housing Near Jobs - [SB 839](#)

Requiring Localities to Increase Housing Stock - [SB 975](#) & [HB 2641](#)

Faith in Housing (Mandatory) - [SB 1351](#)

ADUs Statewide (Mandatory) - [SB 932](#) & [HB 1832](#)

Prohibiting Algorithmic Price Fixing - [SB 1400](#) & [HB 1870](#)

Prohibiting Algorithmic Price Fixing and Directing Study - [HB 2047](#)

Anti-Rent Gouging - [SB 1136](#) & [HB 2175](#)

Restricts Partnership, Corporation, or Trust from Buying Single Family Home - [SB 1140](#) & [SB 1424](#)



# AMENDMENTS TO EXPAND VIRGINIANS' FREEDOMS

## Fundamental Right to Vote Constitutional Amendment - [SJ 248](#) & [HJ 2](#)

These constitutional amendments provide that every person who meets the qualifications of voters set forth in the Constitution of Virginia shall have the fundamental right to vote in the Commonwealth, except for persons who have been convicted of a felony and persons who have been adjudicated to lack the capacity to understand the act of voting. These amendments have been agreed upon by the General Assembly and will need to be agreed upon a second time next session.

**SJ 248: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)

**HJ 2: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)



“Now more than ever, our state legislature needs to support working families and keep costs down. I am honored to be recognized by Freedom Virginia as an Affordability Champion and look forward to partnering with them again on policies to reduce prescription drug costs, provide paid sick leave and raise the minimum wage, and increase access to affordable housing and health care.”

-Senator Creigh Deeds

# AMENDMENTS TO EXPAND VIRGINIANS' FREEDOMS

## Marriage Equality Constitutional Amendment - [SJ 294](#) & [HJ 9](#)

These constitutional amendments define marriage as being between two adult persons, repeal a same-sex marriage prohibition, and affirm the right to marry. These amendments have been agreed upon by the General Assembly and will need to be agreed upon a second time next session.

**SJ 249: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)

**HJ 9: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)



**“I am honored to stand with Freedom Virginia in assuring that families across the Commonwealth, irrespective of zip code, have what they need to survive and thrive. I am proud to be a voice and advocate for affordability and change.”**

**-Sen. Mamie Locke**

## Reproductive Freedom Constitutional Amendment - [SJ 247](#) & [HJ 1](#)

These constitutional amendments ensure an individual’s right to reproductive freedom and the right to make one’s own decisions about all matters related to reproductive care, including pregnancy, contraception, and IVF. These amendments have been agreed upon by the General Assembly and will need to be agreed upon a second time next session.

**SJ 247: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)

**HJ 1: Agreed Upon for the First Time by the General Assembly**  
Vote History [here](#)

# BILLS WE OPPOSED

## Legalizes Skill Games- SB 1322 & SB 1323

These bills would have legalized currently illegal slot-machine-like “skill games.” Skill games are disproportionately placed in underserved communities, exploiting low-income communities in order to generate profit. We believe that instead, the ultra-wealthy and big corporations should pay their fair share in taxes to fund the right priorities, like education and health care.

**SB 1322: Left in Senate Finance & Appropriations**  
Vote History [here](#)

**SB 1323: Left in Senate Finance & Appropriations**  
Vote History [here](#)

## Authorizes Fairfax Casino Referendum - SB 982

This bill would have allowed Fairfax County to hold a referendum on building a casino in the Tyson’s Corner area. This legislation was unpopular with Fairfax County residents, 68% of whom stated that they would vote “no” on the measure.

**SB 982: Left in House Appropriations**  
Vote History [here](#)





# Who is Freedom Virginia?

Freedom Virginia is a nonpartisan 501(c)4 organization committed to ensuring a commonwealth where hardworking people have the freedom to thrive in an affordable and fair economy. Freedom Virginia advances economic security policies through grassroots activism, voter engagement, and legislative advocacy.

Our efforts began in 2020, and since then, we've pushed for a more fair and affordable Virginia by sharing real stories about Virginians' access to affordable health care, education, housing, and the need for policies that foster an economy where hardworking people can get ahead.

For more information, visit us at [freedomva.org](https://freedomva.org) or follow us @teamfreedomva on social media!

